

ideas I refer to, through which Schelling connects earlier systems with more recent thought, the first is the idea of the successive development of natural

striving, such as is peculiar to youthful minds. "In very remarkable contrast to Kant, who proceeds thoughtfully and in measured step from problem to problem, all of which he equally masters, an impatient and impetuous striving now takes hold of philosophical thought. In the life also of ideas there are turning-points and crises which require for their decision the freshness of youthful vigour. It appears as if philosophy in its progress from Kant to Fichte and Schelling tries with each step to rejuvenate itself. Kant was fifty-seven when he brought out his fundamental work, Fichte was thirty-two when he introduced his *Wissenschaftslehre* (1794), Schelling stands at twenty on the height of Kant-Fichtian philosophy (1795) and entered two years later (1797) on the course which is peculiarly his own. Hardly had Fichte spoken the first word of his new doctrine when he was understood by no one better than by the twenty-year-old Schelling, who now, together with the master, develops the doctrine, and plans already the transition to the philosophy of nature whilst Fichte is still occupied with his system of Ethics." This absence of finality in the writings of Fichte and Schelling—of whom Fichte was the greater and more impressive personality, Schelling the more suggestive and inspiring thinker—is probably the reason why the philosophy of neither has met with due appreciation outside of Germany. But this want of finality appears in very different forms in the two philosophies. Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, of which his Works

contain several apparently different renderings, is based upon a fundamental and unvarying conviction, not only of the supremacy of the moral principle in man and mankind and, in consequence, of moral obligation and of the necessity of the development of character, but also of the immediate requirements of his age and country. On the other side Schelling is continually progressing. Beginning with the knowledge of Self, he advances to that of the World, and from thence to that of the Divine Principle; *Wissenschaftslehre*, philosophy of Nature, Cosmology, Theosophy. "This necessary succession of problems marks the stages of Schelling's philosophical development. The first years are dominated by *Wissenschaftslehre*, the second period comprises Philosophy of Nature and the doctrine of Identity, the third and longest, Theosophy. The philosophical development which Schelling presents to the eyes of his contemporaries covers hardly more than fifteen years; they are the most brilliant and active period of his life. He was nineteen when he entered on this important period, thirty-four when he ceased to let the world witness his mental labours" (Kuno Fischer, 'History,' vol. vi. pp. 6 and 7). The ethical problem which was, as it were, solved in Fichte's great personality but not in his philosophical rendering, became in Schelling's mind more and more the great enigma at the solution of which he laboured during the last forty years of his life. It was the problem of Evil and Redemption.