

The philosophy of the day thus aimed at basing ethics upon a religious foundation. But this religious foundation was not to be a mere blind and thoughtless repetition of the ruling theological dogmas, it was to be the spirit and not the letter of Christian faith, and this spirit was to be reached, the deeper understanding was to be attained, through a moral interpretation. If we desire to define the position of ethical thought of that age and school in terms which have become current in this country, we may say that Kant's and Fichte's ethics were intuitional. As such they were quite as far removed from the utilitarian ethics of the present day as they were from the dry formalism which prevailed in the theological schools, rationalistic and orthodox alike. But it was from the latter that the opposition first made itself felt.

The customary teachings of the Church were closely bound up with existing governments and state rule. The Church, with its catechism, was then, as it has been many times before and since, a powerful ally of bureaucracy and political intolerance. Fichte had shown that he stood on the side of social and political freedom. Though he held up the moral law as the highest revelation, as a sacred command, he held and preached enlightened views on social, legal, and political questions. The great success of his academic teaching, his personal influence on younger minds, had aroused many jealousies. Being moreover an assertive nature, he had made many enemies. In the more advanced universities of Germany '*Lern- und Lehr-Freiheit*' was then the order of the day; nowhere more so than at