

Spencer must have acquired at least a superficial knowledge of some of the ideas current in Kantian and post-Kantian speculation. But the search for a creed ended with the latter in exactly that doctrine of the unknowableness of the origin of things at which James Mill had arrived sixty years earlier, and which received popular expression when Huxley coined the term Agnosticism. The circuit of thought which thus began and ended in an agnostic attitude preceded historically the deeper and more scholarly study of Continental Idealism, and has, through it, been pushed somewhat into the background.

18.
The first
episode
ends in
Agnos-
ticism.

Besides this very prominent episode we have, in this country, the original studies and speculations of James Martineau, an independent thinker, of whom we shall have to take notice in some of the subsequent chapters of this History.

The introduction of the term Monism¹ into recent

¹ The term Monism has cropped up in recent philosophic literature from different sides and with somewhat different significance. It is opposed by some writers to the various forms of dualism existent in contemporary thought and, more recently by others, to pluralism, which they consider to be the necessary presupposition for a consistent application of the principle of Evolution. In Germany the term has been usurped by Ernst Haeckel for the materialistic creed which is developed in his popular writings. Some of his followers have joined hands with an earlier tendency of thought, represented by the Society for Ethical Culture, which aims at giving to morality a foundation independent of any religious creed. This direction of thought is represented by a special

periodical founded in America, with the title, 'The Monist.' It aims at representing a unitary philosophical creed by no means identical with the Positivism of Comte or the Materialism of Haeckel, but nevertheless influenced by both. Quite recently there has been held at Hamburg the "First International Monist Congress," of which Ernst Haeckel, the great naturalist, Wilhelm Ostwald, the celebrated chemist, Friedrich Jodl, author of an important 'History of Ethics,' and others, mostly naturalists, seem to have been the leading spirits. The term Monism has thus become, as it were, the Shibboleth of a sort of religion of Free Thought, and cannot now, any more than the term Positivism, be used in the wider sense which its etymology suggests.