

departure from the position of Fichte in a suggestion made by the latter himself.

In one of the earliest of his many introductions and expositions of his doctrine, published in the year 1794, Fichte had dealt with the problem, how can we represent to ourselves the fact of consciousness—*i.e.*, of the knowledge of self? how is self-consciousness possible? and finding that this fact implies the conscious distinction of a self and a not-self, he infers that the first act of the mind or intellect, which he conceives as an active principle, is the differentiation of subject and object, of self and not-self. This distinction presupposes a condition in which these two opposites were still undifferentiated, merged into one. This undifferentiated condition is the state of unconsciousness. Consciousness emerges or rises out of unconsciousness by an act of the unconscious self. Fichte's whole interest lay in the development of the conscious self, which, after the process of differentiation, possessed, as it were, the greater share of reality, in as much as the fundamental active principle had now become a free and self-conscious will with an object to work upon. But this was not the only possible view. The centre of gravity might not necessarily lie on one side of the duality of subject and object, it might lie, as it were, between the two, it might be the point of identity or indifference; also it might lie on the other side, in the not-self, in that region of facts and experience which the intellect looks upon as the outer world or as Nature. And inasmuch as this outer world appears as a separate existence detached from the thinking self which retires into the position of a mere beholder,