

philosophy. In another point also Leibniz can be compared with Aristotle, inasmuch as he was equally acquainted with the teaching of other earlier or contemporary thinkers, and built upon their foundations.

There are other causes why with Leibniz philosophical thought had entered on a new phase, and, instead of venturing on a bold attempt of creation and systematic construction, was largely occupied with reconciling existing doctrines and apparently contradictory aspects of thought. This task of reconciliation and of arriving at unification, not so much by constructive effort as by a process of harmonising, was pushed into the foreground and became a desideratum to many thinking minds through the writings of a contemporary of Leibniz. It was Pierre Bayle who in several of his writings had asserted the conflict between religion and reason, between the tenets of faith and the doctrines of philosophy; and had exemplified this by pointing to the difficulties involved in the problem of evil and sin.¹ Bayle's criticisms gave the occasion to Leibniz

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and Bayle.

¹ Pierre Bayle (1647-1706) was one of the most influential writers of the seventeenth century, as much through the sceptical tenor of his works as through the enormous erudition displayed in his 'Dictionnaire Historique et Critique' (1695-1697, 2nd augmented ed., 1702). It formed a principal channel of historical knowledge for several generations, continued the scepticism of earlier French writers like Montaigne, and led on to the still more celebrated and influential writings of Voltaire. It preached tolerance in all matters of doctrine, especially of religious beliefs. It was the forerunner of the great Ency-

clopædia of d'Alembert, who, nevertheless, as Voltaire indignantly remarks, did not sufficiently acknowledge his real predecessor. It is supposed that Locke, who met Bayle in Holland, received his ideas on toleration in great part from Bayle. Bayle was the great exponent of the absolute separation of matters of knowledge and matters of faith, but not in the sense expressed by Bacon and Locke, which led to the natural religion of the Deists in England, but in the older sense, according to which religious beliefs would have no meaning if they could be logically demonstrated. It was this dualism