

48.
Pessimism.

In opposition to this optimistic spirit Schopenhauer introduces into philosophical thought the pessimistic view. The existence of Evil and Sin in the world impresses him more than the hopeful outlook, the promises and aspirations, so characteristic of Fichte's and Hegel's work. In this work he takes no part: he turns away to the opposite or pessimistic interpretation, he introduces a foreign element, that which had found expression in the philosophy and poetry of India. A knowledge of these had at that time been recently introduced through the study and translation of the great productions of Oriental literature to which the Romantic school, headed by Schlegel, had given much attention. Imbibing this spirit Schopenhauer looks upon the world-process as a process of evil, upon the assertion of the Will as the source of evil; and finds the redeeming process to consist in self-negation, in annihilation of the Will, in quietism, in asceticism, and in the passive virtues of sympathy, compassion, and renunciation. We may note here that it was likewise the problem of Sin and Evil in the world which Schelling approached in the last phase of his philosophy, and which prevented him from arriving at any satisfactory conclusion of his speculations. To the two questions which remained unanswered in Schelling's mind, the problem of the contingent and the problem of evil, Schopenhauer's philosophy professed to give an answer; but it was one that stood in opposition to the progressive spirit of the age.

The philosophy of Eduard von Hartmann has generally