

day avocations are different ; when the philosopher set about philosophizing his duty was to forget that there were people who might overhear his inward reflections. Philosophy was autonomous even if it was dispiriting, and its effects were mere contingencies.

This view had considerable vogue not only among scientists and *savants*, but even among literary people who claimed for art the rights which philosophy asserted for itself. The famous formula, *l'art pour l'art*, for which the Goncourt brothers were responsible, but which accounts admirably for the literary attitude of Flaubert, or Leconte de Lisle, was a translation of the same doctrine : the artist had every right to describe what he pleased, in any way he pleased, provided he did it artistically ; moral or immoral consequences were nothing to him. All this tended, as may easily be seen, to isolate thinkers and writers, and all those who thought themselves entitled to imitate them, from their time, country, and fellow beings in the sole company of what was declared to be Truth or Beauty. A perilous state of affairs, this, in which the supposed sages of a nation profess indifference to the interests of their country.

It is needless to say much about the advanced character of the works of George Sand, Dumas, and Baudelaire. The first two writers practically taught that passion is only accountable to itself and that the desires of man when they reach a certain intensity overrule the ordinary canons of morals ; the third was a morbid decadent who even now defies analysis. As to Hugo, Quinet, and Michelet, at the stage of their career which corresponds to the Second Empire, they were, above all, humanitarians who loved all mankind—with the exception of Catholics, whom they abhorred—and firmly believed in the prompt establishment of the United States of Europe.