

*contemporaine*, and Renan summed up his reflections on politics in *La Réforme intellectuelle et morale de la France*; and lo! these great works of the once advanced writers were not advanced at all; they were, on the contrary, resolutely conservative. Both historians showed the same distrust of vague aspirations as political motives and of democracy as a government. Both preferred the English habit of patching up to the French way of pulling down and rebuilding. Both regarded the Revolution as a failure, and modern demagogism as a form of cowardice. They stood for order, morals, and self-sacrifice as the basis of politics worth the name.

It is not exceptional to meet, even to-day, with people who, preferring the ideas of Taine and Renan in their first development to those which they afterwards advocated, resent any mention of the change I have just noticed. Such people, of course, do not count intellectually; had they come across Taine or Renan they would have promptly secured the contempt of two minds which never tried to get away from facts. But, unintelligent narrow-mindedness is not universal, and the readers of Taine's *Origines* and Renan's *Réforme* were deeply impressed. There is no doubt that the conservative tendency which has become more and more noticeable in favourite writers like Jules Lemaître, Faguet, Capus, Prévost, and hundreds of their imitators can be traced, if not to Taine's or Renan's evolution, at least to the altered attitude created by that evolution: literary people began to take an active interest in politics, and they paid more attention to tangible results than to theories, or, above all, to eloquent declamations. The hostility to the professional politician, which is a great feature of the