

nothing was more wanted than the gospel of duty, of self-restraint, and the strong belief in the existence of high and realisable ideals.

Although Fichte called his philosophy "*Wissenschaftslehre*," a kind of theory of knowledge which was to precede the different doctrines in which special knowledge was communicated, we find little in his writings of those kinds of investigation which nowadays go under the name of Epistemology. Fichte's contributions to the problem of knowledge lay in a different direction;¹ and though he found it necessary

¹ Though Fichte's writings are now little read, it is well to note that we find in them many tendencies indicated which have been further developed in subsequent philosophical thought. Thus he suggested that only two systems of philosophy are conceivable, the materialistic and fatalistic on the one side, the idealistic on the other. This has been borne out in the history of subsequent thought. He terms the former dogmatic, whereas the latter is, following Kant, supposed to be critical. Not to decide which of the two to accept is the attitude of scepticism. The decision or choice itself depends on the resolution of the character. We shall see in the sequel how this view is also that of Lotze. What is peculiar to Fichte is that he sees more clearly the logical difficulties which stand in the way of the materialistic hypothesis than those which stand in the way of the idealistic. This is largely owing to the fact that he stands quite outside of the exact and natural sciences which were making such great progress during his age. A further important idea which has become fruitful in recent philosophy takes

with Fichte the form of denying the existence of the "Thing in itself" which remained in Kant's philosophy as a limiting conception, a tribute to the common-sense way of looking at things. In modern philosophy this argument has taken the form of a denial of the conception of substance as a fundamental principle, and of replacing it by that of process. With Fichte the idea of substance, matter, or "Thing in itself" was in the course of the activity of the universal (hyper-individual) intellect or self produced as a necessary conception. The intellect, or pure reason, was not merely the form, as with Kant, with which to comprehend the material content given by our senses; it was not only the form but also the matter or content of knowledge. Thus Kant's idea of what he termed the transcendental unity of apperception became with Fichte identical with Kant's fictitious intuitive understanding. The unity of apperception became identical with intellectual intuition. Further, with Fichte the problem of knowledge received an extension in a direction indicated already by Leibniz, and brought out in the clear-