

important and extensive literature is even more fragmentary than the literature itself. In order not to part from my readers without giving them some idea of the tendencies of recent thought, I must briefly recapitulate what has been shown more in detail in preceding chapters.

The highest aim of philosophy has always been to search for unity of thought. At the beginning of the nineteenth century Kant had firmly established in the minds of his followers the conviction that this unity can only be found in the unity of consciousness—*i.e.*, of the inner life; but he had still left the possibility of another unity in the “Thing in Itself,” the *caput mortuum* of external reality. The immediate followers of Kant, in what they considered the true spirit of his teaching, consistently destroyed this phantom, and sought for unity and harmony in the inner world, confining themselves finally to the world of thought—*i.e.*, of logical thought. This movement culminated in Hegel.

Quite independent of this, which is usually termed the Idealistic movement, the natural sciences approached unity of thought from the other side—*i.e.*, from the side of the external or material world, concerning the ultimate reality of which they entertained no doubt. Their researches, which were not conducted with the object of establishing a reasoned creed, but simply in order to gain natural knowledge, led, nevertheless, to a surprising though partial unification of such knowledge, and when the endeavours of the Idealistic school failed, some thinkers, trained in the methods of the natural sciences, and impressed with the increasing simplification of their