

istence is the only thing we know about the reality of things, and that all detailed information which we possess about them is mere appearance, originating in the nature of our senses and the forms of our intellect. It has frequently been observed that this way of stating the problem of reality involves a latent contradiction, inasmuch as of a thing regarding which we know absolutely nothing, we cannot even maintain its existence. The same objection has been raised in more recent times against the statement of Herbert Spencer, who, in a more direct way than Kant before him, asserts the existence of the Unknowable, and places this at the entrance of his philosophy.¹

position was unstable and, as Windelband has shown, led to two separate developments: the first, that indicated by Jacobi as unavoidable and necessary, was to throw this conception of an unknowable Thing in itself overboard and resort to pure Idealism, as was done in various ways by Fichte and his successors, who all took great pains to show how Kant's position was untenable. The second was to endow the empty idea of a Thing in itself, the x of the Kantian philosophy, with a definite meaning, whilst maintaining in substance the Kantian argument. The way to accomplish this had been indicated already by Fichte as well as by another philosopher of the Kantian school, Fr. Bouterwek (1766-1828), and was, without appreciation of either, consistently followed up by Schopenhauer. Thus the pure idea of reality either lapses into nothingness, the Unreal, or it acquires a higher meaning as the truly Real. It either degenerates, as Windelband says, "into a quasi-rudimentary organ without any function in

the body of thought," or it rises to that highest object of contemplation on which the closing pages of Schopenhauer's first great work contain an eloquent rhapsody. A third investigation belongs to more recent times, and is not yet concluded. It would have to show how, psychologically, the perplexity has arisen out of the three notions of Self, which we involuntarily form in early life and which are continually intermingled and superposed in all our reflective and practical mental operations: the Self as one among many other Selves, its equals; the Self as pictured to us through the memory of past experience; and the Self as the sensations and feelings of the present moment. Beginnings of this psychological analysis are to be found in Renouvier's 'Essais de Critique Générale.' See also papers by Josiah Royce in 'Philosophical Review' (Sept. 1894, Sept. and Nov. 1895).

¹ We may get out of this difficulty, which applies as much to Kant's as to Spencer's Unknowable, by looking upon it as a limiting