

had come." But he demands, further, an intermediate stage or medium through which this return is effected. ^{29.} Mythology. This middle term he finds in Mythology. Every great poet and artist, every poetical age, creates its own mythology. "How such a new mythology [or as we might say Symbolism], which is not the creation of a single poet but of a new age which represents as it were one poet, can come into existence, this is a problem the solution of which depends only upon the coming events in the world and the further course of history."¹

This passage may be considered as giving expression to a central idea which was taken up in many different ways and by different representatives of the thought of the age. For Schelling it meant the renewed study of a subject which had occupied him in the earliest years of his speculation, the mythology of the different nations, notably of the classical nations. In that school of poetry and literature which in Germany was opposed to the classical as the Romantic school, the same idea was taken up in an extreme form, as indicating the liberation of philosophical as well as of poetical thought from the strict rules of reasoning on the one side and from the limitations of the classical models on the other side. It led there to much that was fantastic and irregular. This development, in its further course, threw off many brilliant suggestions as well as poetical creations, but, where it was not controlled by or subservient to historical studies and the critical spirit, it ended in arbitrariness and barren subjectivism. A well-known example both of the brilliant achievements and of the unsatis-

¹ *Ibid.*, p. 629.