

ligious but likewise of supreme philosophical interest, a revival of the study of Plato went hand in hand; Leibniz being probably one of the first of the great philosophers of modern times to appreciate the Platonic idealism. Towards the end of the eighteenth century the old problem which was before the mind of Plato received a new expression in the philosophy of Kant, and this expression has dominated most of the great systems of nineteenth century philosophy. Even the positive philosophy in France and the philosophy of Evolution in England which, in their great representatives, professed to break with the historical traditions of philosophy, as Descartes and Bacon had done before them, have led, through the reaction which they provoked, to a profound appreciation of the form in which this central problem of philosophy presented itself to Plato and Kant.¹ Philosophical thought in the nineteenth century indeed not only started from, but, as we shall see, continually reverts to, Kant's statement of the great problem.

22.
Community
between
Kant and
Plato.

¹ This view of Kant's philosophy as belonging to the Platonic tradition is strongly brought out by Fr. Paulsen. "Kant's metaphysical conceptions through all their changes remained essentially the same: they consist of an idealism under the directing influence of Leibniz (and Plato)." Paulsen, 'Immanuel Kant,' 4th ed., p. 83; cf. also pp. xi, 97. This view has been attacked by some of Paulsen's critics.

One of the leaders of what is termed in Germany Neokantianism, a revival of the study of Kant's Works, following upon the publication of Kuno Fischer's 'Exposition of Kant's System,' in the 3rd and 4th volumes of his 'History of Modern

Philosophy' (1860), F. A. Lange, has fully entered upon the influence of Platonism upon subsequent ancient and modern philosophy, and has in his 'History of Materialism' (Engl. transl. by E. C. Thomas, in 3 vols., 1877, 1880, 1881) denounced it as one of the great errors in philosophic thought. At the same time he recognises its great historical importance and its abiding value from a different point of view, which he places in opposition to the methodical treatment that belongs to science and philosophy. Of this important distinction, which is independently upheld by other thinkers besides Lange, I shall treat in a later chapter.