

To show all this more fully is not my object at present, as Goethe's activity belongs to the sphere of poetical and subjective rather than to that of philosophical thought. An adequate appreciation of his surpassing greatness and influence would properly belong to a different section of this history. In the region of philosophical thought his presence, nevertheless, made itself continually felt, though from outside or from depths which lie hidden below those speculations which found expression in the actual literature or the academic teaching of the age.

It is, however, important for our present purpose to note how the ethical idealism moved away from its birth-place at Jena and Weimar into a larger sphere of action, and became ultimately centred in Berlin and the Prussian State, whence emanated, under the leadership of Prussia's greatest minister, Stein, the anti-Napoleonic revolution of Europe, followed by the wars of Liberation, and later on by the age of Restoration and Reaction. Philosophical thought through this migration did not escape the temptation of allying itself in later years with the aims and doctrines of political and ecclesiastical parties, a circumstance which did not work for its true interests, but contributed much to pull it down from the high level which it had occupied in the earlier years of the century.

Through the severance which thus took place between the literary and artistic work of the nation on the one side and the practical work on the other, the former was left free to follow its own independent course. This had its advantages as well as its disadvantages. Among the former must be reckoned the unhindered pursuit of

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Severance
of art and
literature
from
practice.