

central problem of philosophy, the problem of Reality, the continued object of his speculation. His philosophy is, more than any other, an attempt to fix the truly Real, to find an expression for the highest form of Reality, for the ultimate ground and essence of things. It is pre-eminently a philosophy of the Absolute. This term he again introduced and made familiar in German philosophical literature. By this more than by any other term—*i.e.*, as a theory of the Absolute—has this philosophy been praised and extolled on the one side, vilified and ridiculed on the other. And Schelling's philosophy is, more than any other, the living proof for the correctness of the view which has been held in various forms and will again and again recur, that the Absolute or the truly Real is the highest object of our search, yet, at the same time, that for which we shall never find a lastingly satisfactory philosophical expression. But Schelling has enriched philosophical language and literature with many valuable suggestions which give us, if not a full view, at least glimpses of the truly Real.

In the first period of his philosophical career, when he saw in Fichte the greatest philosopher of modern times, Schelling conceived the idea of supplementing the one-sided emphasis which Fichte laid upon the subjective side of the truly Real or the Absolute, by a more appreciative treatment of the objective side—*i.e.*, of the phenomena of nature, of the external world which surrounds us. Fichte had seemingly reduced this to a secondary position, looking upon nature, which he defined by a pure negation as the Not-self, merely as the