

or rather the regeneration of the conventional theological and religious teaching through a critical study of the Scriptures on the one side, and a philosophical fathoming of the deeper meaning—*i.e.*, of the spirit of the sacred

theological interest. Others of equal or, in one instance, of even greater eminence, such as Goethe, Schiller, Fr. Schlegel, though without theological bias, had a genuinely religious interest. And this formed one of the important connecting links between what we may term the spiritual and the profane or secular literature of the whole classical period. The entire circle of their interests, the whole body of thought which they put forward, was antagonistic only to two extremes: narrow clericalism on the one side and soulless materialism on the other. An idea or an ideal common to them all was the unity of the Divine and the human. And to this Goethe added and Schelling adapted the idea of the immanence of the Divine in nature. It was only for a moment that Fichte, under the influence of Spinoza, seemed to be contented with representing the Divine as the moral order of the Universe; he soon adopted again a more spiritual view. And at a very early stage both Schelling and Hegel identified the Absolute with the Divine principle, using interchangeably the terms Mind, Absolute, and God. This reintroduction of the words and terms used in specifically religious writings into philosophical and scientific discussions—a habit, if we may say so, not indulged in by Kant—gave again to the philosophies of Schelling and Hegel from the beginning and likewise to the later philosophy of Fichte, not only a poetical but distinctly also a spiritual character, and this in addition to the intellectual and ethical tone peculiar to Kant. But

it was in reality more than a mere habit of thought—it was the central conviction that the truly Real, the ultimate Reality, is what religion terms God, a living and active Spirit and, as such, a Personality. Whether the latter conviction can be logically defended (if not also demonstrated) is a problem which occupied a later and more critical generation and has produced an enormous literature. The perusal, however, of the philosophical literature of that age does not, as it seems to me, permit any doubt that a conviction that the truly Real is a Spirit essentially identical with the God of religion underlies the thought and the writings of the foremost thinkers of that age, and that thinking readers and listeners expected from its great leaders in thought a demonstration of this truth; that this formed one of the main attractions which their speculations possessed and that, at a later period, the interest in them declined in the same degree as a general impression gained ground that this expectation was not—or could not be—fulfilled. And when, in the year 1865, J. H. Stirling initiated that serious study of Hegel's Philosophy before which Ferrier recoiled, but which has been continued in this country ever since, it was one of the main points which he urged that this philosophy was destined to stem the tide of materialism and scepticism and strengthen the spiritual or religious view of things which was threatened in this country. A similar interest seems also to have drawn T. H. Green to a study of Hegel, though his foundations lay