

the distracting diversity of many things or many thoughts. Now this synthesis, as it does not really destroy the manifoldness of things as they present themselves to our contemplating mind, is possible only by an abstraction, *i.e.*, in the region of the Idea. Thus the first step we take is to form some idea which, more than a single thing or observation, experience or thought, represents the *ensemble* or "together" of things, the unity of the underlying ground; it is a first, maybe a very elementary and primitive conception of what this underlying reality is. As we repeat this process, however, we gain more and more elevated expressions or ideas of the Absolute; or, to express it in other words, the idea which we form of the Absolute becomes fuller and more comprehensive, approaching nearer and nearer to its actual nature or essence.

If we now combine this whole scheme in its formal, as well as in its more substantial meaning, with the conviction expressed in an extreme form by Fichte, that the Absolute reveals itself in the first conscious activity of a thinking subject, we arrive at the view that the actual unfolding of the truly Real or the Absolute is of the nature of the thinking process which the human mind is carrying on in itself: further, that the several stages of logical thought are essentially of the same nature as the several stages of the actual development of reality—in fact, we look upon logic, *i.e.*, the canons and categories of human thought, as indicating the succeeding stages of the development of the world-ground or the Divine Logos; a conception which, since the appearance of Neoplatonism in antiquity, has reasserted