

the beautiful, not as a casual and fanciful attribute of certain things or mental states but as an independent revelation of the essence of reality, of the truly Real. "It was of high value to look upon beauty, not as a stranger in the world, not as a casual aspect afforded by some phenomena under accidental conditions, but as the fortunate revelation of that principle which permeates all reality with its living activity; it was of value that this idealism put an end to merely psychological theories which reduced the beautiful to a convenient coincidence of external impressions with our subjective habits of thought; and, on the contrary, sought in every object of beauty its objective meaning in the connection of a comprehensive world-plan; it was of value to recognise in all those formal properties of continuity, of unity in multiplicity, and of comprehensiveness upon which actually our æsthetical feeling rests, the actual forms in which the eternal ground of everything has voluntarily unfolded itself; and, lastly, it was of value to look upon art likewise not as an accidental play of human powers which might also be wanting, but as a necessary stage in that series of developments which form the essential nature and life of the Eternal and truly Real."¹

¹ Lotze, 'Geschichte der Aesthetik in Deutschland' (p. 125 *sqq.*). This passage may serve as a convenient opportunity to define more precisely the object before us in treating of the Beautiful as a problem of philosophical thought. Leaving out of consideration the views developed in ancient times by Plato, Aristotle, and especially by Plotinus, as to the place of the Beautiful and

of Art in a comprehensive theory of the world and of life, we do not find (with the solitary exceptions, perhaps, of St Augustine's 'Beauty of the Universe' and Leibniz's 'Pre-established Harmony,' neither of which was developed in the interest of a philosophy of the Beautiful) the problem treated in this larger spirit till we come to German philosophy in the last