

These influences did not make themselves fully felt in the region of philosophical thought till ten years later. In the meantime a new element was imported into the philosophical and literary circles of Jena through the arrival of Reinhold's successor, Fichte. He took up and proposed to fulfil the second task which, as I stated above, Reinhold had set himself but had not successfully carried out—the unification of the Kantian doctrine. A great personality, a strong and unbending character, self-reliant in abstract thought as well as in action, he was the very man to bring out the moral power, as well as the ideal sides, of the Kantian system.

44.  
Fichte.

He professed to understand Kant better than did his immediate followers, including Reinhold.<sup>1</sup> Nor was it difficult for him to find in the writings of Kant, especially in the two later Critiques,<sup>2</sup> many valuable suggestions which would aid him in the accomplishment

<sup>1</sup> After having lectured for three years Fichte found it advisable to publish an authentic Introduction to his philosophy (1797); partly in order to correct certain misunderstandings, partly also to emphasise that his intention always had been to expound the true Kantian system. He remarks that Kant's intention to give to the philosophical thought of the age an entirely new direction had completely failed. "Kant is up to now, with the exception of one recently published suggestion, . . . a sealed book, and what has been read into it is just what is not adequate and what he desired to contradict. . . . I have not to do with the correction and extension of current philosophical views, but with the complete routing of them and an entire reversion of thought"

(Fichte, 'Werke,' vol. i. p. 420). The one exception which Fichte refers to is the philosophy of Beck.

<sup>2</sup> After the publication of the first 'Critique' in 1781 Kant published in 1785 'Principles of the Metaphysics of Ethics'; in 1788 his 'Critique of Practical Reason'; and in 1790 his third 'Critique,' which was to give unity to the whole of his system, the 'Critique of Judgment.' Fichte published in the true Kantian spirit in 1791 his Essay on 'Criticism of Revelation,' in which he applied Kant's principles to the religious problem. This was followed by the last of Kant's important works, 'Religion within the limits of Pure Reason' (1793). It was in the year 1794 that Fichte came to the University of Jena.