

therefore, neither an extension of ordinary knowledge nor purely ethical precepts or moral commands. Thus Schleiermacher stands between the purely metaphysical treatment of the religious problem by Hegel and the purely ethical by Kant; having an appreciation for both. This assertion, by Schleiermacher, of the independence of the spiritual life in relation both to the intellectual and the ethical, though forming the ultimate basis of both and reacting on them, led in the sequel of his own speculations, and still more in the further course of nineteenth century thought, to two distinct developments, to two very different conceptions of the religious life and of the solution of the religious problem, of the problem of the spirit. These two independent developments were combined in Schleiermacher's personality, but since his time they have gone far asunder. They may, for our present purpose, be defined as the æsthetical and the social conception of religion and its importance.<sup>1</sup>

28.  
Æsthetical  
and social  
conception  
of religion.

<sup>1</sup> The peculiarity and originality of Schleiermacher's genius can be best grasped by contrasting him with other great thinkers who surrounded him. Among these no one played a greater part in bringing out Schleiermacher's characteristic conceptions than Fichte, and it is to the latter that we are most indebted for unknowingly stimulating Schleiermacher to the expression of his own views, to the production and publication of some of his most striking earlier writings. The contrast to Fichte is summed up by Dilthey in a quotation taken from Schleiermacher's Correspondence (1800): "Philosophy and life are with him [Fichte], as he also theoretically maintains,

quite separate; his natural way of thinking has nothing extraordinary, and thus there is wanting in him, so long as he sticks to the ordinary point of view, everything that could make him interesting to me. Before he arrived I had an idea of conversing with him about his philosophy and opening out to him my opinion that I could not very well put up with his way of separating the common-sense from the philosophical point of view. But I soon pulled in my sails." Dilthey adds that "personal intercourse, conferences over many common interests, the respective scientific developments, resulted with Schleiermacher only in an accentuation of this impression" (*loc. cit.*, p.