

crisis of thought had to be faced, which was marked by the writings of David Hume.¹ Similar demands presented themselves when in Germany the original but fragmentary ideas of Leibniz had to be worked into a system which should form the basis of university teaching. Again, the same practical problem had to be solved when during the Restoration in France the great teachers of philosophy had to meet the demands made upon them by the official system of higher instruction. The way in which this practical problem was solved differed in all the three cases according to the genius of the nation, the prejudices, the exigencies, and the surroundings of the age. There are two distinct ways in which the teacher of any large subject can make up for the deficiencies which his personal knowledge or that of his age must necessarily contain. No doubt both ways are generally resorted to. He can either appeal to custom and tradition, or he can extend the principles and ideas which have proved fruitful in the treatment of restricted fields to the whole of the region which he desires to cultivate. In the degree in which he gives more weight to the one or to the other of these methods, his teaching will become practical or abstract, conventional or revolutionary, satisfying on the one side

¹ We know that in 1744 David Hume was anxious "to be appointed Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, but public sentiment could not bear the idea of one so sceptical being appointed a teacher of youth" (M'Cosh, p. 124).

"People have often speculated as to what Hume would have

taught had he been elected Professor of Moral Philosophy in Edinburgh. I believe he would have expounded a utilitarian theory, ending in the recommendation of the pleasant social virtues; speaking always respectfully of the Divine Being, but leaving His existence an unsettled question" (ibid., p. 153).