

He would have agreed with Aristotle that the State 'comes into being for the sake of life, but continues in being for the good life'. War is not the continuation but the failure of politics. Its true continuation is the life of art, science, religion, for the full development of which it is the essential condition. Nor would he have tolerated the doctrine that the State is the ultimate appeal in matters of right. Above and beyond the State there is the Spirit of the World or the Spirit of God: 'the history of the world is the judgement of the world'. It was he who said of Napoleon that he had brought the highest genius to victory only to show how little victory alone could achieve against the moral forces of the world. It is true that his political theory was approved by contemporary statesmen, but before his death they had come to suspect that there was 'perilous stuff' in it for all reactionary and repressive policies.<sup>1</sup> It is not in Hegel but in the violent reaction that set in shortly after his death, in 1831, against the whole Idealist philosophy that we have to look for the philosophical foundations of Prussian militarism.

## II

### THE REACTION AGAINST IDEALISM

The story of this reaction is a complicated one. That it was due in part to certain high-handedness in method and obscurity in result of the older philosophy cannot, I think, be denied. But the main causes lay elsewhere. I select two of the chief factors in it.

1. Germany has been accused of culpable absent-mindedness in occupying herself with mystical speculations while other countries, by commerce, colonization, mining, and manufacture, were laying the foundations

<sup>1</sup> See E. Caird's *Hegel*, p. 94.