

becomes a weary cycle, that ever returns upon itself. The human intellect, under its influence, seems as if drawn within the ceaselessly-revolving eddies of a giddy maelstrom, or as if it had become obnoxious to the remarkable curse pronounced of old by the Psalmist: I quote from the version of Milton,

“My God! *oh, make them as a wheel;*
No quiet let them find;
Giddy and restless let them reel
Like stubble from the wind.”

History is emphatic on the point. Nearly three centuries have elapsed since the revived Christianity of the Reformation supplanted Roman Catholicism in Scotland. But there was no vacuum created; the space previously taken up in the popular mind by the abrogated superstition was amply occupied by the resuscitated faith; and, as a direct consequence, whatever reaction in favor of Popery may have taken place among the people is of a purely political, not religious character. With Popery as a religion the Presbyterian Scotch are as far from closing now as they ever were. But how entirely different has been the state of matters in France! There are men still living who remember the death of Voltaire. In the course of a single lifetime, Popery has been twice popular and influential in that country, and twice has the vacuum-creating power, more than equally popular and influential for the time, closed chill and cold around it, to induce its annihilation. The literature of France for the last half-century is curiously illustrative of this process of action and reaction, — of condensation and expansion. It exhibits during that period three distinct groups of authors. There is first a group of vacuum-creators, — a surviving remnant of the Encyclopedists of the previous half-century, — adequately represented by Condorcet and the Abbé Raynal; next appears a group of the reactionists, represented