

4.
Failure to
attain unity
of thought.

philosophy completely unified knowledge, is probably one of the least disputed and most generally accepted expressions of that thinker, and this in the present day when his own ways of arriving at this unification are almost as generally rejected or forgotten. Now, if we may say that the present age is marked by a desire to arrive at unity of thought, we are forced at the same time to confess that it is equally marked by the failure to attain or even to approach it. In this respect it presents a great contrast to the state of things which prevailed a hundred years ago.

5.
Monistic
tendency.

Although the term introduced by Herbert Spencer—unification of knowledge and thought—is now generally adopted, it is only a new way of expressing what former ages said in different terms. They spoke of and produced systems of philosophy. The last generation has produced no original system. On the other hand, we hear and read a great deal of the monistic tendency of thought; popular periodicals and treatises have been published giving expression to this tendency. Thus we may define the character of the highest philosophical thought in the beginning of the nineteenth century by saying that it was essentially systematic; and again we may say that the tendency but not the character of philosophy at the end of the century is to a large extent monistic. An adoption of new terms and the discarding of old ones mark a change in philosophical thought itself which it will be of interest to examine more closely.

Limiting ourselves for the moment to a consideration of philosophical thought in Germany during the course