

This leads us to an understanding of the importance of Lange's view,—a view which is, consciously or unconsciously, explicitly or implicitly, shared by many thoughtful minds in Germany at the present day. I have had occasion to point out in an earlier portion of this chapter, as likewise on former occasions, how the aspirations of German poetry and the courageous efforts of German speculation, at the end of the eighteenth century and at the beginning of the nineteenth, were a reflection of the new interests and the youthful ideals of the age—an expression of the general hope that a new era had dawned for human history and human culture; also, how this universal and widespread feeling received an extreme expression through the French Revolution; and, lastly, how the disenchantment which followed upon its exaggerations and excesses led to two

in the same person; Vaihinger having written the book more than thirty years ago (1875-1878), but allowed it to remain unpublished, as it seemed to him that the age was not ripe for its reception. During the generation, however, which followed the publication of Lange's 'History' and the composition of his own work, he recognises that Lange's ideas have been more and more assimilated by other thinkers. Of these he gives a long list in his Preface as the author, pointing especially to the similarity of his views to such popular philosophies of modern times as those of the Pragmatists in this country and of Fr. Nietzsche in Germany. His relation to Henri Bergson, which has been pointed out (see Dr K. Oesterreich in 'Deutsche Literaturzeitung,' 1913, p. 199), is less evident, inasmuch as the final drift of M. Bergson's

speculations is not yet clear. Although the main title of the work is repellent to common-sense, it is of value to the historian of thought to see it clearly expressed in the sub-title that according to this tendency in philosophy all progress in culture and society seems to be based on fictions or on inventions of the human mind, without any underlying conviction that they are, if not the expression, yet at least a reflection of the truly Real—in fact, the latter seems to vanish altogether out of existence. It will be evident to my readers that the whole tendency which I desire to bring out in this History is exactly the opposite of what Prof. Vaihinger considers to be the drift of recent thought; but it is of advantage for both sides that through the use of the word "fiction" this contrast should be distinctly defined and emphasised.