

Continent: the problems of education raised in France by Rousseau, and practically worked out by Pestalozzi; the problem of reason and faith raised by Kant and Jacobi; the problem of liberty raised by the French Revolution; the problems of the reconstruction of the State and society which followed in the sequel of that great movement,¹ and of the breaking down of all the old landmarks during the Napoleonic wars. He found a foundation whereon to build in Kant's doctrine of the primacy of practical over theoretical reason, and he filled in the seemingly empty forms or categories of Kantian morals by emphasising a higher spiritual reality. The existence of such a higher reality was not merely a personal conviction of Fichte's; he only saw, felt, and expressed more clearly and tried to define what an ardent younger generation were striving for, and what had found expression and become an active power in a new literature and a new poetry.² In urging the necessity that all thought and

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Fichte
representa-
tive of a new
generation.

¹ The earliest of these problems was that raised simultaneously by Kant in his first 'Critique,' and by Jacobi in his publication, after Lessing's death, of his conversation with the latter on the philosophy of Spinoza. Jacobi himself treated of it in his subsequent writings, in which he took up an independent position to Spinoza, Kant, Hume, and, later on, to Fichte. The problem of education assumed a definite form and received a practical and realistic treatment through Pestalozzi, who published the first of his popular Works in 1780, with a significant appeal to Goethe to identify himself with the new movement, just at the time when the latter was already, as is

shown in 'Wilhelm Meister,' moving away from the purely classical to a more practical ideal of life. Fichte himself, before approaching theoretically the problem of knowledge in his 'Wissenschaftslehre,' had contributed to the solution of these various practical problems in his earlier writings on 'Revelation' (1792), on 'Freedom of Thought' (1793), on the 'French Revolution' (1793), and on the 'Vocation of the Scholar' (1794).

² Schiller had stirred the minds of the younger generation by a brilliant succession of poetical and dramatic productions; had been appointed to fill the Chair of History in the University of Jena (1787); had, under the influence