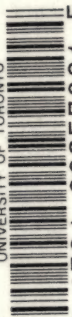


THE WORLD'S EPOCH-MAKERS.
EDITED BY OLIPHANT SMEATON.

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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*Kant and
His Philosophical Revolution*

By
Professor R. M. WENLEY, D. SC.



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THE WORLD'S EPOCH-MAKERS

EDITED BY
OLIPHANT SMEATON

Kant and
His Philosophical Revolution

By Professor R. M. Wenley

D.Phil., D.Sc., Litt.D., LL.D.

"I have come with my writings a century too soon ; after a hundred years people will begin to understand me rightly, and will then study my books anew and appreciate them."

KANT (in 1797).

"Certainly the present bears witness that in our time the writings of no philosopher are so zealously studied, as fountains of *living* truth, as are the works of Kant."

KUNO FISCHER.

"Kant's work was a work of patient mining, of experiment after experiment, criticism upon criticism ; nor did he ever leave any question till it was thoroughly exhausted. And it was just because his method was thus exhaustive that the revolution of thought produced by it was so great and irreversible."

EDWARD CAIRD.

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and

His Philosophical Revolution

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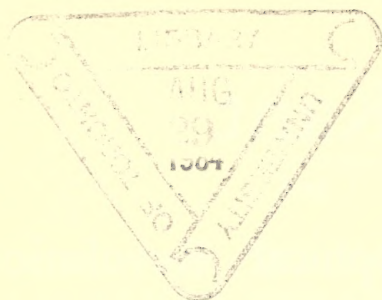
R. M. Wenley

Professor of Philosophy in the University of Michigan

Edinburgh. T. & T. Clark

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PREFACE



MORE, perhaps, than any of the 'Epoch-Makers' whose achievements this Series records, Kant remains '*caviare* to the general.' It is hard to reproduce the subtleties of his thought so that the average man may sense their ways, harder still to create vital appreciation of the importance and scope of his speculations. Probably, a profound 'revolution' was never loosed upon the world in such forbidding mien. For, as Kant says himself, "while the greatest care was bestowed upon the matter, little care was expended on the style, or in rendering it easy for the general reader." Further, my task has been made at once more and less difficult by the admirable commentaries upon the Kantian philosophy and its results accessible to English readers now. More difficult, because many matters have been explained with a skill and insight that I cannot pretend to rival. Less difficult, because the path has been blazed so clearly. Partly for these

reasons, and partly in the spirit of this Series, it has seemed best to consider at length the 'epochal' relations of the philosopher's problems and conclusions; to exhibit somewhat fully the personal, human interest of his career; and to follow closely his slow mental development, which mirrors the age so well.

Yet, even thus, the immense difficulty of simple statement does not disappear; although Kant left no system in the strict acceptation, his technicalities possess rights that never lapse. I can but say that I have simplified to the best of my ability, and add, that Kant students alone are in a position to realise the obstacles to fluent exposition. As far as may be, I have subordinated moot problems in Kant 'philology,' and avoided ramifications which could not be followed up within a space limited by pre-arrangement.

Scholars who have undertaken a small book on a great subject know full well the troubles that afflict the just at any time, and, with Kant for theme, difficulties beset one from every quarter. In particular, the proportions to be assigned to each part have raised sore puzzles, like the necessary omissions. I cannot hope that I have succeeded altogether in these respects. The book is designed to do the general reader a service

and, of course, his demands concern the larger sweep of Kant's thought rather than the minute details of the Critical Philosophy. The writings of E. Caird, Stirling, Watson, Morris, Adamson, Wallace, Sidgwick, Paulsen, and Prichard should be in the hands of all English readers who desire to pursue the ramifications of the Critical Philosophy seriously.

R. M. WENLEY.

ANN ARBOR, *October* 1910.

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PART I
ORIGINS

CHAPTER I

THE LARGER ENVIRONMENT

THE ORIGINS AND CONDITION OF KANT'S GERMANY

THE contemporary German Empire and Kant's 'Germany' present a contrast great enough to be termed extraordinary. For us, the German Empire is the first military power in the world, the home of the best educated modern nationality, the focus of highly organised commercial undertakings, the country whose industrial operations are conducted on the most thorough scientific and technical basis: in short, among the potent forces in civilisation, wielding an intellectual no less than a warlike hegemony. Naturally, then, we tend to set Kant in a similar or identical environment, to think of him as a leader among a folk accustomed to lead, innured to leadership. But, if we would understand his situation, we must review the vast changes that have overtaken continental Europe these last one hundred and fifty years. Not that the present German Empire lacks political aspects reminiscent of Kantian times. On the contrary, its constituent portions, eloquent witnesses to the heritage from a punier past, offer a convenient point of departure whence to attempt

realisation of conditions in a previous age. For the very titles now enjoyed by some of the federated sovereigns were gifts of Napoleon I. The realm created by William I. and Bismarck, with the aid of Moltke and his myrmidons, consists of no less than twenty-six administrative units. The most important are—the kingdoms of Prussia, Saxony, Bavaria, and Würtemberg; the Grand Duchies of Baden, Hesse-Darmstadt, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Saxe-Weimar, and Oldenburg; the *Reichsland*, or Imperial Province, formed of the territory ceded by France in 1871. We must add to them the five Duchies, the seven Principalities, and the three Free Cities, constitutive of the composite whole. Moreover, a map of ‘Germany’—“a geographical expression”—in 1715 looks like a crazy-quilt, cut up, as it is, into no less than three hundred and sixty-five ‘States,’ and serves to remind us that divisions of the Empire now consolidated have undergone numerous vicissitudes; for example, the name of Brandenburg, whence all this greatness sprang, does not appear on the list above. Now, 1715 is but nine years before Kant’s birth (1724), while, only in 1815, eleven years after his death (1804), does the latter-day State begin to emerge finally from circumambient chaos. Evidently, then, on the mere material side, we must be prepared to reckon with many deductions from the contemporary outlook.

Kant was a Prussian subject by birth. Accordingly, Prussia, rather than any of the neighbour States, claims attention. But here again we must slough all ideas of modern Prussia, the backbone of imperial power, containing some two-thirds of the territory of the

Empire and some three-fifths of its population, furnishing two hundred and thirty-six of the three hundred and ninety-seven votes in the Federal Parliament. For, simple mention of her principal provinces indicates that she, too, has experienced historical changes and chances in common with the remainder of the Empire. East Prussia, West Prussia, Brandenburg, Silesia, Rhenish Prussia, and Hesse-Nassau, to name the chief divisions only, serve to recall days when Prussia fared very differently from her present proud estate. And if Kant's circumstances are to be understood, some aspects of this chequered tale call for brief notice.

It was so recently as 1417, no far cry in history, that Frederick of Hohenzollern, Burgrave of Nuremberg, received investiture as first Elector of Brandenburg from the Emperor Sigismund. This province, destined to be the nucleus of the Prussian State, had been rent by anarchy for generations. Frederick's strong hand compelled order. Under his son, the New March was purchased from the Teutonic Knights (1455), while the Duchy of Stettin was acquired in fief (1464). Meantime, the junior branches of the House of Hohenzollern ruled Anspach and Baireuth, and the purchase of the Duchy of Jaegerndorf, in Silesia, by John George, Margrave of Anspach, great-great-grandson of the first Elector (1524), was to prove of weighty moment in the early years of Frederick the Great. Similarly, the election of Albert, John George's brother, to the Grand Mastership of the Knights of the Teutonic Order, proved the first link in a chain of events that left the Electors of Brandenburg Kings of Prussia.

The Teutonic Order arose after the death of Frederick

Barbarossa (1189), and had its seat at Acre. Thanks to the hopelessness of the Crusades, the Grand Master removed his court to Venice early in the thirteenth century, and, in 1226, at the call of Poland and of the Emperor Frederick II., the Order migrated to the Baltic, there to battle against heathenism. Here it conquered the territory between the Vistula and the Pregel, which became known as East Prussia, with Königsberg, Kant's native city, as eventual capital. It also mastered Pomerania to the west, as well as the lands of Courland, Semgallen, and Livonia to the east and north, till, at the height of its power, its rule ran from the Oder to the Gulf of Finland. Thanks to its harsh, tyrannical treatment of its subjects, and to its constant feuds with Poland, it fell upon evil times, the decay of its lordship dating from the disastrous defeat at Tannenberg in 1410. A revolt of its own provincial nobles, who called for Polish aid, accorded with alacrity, broke out in the middle of the fifteenth century and, after a thirteen years' war, the Order was abased, its Grand Master taken captive, and it retained East Prussia only as a fief of Poland, which stripped it of its western territories. Thus Poland, in possession of West Prussia, interposed itself between East Prussia and Brandenburg, with its capital, Berlin. Accordingly, so early as 1466, the country in which Kant was destined to be born had been separated by a foreign land from the seat of Hohenzollern rule, and laid waste so cruelly that some 300,000 men perished, while 18,000 villages are said to have met destruction. Weakened in this disastrous fashion, the Order felt it necessary to procure a Grand Master fit to restore a portion of the lost lustre. The need cul-

minated in the election of Albert of Brandenburg (1511). Although solely averse to the Polish vassalage, circumstances proved too strong for Albert, and, in 1525, the Grand Master became hereditary Duke of Prussia, as a fief of Poland. Thus Kant's homeland fell to a cadet of the House of Hohenzollern. The second Duke was an imbecile, and upon his death (1618) the Elector of Brandenburg became Duke of Prussia also. The Thirty Years' War followed, when Brandenburg, a theatre of constant struggle, experienced such terrible ravages at the hands of both contestants that, at the Peace of Westphalia (1648), the population of Berlin had fallen to 6000. But the reign of the Great Elector, inaugurated in 1640, had already given promise of better days. Although Frederick William lost the northern portion of the Duchy of Stettin, and failed to receive Pomerania, events conspired by 1650 to constitute Brandenburg the most considerable German State after Austria. The Elector worked energetically to regenerate his impoverished realm, and accomplished no small progress by his wise policies. He welcomed cordially the skilled and thrifty Huguenots, driven from France by the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). Agriculture and forestry, industry and trade, received protection and impetus; roads were built; the Elbe-Oder canal was constructed: in a word, the basis of material prosperity was laid. The Swedish-Polish war, ended by the death of Charles x. and the Peace of Oliva, found the Elector on the victorious side. Prussia's compensation took the form of release from Polish vassalage, and she entered the ranks of sovereign States. But the Swedes were by no means satisfied

and, incited by Louis XIV., attacked Brandenburg, only to be defeated in the momentous battle of Fehrbellin (1675). As Frederick the Great declared later, "Posterity dates from this day the rise of the House of Brandenburg." Nevertheless, the Treaty of Nymegen (1679) deprived the Elector of his Pomeranian conquests from the Swedes, so that little territorial gain remained to him. His son, Frederick III., who, as Frederick the Great remarked sarcastically, was "little in great things and great in little things," proved greedier of title than of territory, and set his heart upon a crown. As a result of political combinations and necessities, connected mainly with the question of the Spanish Succession, the Powers saw fit to gratify and conciliate him—a title costs nothing or, as in this case, seems to portend little at the moment. So, on the 18th January 1701, Frederick crowned himself King of Prussia at the city of Königsberg. More by good luck than by his good guidance, the State had acquired resources during his reign, while the Queen, Sophia of Hanover, had fostered the things of the spirit. The Berlin Royal Academy, and the University of Halle,—whose pietism was fated to count in Kant's moral equipment,—are her monuments. Frederick William I., who succeeded (1713), proved the kind of autocrat whom the times demanded. In particular, he accomplished much for Kant's province. During the first decade of the eighteenth century East Prussia had endured disasters of her own. The plague had depopulated her, and cattle-disease had scourged her (1709–10). The need for new blood became clamant. And, as the Great Elector had welcomed the Huguenots, so Frederick William invited the Protestant

Salzburgers who, persecuted by the Archbishop Maximilian Gandulph von Kuenburg (1668-87), were exiled at short notice by his latest successor, Leopold von Firmian (1727-31). In February 1732, Frederick William's edict offered them new homes in East Prussia, while his power extracted pecuniary compensation for their confiscated property. His invitations to immigrants from Saxony, Würtemberg, the Palatinate, Switzerland, and Bohemia were also of importance. Otherwise, after the king had wrested Stettin from Sweden, peace blessed his rule; he thus left his country less stricken with poverty than it had been since the awful calamities of the Thirty Years' War. Although things remained on a most exiguous scale, as we shall see, Frederick the Great inherited a solvent kingdom and, what was of much more immediate importance, the best disciplined army in Europe. His father had indeed transformed Prussia into the "Sparta of the North." The last years of this reign coincided with Kant's boyhood. Frederick the Great succeeded to the throne, and Kant matriculated at the University of Königsberg in the same year (1740). The king was twenty-eight years of age, the freshman sixteen.

More perhaps than any other place, Nuremberg reveals German civilisation as it was in the sixteenth century, before the Wars of Religion wrought universal ruin. Augsburg, Ratisbon, Lübeck, and portions of Heidelberg, serve to elaborate and confirm the impression. Solid commercial prosperity blossomed in an accordant social culture, which attained its height about 1550. These were the conditions that led Pope Pius II. to observe, "The kings of Scotland might

rejoice to be housed as well as the average burgher of Nuremberg." Nay, the Emperor himself did not despise aid from the private purses of the Fuggers of Augsburg. But the manifest sluggishness of national life after the accession of the Emperor Charles v. (1519), thanks to political and intellectual obscurantism, symptomatic as it was, hardly presaged the utter destruction consequent upon the Thirty Years' War. Devastation, complete and unrelieved, overtook the hapless country. Cities were sacked by the score and, when not razed, depopulated; villages literally disappeared by hundreds, possibly by thousands. Würtemberg entered the war with 400,000 inhabitants, at its close she had no more than 48,000. The material basis of civilisation had been shattered to fragments. Sixty-nine per cent. of the people, two-thirds of the dwellings, nine-tenths of the domestic animals were wiped out; three-quarters of the land had lapsed to the wild; trade and commerce had ceased to exist, even the powerful and opulent Hanseatic League had gone under; capital there was none. It took two hundred and thirty years—that is, till 1850—merely to redress the balance.

As usual, moral and intellectual decline dogged the steps of fiscal ruin. Gryphius' *Horribilicribrifax* (1649?), Grimmelshausen's *Simplicius Simplicissimus* (1668), and Christian Weise's *The Village Machiavellus* (1679) furnish lambent commentaries upon the barbarism, licence, and triviality of the resultant age. The sober middle-classes, like the self-respecting upper middle-class, had clean gone. The peasantry lived in degradation, the nobles, especially the petty nobles, in crass forgetfulness of civic responsibility, and dead

to higher things. Servility tainted the upper, cowardice the lower, orders. Education had reached a sorry pass, religion had sunk into superstition, or was throttled by a pedantic theology. The lowest depths were plumbed a short generation before Kant's birth—say, about 1700. Above all, national feeling, with its recognition of a common fatherland, and a unitary internal spirit, had been lost completely. Nevertheless, two seed-plots of the new era to come awaited nurture and cultivation—Prussia and Protestantism. Kant grew to be a mighty protagonist of the tendencies peculiar to both. Plain living and high thinking fell to his lot; hard service and decisive, if not always justifiable, action were to be the portion of his sovereign. From a little thing both were destined to make a great matter. But it was a slow business, demanding the utmost idealism, with consonant self-sacrifice and stern application.

Prussia proved the proverb; in her case, darkness fell deepest before dawn. Despite narrow circumstances, Frederick William I. did contrive to initiate the real work of regeneration. Sinecures were abolished, peculation entailed certain and severe punishment, the salaries even of the indispensable bureaucracy were reduced to most modest limits. Above all, a spirit of self-forgetfulness and of rigid discipline was introduced into all branches of the Government service. It is scarcely too much to assert that "the superb qualities of honesty, economy, order, and devotion to duty that everywhere characterised the Prussian administration" owe their inception to him. Oftentimes harsh, even petty, in his relations with his fellow-men, the king did not spare himself.

On the contrary, he stood forth the "first servant of the State" incarnate. He took the royal domains under personal control, not, however, to minister to his own luxury, but as a trustee for the common weal. His care and caution are proven by the fact that, when he ascended the throne, their revenue amounted to 1,800,000 thalers; when he died, it had well-nigh doubled,—the figure had risen to 3,300,000 thalers. The wasteful municipal oligarchies were supplanted by an economical central administration. And, with regard to industry and commerce, Frederick William sought, by a policy of protection, "not to lighten the burdens of his subjects, but to increase their capacity for bearing burdens," to use his own phrase. In the same spirit he officered the army from his nobility for the double purpose of broadening patriotic devotion and of linking social classes in closer union. Thus, while the sovereigns of Bavaria, Saxony, and Würtemberg were living in a riot of wanton ease, when the Guelphs were making a sad mess of their attempt to understand England, the Prussian king was reorganising his State, and laying the foundations—moral and material—for the future unification of Germany.

Their notorious personal relations notwithstanding, Frederick William's policy descended to his son, who retained the same serious ideal of kingship. The conception of public duty that animated Frederick the Great on his accession found emphatic statement in his earliest pamphlet. Those be memorable words:

"The princes must be made to know that their false maxims are the fountainhead whence flow all the evils

that are the curse of Europe. Most princes are of the opinion that, solely from regard for their own greatness, happiness, and vanity, God has created these masses of men whose welfare has been entrusted to them, and that their subjects have no other purpose than to be the instruments of princely passions. Hence their desire of false glory, their wild ambition for usurping everything, the weight of the taxes with which they burden the people; hence their laziness, arrogance, injustice, and tyranny; hence all those vices with which they degrade human nature. If the princes would rid themselves of this fundamental error and seriously reflect upon the aim and purpose of their power, they would find that their rank and dignity, which they are so jealously guarding, are exclusively the gift of the people. That these thousands of men entrusted to them have by no means made themselves the slaves of a single individual in order to render him more formidable and powerful; that they have not submitted to one of their fellow-citizens in order to become a prey to his arbitrary caprices, but that they have elected from their midst the one whom they expected to be the most just and benevolent ruler, the most humane in relieving distress, the bravest in warding off enemies, the wisest in avoiding destructive wars, the most capable of maintaining the public authority.”¹

An *enlightened* despot this! But a *despot* nevertheless! Hence, too, many consequences of vast moment for our theme. A recent English historian of the period apologises as follows for his almost exclusive

¹ *Considerations sur l'état du corps politique de l'Europe*, Œuvres viii. pp. 35 f.

attention to what may be termed the external, or politico-military, aspect of his subject:

"In deliberately choosing the military aspect of German affairs as the feature on which to lay most emphasis, I am aware that I have hardly touched upon the intellectual and literary life of the period. However, I have omitted this side advisedly, feeling convinced that in the main it was a thing apart, which affected the life of the country as a whole but little, and certainly had hardly any effect upon the politics of Germany. The 'Potsdam Grenadiers' are more typical of eighteenth-century Germany than are Goethe and his fellows. It was only quite at the end of the period, in the days of the War of Liberation, that German literature can be really called 'German,' that it ceased to be merely cosmopolitan and became national."¹

The soundness of Mr. Atkinson's case is open to little question.

It is true, doubtless, that the services of Frederick the Great to his country cannot all bear the fierce light of moral scrutiny—the Silesian aggression, for instance. Yet, in one respect in any case, he conferred perennial benefits, not upon Prussia simply, but upon Europe at large. His decree of complete religious and intellectual toleration cannot but be pronounced epoch making. "In this country everybody can secure his salvation in his own fashion." The king secularised his realm. Accordingly, with no liking for Roman Catholicism, note his reply to Count Schaffgotsch. The Count, one of the landed magnates, had reverted to Roman Catholicism in order to acquire

¹ C. T. Atkinson, *A History of Germany, 1715–1815*, Preface, p. vi.

the estate of Schlackenwerth. After he had explained, and apologised to his sovereign, the king replied: "I have taken cognisance of your lordship's action, to which I have no objection. Many roads lead to heaven; your lordship has struck out on the road by Schlackenwerth. *Bon voyage!*" As has been said, this toleration, amounting to flat cynicism in some eyes, was really epoch making. And its epoch-making character flowed in no small measure from the very ubiquitousness of the king's autocracy.

The period from the Peace of Utrecht (1713) till the battle of Jena (1806) forms a distinct epoch in the history of the German people, and overlaps Kant's life (1724-1804) but slightly at both ends. If we view it from one angle, nothing could well be more disconcerting than Mr. Atkinson's statement about the Potsdam Grenadiers. Hastily, and without a thought, we enter vehement protest, exclaiming, What of Klopstock, Lessing, Wieland, Kant, and the rest? Do they count for naught? In a word, the intellectual and literary achievements of the age, so conspicuous and potent, cast all else in shade for us. Yet we must pause to consider a second outlook, say, that occupied by Frederick the Great in his *De la Littérature Allemande* (1780), where Klopstock, Lessing, and Wieland fail even of bare mention. Appreciated with due sympathy, this standpoint suffices to indicate that political, military, and administrative affairs filled the foreground, at all events for the 'great world.' Curious although it may be, external institutions seem to sit loose to the internal, or spiritual, development of the people. Curious, we repeat. For, while real life abounds in surprises stranger than fiction, the paradox

of a separation between body and soul were too impossible. The truth is, there was no 'people,' or, rather, the *ethos* necessary to inspire a people found its vehicle, not in a homogeneous spirit, but in a series of groups, the manifestations differing from one to another. Thus, the cultural tradition of the governing classes, of the sovereign particularly, took a direction of its own, that of the representatives of the German *Volk* (if *Volk* there were) flowed otherwise. Frederick the Great occupied a supposititious *stratum* in the *upper* air whither no current blowing from the Germany of the day ever penetrated. Gellert he knew—the rest was silence. And his enforced pre-occupation with the 'corn and oil' after early middle age confirmed him in complete satisfaction with the circle familiar from his youth, when Voltaire illuminated the brilliant French day, and Gottsched loomed the lesser luminary of the doubtful German twilight. "From my youth up," as Frederick declared to the Leipzig dictator just before the significant victory of Rossbach (1757), "I have not read a German book, and I speak the language like a carter; but now I am an old fellow of forty-six, and have no longer time for such things." Incredible as it may appear, Frederick knew German much as George I. knew English. Now, as we are aware, thanks partly to his favourable residence at the principal literary centre, Gottsched had risen to be dean among those who supported the doctrines of Wolff (1679-1754) which moulded the education of the king. His *Weltweisheit* (1734) provided a popular, and available, manual of the "philosophy for the world." And although, like Kant, Frederick felt the pulsation of English ideas,—especially those of Newton,

Locke, and Shaftesbury in their Voltairean dilution,—this only served to confirm his devotion to the general spirit and standards of Enlightenment (*Aufklärung*), an imported article for the most part.

Yet, even so, another half of the tale remains to tell. On the one hand, the monarch was no tragic figure, prompted by aspirations that he could not realise. His native strength stands in impressive contrast to Gottsched's native debility. On the other hand, and for obvious reasons, circumstances never compelled him to sink to the level of the servilities that formed the portion of the literary man in these days. Gottsched's dedication of his *Versuch einer critischen Dichtkunst vor die Deutschen*, inscribed to certain vapid courtiers of that unspeakable, Augustus the Strong, of Saxony, throws a vivid light upon the difficulties which new German ideas were doomed to encounter. Moreover, the kingly wits never became so obfuscated as those of the critical academician. Pseudo-classical in his sympathies Frederick may have been, he was incapable of such fustian as the following:

"Concerning the weight and dignity of poetical speech, it consists in tropes and figures, by which we make a certain word assume a different meaning from its real one. To dwell here on the division, qualities, and accessories of these figures, I deem unnecessary, because in this respect we can learn everything from the example of the Latin writers. Only this I will say, that it is of the highest importance that we should try to borrow from them and the Greeks the use of epithets, in which we Germans have been extremely lacking thus far. For they give to poetical pieces such a splendour that Stesichorus has been considered the

most graceful of poets, because he knew how to utilise epithets most appropriately. In poems of a low order common and insignificant people are introduced, as in comedies and bucolics. But in the higher order of poetry, where the interest turns on gods, heroes, kings, princes, cities, and the like, one must bring in high-sounding, forcible, and spirited language, and call a thing not only by its name, but paraphrase it with specious and magnificent words."

Gottsched implies plainly that poetry is a means of ingratiating one's self with the 'quality'; it is a decorative detail of the court. Frederick's way of escape from such piffle lay through the practical facts forced upon him by his official position. To alter the figure, we may say that they furnished *real* grist to his mill. Even if he wrote in French, he must be accounted one of the chief German authors of his time. But his contribution, appropriately enough, ran to political affairs, not to vital questions of pure literature. His stern individuality found congenial outlet along these lines, an expression, however, that lay quite apart from problems of intellectual import primarily. Accordingly, his activity as a writer did little or nothing to ally him with the main tendencies of German thought, then in their first blush.

Frederick's entire contact with culture conspired to erect a middle wall of partition between him and German aspiration of the type voiced first by Klopstock. In addition, his administrative policy operated similarly. It tended to enmesh men in the relentless machinery of bureaucracy, where all was prescribed, and initiative languished. Further, those who escaped this grip were thrown back upon them-

selves—their citizenship bore no opportunity. Hence the wonderful bloom of individual achievement to which, at first sight, the temper of the age seems thoroughly alien. Lessing's case furnishes the classical example, of course. The critic and the king possessed much in common. Striking traits of temperament marked both. The one created a national German *Kultur*, the other a national German State. Both shared kindred views about toleration, and both expressed their favourite opinions with the same direct crispness. Both pursued their enemies with a like relentless vigour, and both were filled with a sense as of a mission. Yet Frederick would have none of Lessing, and was even content to judge, nay, to dismiss, him on hearsay. The fact is that in matters intellectual the monarch's purview included the 'upper classes' alone—those to whose havens Gottsched sought to waft himself on the painted wings of the muse. Lessing, on the contrary, whether he knew it or not, served himself the mouthpiece of the coming nation. The spirit that could long, as Kleist sang, for "*Der edle Tod fürs Vaterland*," was already touched to vaster issues by Lessing. So, just as he fled to Hamburg and Wolfenbüttel, there to inaugurate a new dispensation, far from the smiles of royalty and its appanages, other leaders of nascent German thought went their several ways, and fought their battles single-handed, often unnoticed. The new literature and the new ideas, although stimulated mightily by the spectacle of Frederick's titanic struggles against Europe in arms, flourished by themselves in a sphere secluded from these deeds of derring-do.

Thus, as the apt phrase runs, Germany gained "the

empire of the air." The continents were to France, the oceans to Britain, but the free flight of poetic imagination and philosophical speculation passed to the Teuton. A remarkable efflorescence ensued, recalling the outburst in old Greece. Liberty throbbed everywhere in seminal persons and ideas. Still, years were to elapse ere the novel thought could be translated into terms of a *common* life. Beauty, and Truth, and Goodness appeared in the guise of strangers from a far country, as it were. Yet, appear they did—to breathe eventually upon the dry bones of Frederick's contrivance. It had been the king's task to keep the ring, so that this development could emerge without let or hindrance. A benevolent absolutism having unshackled the folk from anti-rationalistic restraints of ecclesiastical feudalism, some few felt emboldened to speak out. Nevertheless, the people as such possessed no self-conscious soul, with the result that genius assumed a cosmopolitan tone. But, as the collectivism inherited from the Middle Ages went to pieces, free spirits presaged the principles destined to sway the nineteenth century. Frederick guaranteed the indispensable condition for constructive intellectual expansion; he had no knowledge of the matters maturing beside him. Klopstock's idealism, Wieland's universalism, Lessing's notion of human emancipation as a pedagogical process, Kant's critical regress, were sealed books to him. Self-control and self-sacrifice in and for the State he appreciated fully; but these same forces wielded for the sake of conquest in fresh realms of literature, art, philosophy, and religion, he could not recognise, even if his civil rule had been necessary to their very existence. Little as he sensed

the profound issues, Frederick showed insight of another kind when he said to Mirabeau: "By allowing the intellectual life of Germany to take its course, I have done more for the Germans than I could possibly have done by giving them a literature." The rôle of Augustus sufficed him, to play Mæcenâs lay beyond his plan. He fenced the domain to be tilled by Klopstock, Wieland, Lessing, and Kant; to be watered by Rousseau for the extraordinary crop that dates from the era of *Sturm und Drang*; but, preoccupied with his absorbing task, he had no eye for consequences, even if he did predict a near golden age of German literature.

To sum up. As concerns the larger environment, and on its external side mainly, Kant fell under three influences that operated powerfully in moulding his opportunities. (1) He was born in an isolated region of a country broken and impoverished by the fortunes of history. Of meagre natural resources, this province had been, and was still to be, stricken by war, plague, and pestilence, so that human character lay under compulsion to manifest its most strenuous qualities in the hard fight against circumstance. Its innate strength and riches were challenged to counterbalance the niggardliness of nature, the havoc of human enmity, and the scourge of disease. It was a situation calculated to evoke tenacity, thrift, and sober forethought. All this can be traced in Kant's uneventful, almost drab, career. (2) By the time they had reached the threshold of manhood, Frederick the Great brought to Kant and his compatriots that most priceless gift for the original thinker—complete freedom to be true to self, to speak forthright as the promptings of

insight might dictate, fearing nothing. When old age overtook him, in the next reign, Kant was to realise this inestimable boon by contrast. But, even so, the enlightened autocrat represented a system, as it may be termed, whose hey-day had gone. Kant's early associations and discipline lay within this same 'climate of opinion.' Accordingly, here, too, the conditions of a bitter struggle to larger opportunity had been assembled. History found her epitome of this reversal in the long, tortuous lifework of the philosopher. Such were the difficulties that, while he indeed climbed atop Pisgah, he was permitted only to see the Promised Land athwart the horizon of a luminous haze. He never entered it in person, so as to absorb its very genius. His it was to lead others to the frontier, and to predict what they might anticipate within. (3) Other liberators were afoot also, in revolt against the pseudo-classicism of the later Renaissance; and the year 1781, when Kant achieved perpetual reputation with the *Critique of Pure Reason*, witnessed the end of a period—in the death of Lessing. With respect to this "Liberation War of humanity," Kant stood between Lessing and the *Geniezeit* that was to ripen into the *Vernunftstaat* of the great post-Kantian idealists.

This third factor belongs, however, to the internal environment. We must turn our steps thither for a little.

CHAPTER II

THE LARGER ENVIRONMENT (*continued*)

THE INTELLECTUAL PERSPECTIVE—ECLECTICISM—CROSS-CURRENTS OF RATIONALISM, EMPIRICISM, AND SENTIMENTALISM

ON a broad view, details being left aside, human nature may be said to manifest its capacities in two ways. On one side, it escapes in practical activities such as conduct, art, and religion; on the other, it constructs those chains of ideas that take shape in systems—science, scholarship, philosophy. Consequently, these manifestations may be approached in a spirit swayed either by the practical or the theoretical interest. But, no matter what the preponderance of either, the other claims its due eventually. For instance, Luther, although prompted by the mysticism that enlivens practical religion, also felt the pressure of the humanism wherein the intellectual movement of his day found expression. His person revolutionised Christianity, because it became the focus of both the main processes of human experience as they were at that time. For his mission as *the* reformer must not be permitted to obscure his philological services. He breathed fresh life into the German language. So, too, Kant revolutionised thought. Unlike Luther,

his genius concentrated upon intellectual problems. Nevertheless, he could not evade the practical difficulties inseparable from the ethico-religious consciousness. Accordingly, empiricism, the last word of Renaissance thought, mingled in his person with idealism, the first word of later ethical aspiration. His effort to equate the divergent demands of each eventuated in the central problem of modern philosophy. The starry heavens above could not obliterate the moral law within. Needless to say, an internal process of subtle complexity lies concealed here, and we must attempt to track it as best we can, in outline at least. Even with this limitation, we shall be led far afield.

Those who have not followed Kant's career closely may be astonished to learn that, of fifteen publications bearing his name, issued during the years 1747-61 (the period of early manhood, from twenty-three to thirty-seven), all save two, and these the least important, deal mainly, though not exclusively, with physical science. Thereby hangs a tale. Curiously enough, also, it is a tale subordinated on occasion even by Kantian students who, in their natural anxiety to concentrate upon the philosophical contribution of the master, tend to hasten over the day of smaller things, or to rest satisfied with an account of the distinctively speculative tendencies betrayed then. Nevertheless, the direction thus taken happens to be of great importance, for, during this stage, Kant shared, or at least came into intimate contact with, ideas that exercised profound influence over the eighteenth century. The roots of his epoch-making position strike here. Fontenelle's *Eloges* (begun in 1700), Voltaire's *Eléments de la philosophie de Newton*

(1738), La Mettrie's *Histoire naturelle de l'Ame* (1745) and *l'Homme Machine* (1748), Buffon's *Théorie de la Terre* (1749), d'Alembert's and Diderot's *Encyclopédie* (begun in 1751), and d'Holbach's *Système de la Nature* (1770), to note the French line only, represent a mode of thought so prevalent and noisy that the eighteenth century is often identified with it, and called the Age of Enlightenment (*Eclaircissement*). While men—the so-called freethinkers or self-styled rationalists, for example—are not delivered yet from some of its banalities, there can be little doubt that, when laid bare, its fundamental principles repel our contemporary culture. Accordingly, sympathy with them implies effort, so different is our epoch from the one they ruled. Intervening Romanticism, Hegelianism, historical and comparative research, biological science and, notably, Kant himself in his philosophical revolution, have wrought a wondrous change. A transformed universe salutes the mind's eye now. We may well ask therefore, What was the older world like—the world whose judgments were broken into by Kant, and touched by his criticism to such magical consequence? In other words, our first question is, How was Kant's atmosphere affected by Cartesian rationalism and Newtonian empiricism especially?

Although far less symptomatic to-day than thirty or forty years ago, a striking trait of recent culture is traceable still to the antagonistic or divergent interests of science and philosophy respectively. On the whole, the dominant school of speculation, especially in Britain, and the chief representatives of experimental research have treated each other with contumely or, at best, kept an armed peace. This

contrast played a lesser part in the thought of pre-Kantian Europe, and the reason is not far to seek. From the Renaissance till the French Revolution science (empiricism) and philosophy (rationalism) operated within a definite, if somewhat narrow, field. Further, they arrived at conclusions that appeared to dovetail easily. Despite absorbing controversies, as about *actio in distans*, and about innate ideas, no irremediable cleavage asserted itself, because both disciplines accepted the same theory of the universe. Thus the questions most provocative of hopeless conflict did not arise. Science included simply the mathematico-physical group, more specifically—mathematics, in the sense of formulæ of measurable quantities; astronomy, dealing with the observed relations of the planetary bodies; and physics, not in the modern acceptation, however, but restricted on the whole to the mechanics of the solar system. The eighteen bodies constitutive of man's immediate universe, as discovery then went, prescribed at once the modes and the inquiries of thought, the methods and the tasks of science. Organisms and electrons, with their upsetting suggestions, attracted little attention, their possible import as viewed to-day was unsuspected. The physical realm seemed a collection of relatively large and self-centred parts; the business on hand was to express mathematically the mechanical relations subsisting between these parts. Needless to recall, the genius of Kepler and Newton furnished a generalisation of the paramount problem unparalleled since for accuracy and range. These admirable qualities helped to diffuse and enforce the conclusion that the theory of things implicit in mathematico-physical

science must be correct, nay, that a competitor could hardly arise.

Similarly, philosophy meant, in continental Europe, the metaphysics of dualism. That is to say, speculation set out with a rounded or limited whole called 'extension' (matter), and with a second complete 'thing' termed 'thought,' possessing no qualities in common with the extended 'thing.' These two were conceived somewhat in the same way as the heavenly bodies, the *data* of the 'natural philosopher.' They excluded one another, and each ruled its own province in its own fashion. Being irreducible, they took rank as ultimates. The universe was *two*. So, obviously enough, the central problem came to be, How can the two be linked to form a consistent whole? How devise a *system* from such mutually exclusive parts? How connect 'matter' and 'mind'? In Britain, although psychology rather than metaphysics controlled the approach, a like situation obtained. Knowledge and the contents of knowledge were held to differ. Accordingly, the basal question was, How do I get my knowledge and, when I have acquired it, what is its scope and value? As with the continental philosophers, so here, the problem assumed that knowledge comes somewhere and proceeds somewhither. Consequently, the metaphysic implicit in science reposed upon the same presupposition as that entertained by speculation proper. For both, the universe appeared static or in equilibrium; massive, or capable of treatment in gross; composed of prominent parts (a planet, a faculty of the mind, a mode of substance); above all, it seemed to be mechanical in the strict sense of the term mechanism, that is, it consisted of pieces fitted externally so as to form a

whole, by a power or powers introduced into the system from without.

In these circumstances, science and philosophy had no cause for dire quarrel. Both dealt with *self-centred* bodies, or states, in equilibrium or at rest; with *self-centred* aggregations of matter, or of mind, given capable of analysis; with the relations between *self-centred* unities—in fine, with external conjunction, never with internal self-manifestation. Therefore, the connection between any two, or indeed between any number, could not result from organic constitution, but must proceed from a cause foreign to the terms of the relation. From the scientific side, Newton put himself on decided record regarding this very point. In a letter to his Cambridge colleague Bentley, written about the New Year of 1693, he said:

“It is inconceivable that inanimate brute matter should, without the mediation of something else, which is not material, operate upon and affect other matter without mutual contact, as it must be, if gravitation, in the sense of Epicurus, be essential and inherent in it. And this is one reason why I desired you would not ascribe innate gravity to me. That gravity should be innate, inherent and essential to matter, or that one body may act upon another at a distance through a *vacuum*, without the mediation of anything else, by and through which their action and force may be conveyed from one to the other, is to me so great an absurdity that I believe no man, who has in matters philosophical a competent faculty of thinking, can ever fall into it. *Gravity must be caused by an agent acting constantly according to certain laws;*¹ but

¹ The italics are mine.

whether this agent be material or immaterial, I have left to the consideration of my readers."

On the philosophical side, the teaching of Descartes led to the same conclusion in all essentials. Freed from its formalism in the original, the argument has been stated with characteristic perspicacity by Kuno Fischer.

"The fundamental aim of the Cartesian philosophy . . . is to free physics from all anthropomorphism, and to apprehend the nature of objects after the subtraction of the mental nature of man. . . . When the veil, which is woven, as it were, out of our mental nature, falls off nothing else can be revealed than the body in its nakedness, in its nature opposed to, and deprived of, mind; and this is merely extension. As the self-conscious, mind is likewise the self-active inner nature; all self-action is of a spiritual nature. Completely opposed to this is the inert state of being which is acted upon merely from without; *i.e.* extended being or matter. Extension is, therefore, the attribute of body; the opposition between mind and body is equivalent to the opposition between thinking and extended substance. . . . In our certainty of God our certainty of self has its roots. The idea of God is not merely one among others, but it is the only one of its kind, because it is the source of all light. . . . But as the *primariness* of the idea of God, its independence of our thought and existence, its *causality* in reference to our knowledge of self, is evident, the reality of God is therefore clear of itself. It is proved that the idea of the perfect, primary as it is, is not merely an idea, but God. . . . And not only the fact that God is now appears beyond doubt (because the existence and idea

of God make true doubt possible), but also *what* he is. The idea which illuminates the state of our intellectual imperfection in the clearest manner, can be nothing else than intellectual perfection itself, with which no kind of defect is compatible. Therefore, this God is absolute truth. . . . Now doubt is cleared up. The knowledge of things is possible; my present actions are no phantoms; *things are as I conceive them*, when I consider them in that infallible light.”¹

For science, then, the universe consists of a number of bodies into which an “agent acting constantly according to certain laws” has introduced gravity and inertia; and its task is to describe the resultant relations between the bodies with the utmost accuracy possible. For philosophy, the universe consists of two mutually exclusive parts, extension and thought, rational knowledge of the former by the latter being guaranteed by God, who “can make all things which we clearly conceive in the manner in which we conceive them”;² and its problem is to ‘compose’ human experience from these factors.

The reason why this general view of the world, inherited by Kant, possesses such historical importance, can be stated summarily. It contemplated the necessity of a break in the physical system—nature could not be a *closed whole*, as modern theory insists. Further, it violated the central principle of nineteenth century philosophy (a principle due to Kant’s followers),—that human experience, if explicable in any real sense of this term, must itself supply the key. Thus it abounded in superfluous and irrelevant discussions

¹ *Descartes and his School* (Eng. trans.), pp. 357, 358, 359, 380, 381.

² *Descartes’ Method and Meditations* (Veitch’s trans.), p. 272.

(from the point of view now current), as Kant saw partially, because the prerequisites of knowledge had not been subjected to careful examination. For, to refer the unity of experience to a Being who, by hypothesis, cannot be brought within experience, is to miss the problem of philosophy completely. In other words, on such presuppositions thought must admit bankruptcy sooner or later. By Kant's time Wolff had dissipated the last resources, and Hume had foreclosed.

The truth is that this conception of the fundamental factors incident to the problems of knowledge and of nature, involves what is called the fallacy of spatial analogy. That is, whether argument turn upon man and the soul, or upon the universe and reality, or upon God and creative cause, it implies a subtle reference to inert matter, a reference that prevades the very terms of the statement. The soul, the universe, and God are treated as if they were objects in space, owning certain attributes; strip these off, and you arrive at an irreducible *substratum* necessary to support them—the ground wherein they inhere. This occult being underlies the qualities perceived by the senses and the events incidental to nature, for it is the permanent substance that binds all together, and renders them mental or physical facts. Behind ideas stands the substantial soul that operates with them; behind objects stands a crass somewhat whereon they depend; outside the universe abides the creator, separate and transcendent. Now, it makes not the slightest difference that thinkers bandy the comfortable and comforting words, 'soul,' 'reality,' and 'God'; for, on the basis of this rationalism, all three lie equally beyond man's ken, they are mythological entities.

Vociferate as he may, the investigator cannot escape this final conclusion, an inexorable logic drives him thither. Consequently, as the Enlightenment was to show, things seen are eternal, things unseen are exceeding problematical, possibly non-existent; and, anyway, they make no difference. In short, on this scheme, even the most orthodox must deal with spirit as if it were material or, at best, sensuous. Small wonder, then, that approved manuals, embodying this standpoint, abound in curious banalities concerning moral and speculative subjects. For example, gross anthropomorphism, extending even to minor details, marks the prevalent ideas about deity. God appears often as a strictly juridical personage provided, it would seem, with a commission to overturn the foundations of ethics by some supranatural hocus-pocus. And, why not? Things stand alongside one another, are in isolation, they cry for plan or system by injection. God *versus* the world, conventional saint *versus* conventional sinner, natural *versus* revealed theology, spirit *versus* matter, free will *versus* necessity—in a word, all the old, traditional oppositions serve to generate all the old, insoluble puzzles. Contradictions that turn out to be no contradictions multiply chimerical riddles. One is almost driven to recite the nursery rhyme:

“Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall,
All the king’s horses and all the king’s men
Could not put Humpty Dumpty together again.”

The sun with its attendant masses, the planets, circling round it in empty space, had hypnotised

thought, as it were. Thus circumstanced, Reason inferred soul, substance (matter), and God; ejected them into the same empty space; and then, with this equipment, deemed itself able to attempt, with complete success, an explanation of the entire unity. Inevitably then, the known, when fraught with difficulty, came to be *explained* by the *unknowable*!

Further, the superstition that all things co-exist as separate parts, and that what we know consists of attributes of a supposititious substance to which they belong, provided a natural division of labour, not only for science and philosophy, but also for theology. The point of view, that is, extended from the sensible and intelligible spheres to the supersensible. A glance at this aspect of the situation may serve to enforce from another side the conception which we are trying to grasp. If matter hold two properties (gravity and inertia), the difficult subject of its ultimate constitution need not excite immediate concern. For the properties present a fallow field so extensive and inviting that this more recondite discussion may well be retired. These, being attached to certain masses moving in empty space, the problem is to investigate the interrelations of the masses, and to describe their conjunct behaviour. But if, after their wont, the inquisitive ask, How did the properties get there? the ready reply is, They are caused by an "agent acting constantly according to certain laws." Now, this question divides the world-scheme for theology as well as for the 'concrete' sciences. So long as you confine yourself to treatment of the properties, your theology is 'natural.' But the moment you inquire, *How* did these contingencies break into the universe? you are

on the thorny ground of 'revelation.' Nevertheless, for both alternatives, the same fundamental theory of the cosmos holds good—the known is, not single, but dual or plural; an agent and a patient, or patients, enter necessarily into the calculation. Accordingly, just as secular learning divides itself into two separate portions, one dealing with the relations involved in the properties of matter (science), the other with the problem of guarantees in knowledge (philosophy), so in theology a parallel classification becomes unavoidable. 'Natural' theology discusses design, or the evidence, presented by nature through unaided human reason, for the existence of a world-designer; that is, it passes from consequent to antecedent, but without any help from revelation. On the contrary, 'Revealed' theology pivots upon miracle, or the direct interposition of the Divine Author among his designs—to accomplish purposes not contemplated in the original plan, or to inform man what the plan means. And the point to be enforced is just this: Whether the one study or the other be pursued, the same framework prescribes the limits or directions of investigation. For both, the universe is little more than a crass substance operated upon, from a distance, by some Being whose essence and ways are inscrutable, because known to us only in their physical or experiential consequences. This dualistic attitude determines everything. For God exists by himself somewhat off in the clouds, and the universe, scattered through space, speeds upon its course in isolation from him, abnormal interferences aside. The Deity may be an English architect, a Genevese clockmaker, a German optician; or, on a slightly higher level, a 'necessary being'—one existence among

the planetary spheres, invisible as compared with them, no doubt, but external to all, and therefore no more than another piece on the cosmic chess-board. In similar fashion, and as a logical accompaniment of this doctrine, the human soul may be defined as "a simple, incorporeal substance"—a substance quite irrational, so far as experience can throw light upon it, nevertheless, like Deity, taking its place among other substances. It may be viewed as an extra part of the universe, even if it cannot be demonstrated by inspection of the parts. On this basis, the books of the mind could be kept by double-entry, and so the central problem could be dismissed or, as the fact was, relegated to the background.

This, then, enables us to realise, from another side, the philosophical atmosphere into which Kant was born, and to understand why the conflict between science and philosophy, so familiar from the forties of the nineteenth century, did not disturb him—on the contrary, he could integrate the one discipline with the other. Accordingly, remembering that the solar system is the type of universe, recall that it is a *system*, because an "agent acting constantly according to certain laws" had rendered it such. This implies, moreover, that while a *description* of the universe may be possible, as in terms of mathematics, an *explanation* of it lies beyond reach. Explanation cannot fail to become fanciful as, indeed, the positive sciences still assert. Turning to the philosophical side, a striking parallelism attracts notice at once. Of course, we are no longer dealing with 'heavenly bodies,' but 'matter' and 'mind' are treated by the philosophers much as Newton handled his molar units.

In effect, Descartes asked, How is it that 'thought,' possessing none of the qualities of 'extension' (matter) and 'extension,' possessing none of the qualities of 'thought,' come to unite so as to *be*, what they evidently are—a single whole in man's experience, nay, in man's person? Generally, he supposed that ideas are copies of things, or that things *are* as we conceive them. But, even so, how do we know that the copies are correct or reasonably adequate? May not ideas lie? A solution can be reached by one means only. Some agent, neither 'thought' nor 'extension,' but *above* both, must vouch for the correspondence. Just as, in the physical world, one body cannot affect another save by the operation of a juridical power (whether material or immaterial is not a question for science, as Newton indicated), so 'thought' and 'extension' cannot be combined in the unity of our experience unless God have willed it so. The parallelism is precise. A 'third thing,' apart from each of the factors under review, plays the *rôle* of good fairy, and enables both ideas and things to be what they are for us. Despite its patent inadequacy, this answer enjoyed a long lease of favour. Even amid apparent transformations it preserved itself unchanged in essentials. The Deistic movement, Butler's *Analogy*, Pope's *Essay on Man*, Gallic materialism and sensationalism, Paley's *Natural Theology*, the highly wrought productions of the great French Newtonians, culminating in Laplace's *Mécanique Céleste*, the Scottish 'common-sense' protest against Humian scepticism, emerged from the basis of its first principles. Indeed, kindred assumptions dictate the naïve presuppositions of much so-called 'orthodox' thought to-day, and thus,

paradoxical as it may seem, render defenders of the faith unconscious parties to destructive conclusions, even the most abhorrent. A masterful Scottish theologian has put their case thus, with almost brutal frankness:

“At no point is it permissible to call in the idea of an exceptional exertion of divine power, whether immanent or transcendent, supplementary to that which is eternally operative. It may be long before the theological mind becomes familiarised with this scientific, anti-supernaturalistic conception of the divine relation to the universe. But until this conception is embraced, theology will remain, as it now is, in a deadlock, with no possibility of advance in any direction whatever.”¹

Towards the end of the seventeenth century, and during the progress of the eighteenth, these views ceased gradually to be the exclusive affair of the professional thinker, and became current in cultivated society. In England, such books as King's *On the Origin of Evil* (1702), and Shaftesbury's *Characteristics* (1711), on the continent of Europe, Leibniz's *Théodicée* (1710), and Wolff's *Reasonable Thoughts* (a series of seven volumes, written in German, and therefore for *popular* use, between 1712 and 1725, of which the most influential was the latest—the third edition of the *Reasonable Thoughts about God, the World, and the Soul of Man*), rendered them quite familiar. No doubt, ere they filtered to this level, they had suffered dilution, had become, as Taine put it acutely, “limited truths, which are

¹ William Mackintosh, *The Natural History of the Christian Religion*, p. 35.

situated midway between the highest philosophical abstractions and the minor details, a class of truths with which oratorical art deals, and which form what we call commonplaces." In this connection, Addison let the cat out of the bag with refreshing simplicity:

"It was said of Socrates that he brought philosophy down from heaven, to inhabit among men. I shall be ambitious to have it said of me that I have brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and coffee-houses. I would therefore in a very particular manner recommend my speculations to all well-regulated families that set apart an hour every morning for tea and bread-and-butter."¹

Addison had many counterparts in the Germany of Kant's youth.

Philosophy thus entered upon its intimate alliance with the *belles lettres* of pseudo-classicism. The great problems that had vexed Descartes and Spinoza, Locke and Berkeley, Leibniz and Butler, came to be regarded from an otiose and utilitarian standpoint, and the resultant compost was enshrined, for the English world, in Pope's *Essay on Man*, a classical case of the 'forcible feeble' in speculation.

"Lo, the poor Indian! whose untutor'd mind
Sees God in clouds, or hears Him in the wind,"

and many similar passages, may be fine verse, but how jejune in thought! No doubt, Pope reproached the scholastics for their propensity towards spinning cobwebs and splitting hairs:

¹ *Spectator*, No. 10.

"Let subtle schoolmen teach these friends to fight,
More studious to divide than to unite."

But, what kind of unity did he propose to set in place of these discarded divisions? Merely one where an anæmic optimism could remain ensconced comfortably from troublesome problems, because it had relegated them to a sphere beyond this world.

"All nature is but art, unknown to thee ;
All chance, direction which thou canst not see ;
All discord, harmony not understood ;
All partial evil, universal good."

This recalls Mr. Pecksniff, who employed reckless generalisations, ingeniously expressed, "so boldly and in such an imposing manner that he would sometimes stagger the wisest people and make them gasp again." Brockes was well equipped to hypnotise Kant's countrymen in like fashion.

Why, from the point of view of contemporary thought, must we characterise these, and other efforts of their sort, as "flimsy and superficial trivialities"? If this question can be answered, then some glimmering of the vast contrast between Kant's world and ours may be gained. In the first place, Pope's typical platitudes are guiltless of the scientific knowledge regnant now, and so their complacency remains unruffled by the complexity of natural phenomena. Invariably, they seek support outside the problems involved rather than within the incidental terms. In the second place, the historical and comparative methods, most potent guides of recent inquiry, are conspicuous by their absence. How did things come to be as they are? What is the internal principle of

their connection? What does the universe suggest about the inwardness of its cosmic unity? What kind of atmosphere is Nature throwing round all her works? These, and similar questions, never dawn, because their dynamic implications never excite curiosity. Evident antinomies, convenient omissions, vague beliefs in that for which there is no evidence, and so forth, serve to dismiss or conceal the real difficulties. The antagonisms of experience are stayed by an easy reference to an abstract power of unification that flows in upon man's world from another sphere. The parts continue to lead their isolated existence, and are supposed to be explained by a dead, undifferentiated substance, itself no more than another part. Thus the problem is 'solved' by the substitution of a fresh one which, as is now apparent, clarifies on the principle of *lucus a non lucendo*—because it contains a surd, or factor incapable of rational expression, much more of being itself employed as the embodiment of satisfactory explanation. In short, current platitudes, the slushy small-talk of "well-regulated families that set apart an hour in every morning for tea and bread-and-butter," do duty for philosophy, and are supposed to pierce man's most solemn mysteries. The universe is such and such, because it may be regarded as useful to frequenters of "clubs and assemblies and coffee-houses," or productive of satisfaction to their "need, comfort, and delight." Withdrawn from the stern realities of life, folk are led "into my lady's chamber," where references to the stress and tortuousness of human experience become, not simply superfluous, but positively in bad taste, an offence against minor morals. Knowledge *ought* to

begin and end with the obvious, for, from the obvious its force derives, from application to the obvious, its utility.¹ The value of knowledge, that is, centres in its generality, in its superficial comprehensiveness.

“Philosophy that reached the heav’ns before
Shrinks to her hidden cause and is no more.”

Certainly, on these principles! Or in the delphic declaration of Leibniz:

“Out of numerous possibilities God has chosen that which He knew to be most suitable. But when He has once chosen, everything is comprehended in His choice, and nothing can be altered: for He has foreseen and arranged everything once for all.”

Here was the world-wisdom preached by Gottsched, and many others, the last word of the society that bore Kant. One might call its general spirit reflective Euphuism. “The Euphuists of the sixteenth century drew, for purposes of simile and illustration, on a fabulous natural history which assumed the existence of certain animals, herbs, and minerals, and of certain properties and qualities possessed by them. This gave great point and picturesqueness to their style, and though it was certainly misleading and occasionally perplexing to those who went to them for natural history, *it had a most charming and imposing effect.*”

It is interesting to note that Kant himself did not escape this practical or utilitarian trend. No doubt the result may be traced partly to the exigencies of his position as a poor, unsalaried *Docent*, dependent for a livelihood upon the popularity of his instruction. But, as undoubtedly, the spirit of the time affected

¹ Cf. Bolingbroke, *Works*, vol. viii. p. 156.

him. His lectures on *Physical Geography*, delivered first in 1757, and published by Rink in 1802, drew not only students of the university, but officers of the garrison, nobility and gentry from the neighbourhood, merchants and professional men of the city. They are attractive and stimulating—useful in the eighteenth-century sense, but they cannot be called science, particularly in the German acceptation of the term. They present on a creditable plane that current appeal to the ‘natural understanding’ of a mixed audience which, with the majority then, stood for the sum and substance of philosophy. Similar, but on a still higher level, and containing many suggestive bits of information and acute insights, were his lectures on anthropology, given as his popular course in the winter semester of 1775, and forming the last work published under his personal supervision—*Anthropology, Pragmatically Considered* (1798). As usual, they were devoted to *practical* consideration of the principles that men employ in their intercourse with one another, and on the practical aspect Kant himself laid no little stress.

Returning to the main theme. This sublimated common sense flourished in a perspective different from that which envelops serious thought to-day. In this it set, not its presuppositions alone, but the order and scope of its normative ideas. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the gradual domination of abstract mechanics, and thus of simple mathematical methods. Consequently, when men came to handle philosophical questions,—metaphysics, psychology, ethics, or rather, moral philosophy, theology, and politics,—they tended, and quite naturally, to avail themselves of mechanical modes in thinking. Starting

from given particulars, they went on to demonstrate co-operation between the parts of experience. Definition, with its inevitable isolation, pleased, even satisfied, them. Accordingly, an artificial system of classification emerged, and its outline plan was mistaken for *the* explanation of all things. Conventional distinctions ruled the mind whenever the subject of inquiry happened to be complex, as it must be in every discussion concerning human life. Consequently, the epoch produced typical synthetic ideas which, on account of this origin, are repugnant to, often contradictory of, those in vogue now.

“ I saw no use in the past : only a scene
Of degradation, ugliness and tears,
The record of disgraces best forgotten,
A sullen page in human chronicles
Fit to erase.”

If we remember this, our difficulty in realising all that the pre-Kantian period implied may be expressed in yet another way. Under the impulse of the biological theory of Evolution, and of the speculative idea of Development, we think of everything in terms of Energy or, better still, of Spirit. That is, each particular event displays its own proper nature in virtue of its relation to others, and to an immanent unity in all. Process supplies one ultimate reference, identity the other ; and either is meaningless apart from its fellow.

“ No detail but in place allotted it, was prime
And perfect.”

For the eighteenth century, the reverse held good. Rest, with its attendant conception of the individual,

totus, teres, atque rotundus in itself, furnished the fundamental notion whence the demonstration set forth. Kant's predecessors conceived of things as substantial. A real being, fixed and immutable, formed the hidden nucleus upon whose face played the qualities or attributes apparent in the course of experience. For us, on the contrary, an internal principle of unity is alleged to manifest itself everywhere. The effect of this idea is to cancel the old externalism. We see the individual *becoming* ceaselessly in its qualities. A man's character persists amid his acts, ideals, judgments; but it does not underlie, and merely limit these, for, only through them can it attain reality of its very own. In short, the character grows, arrives at self-recognition, *is*, only as these so-called phenomena are also. The two orders are one *pari passu*—one in the sense that they are co-ordinates, each inconceivable without its neighbour. Bare identity bestows no sure footing, for, change is the condition of its characteristic manifestation. Or, to be quite plain, change and identity are one, and all problems root in this their unity.

Evidently, then, the pre-Kantian epoch pinned its faith to a power of mind capable of arriving at definite surety in propositional form, provided a first, and true, proposition had been laid down as a valid base-line. Its motto was, Supply the substance (ideal or sensuous), and Reason will furnish the self-evident form of truth:

“An atom with some certain properties
Known about, thought of as occasion needs.”

Thought thus conformed to the type of mechanism, or of design as seen in relation to artificial products.

For us, on the contrary, organism affords the typical notion, and spiritual principles of self-manifestation constitute our ultimate truths. Thus, we are interested, not in the conventional form, but in the real being, or functional process, of things.

"It was possible, in former ages, for Faith to slumber in some closed chamber of the mind while the logical understanding seized on all present events as its exclusive property, and felt that its negative conclusion could not touch God. Now that we see every moment to be as full of Him as any moment ever was, we must trust Him infinitely more, or cease to trust Him at all. . . . He means the sum of things, and whatever that principle is which lies at their root—that principle which explains them as gravitation explains the movement of the planets, and is exhausted by such manifestation." ¹

Speaking in the spirit of the eighteenth century, beyond which his school never ventured far, George Henry Lewes exclaimed, "Whatever is inaccessible to the reason should be strictly interdicted to research." We admit no such covert agnosticism, because modern thought, whether we follow its triumphant, if unconscious, science, or its halting, and conscious philosophy, has taught that the universe is a cosmos, not a multiverse, precisely on the ground of its internal intelligibility. To compromise upon this point were to commit the sin that shall not be forgiven.

Therefore we must bear in mind that Kant had to deal with an alien age. We are forewarned that, although near in time, it evinces a strange, almost elusive, temper; so much so that we find more difficulty

¹ Julia Wedgwood, *The Moral Ideal* (1st ed.), p. 387.

in thinking ourselves back to it than in sympathising with the transitive conceptions of ancient Greece, or with the vague, but spacious dreams of Italian naturists, like Bruno. Not, however, that the period fell short in achievement. On this there must be no sort of misunderstanding. "It is too late now to abuse the eighteenth century." Some battles were won right valiantly then. The freedom we enjoy peacefully to-day was bought at a price: Hobbes and Locke, the Deists and Voltaire, Wolff (who was driven from his chair at Halle), and many others, their sacrificial sufferings unrecorded, paid the ransom. One who was set midmost this proud, strenuous epoch, has left a just record of the facts as he could, as we can not, see them. Wieland, with the insight that sometimes renders poets the better historians, set down these memorable words in his masterly essay "On the Place of Reason in Matters of Faith" (1788):

"If it is true that this eighteenth century of ours may boast of some considerable advantages over all previous centuries, it is also true that we owe them exclusively to the freedom of thought and expression, to the propagation of a scientific and philosophical spirit, and to the popularisation of those truths upon which the welfare of society depends. It may be that some eulogists of our age have made too much of these advantages. But if the blessings which we have derived from them are not greater, more extensive, and beneficial than they are—what is the cause of it, if it be not this: that the rights of reason still lack recognition in a good many countries of this hemisphere, and that even in those countries where there is the most light, they still find powerful and obstinate

resistance in the prejudices, the passions, and the private interests of ruling parties, classes, and orders. It cannot be too often repeated: nothing of what men have ever publicly said, or written, or done is exempted from the impartial and sober criticism of reason. No monarch is so great, no pontiff so sacred, that he might not commit follies which we should not be permitted to call what they are, namely, follies. It is true, children—as long as they are children—must be guided by authority. But it is in the nature of things that a child with every added year comes to be less of a child. It has in itself all that is needed to bring it to maturity, and to the perfection of its individual nature; and it is wrong for its superiors, from selfish motives, to hinder its development. If, then, what we call the people is a sort of collective child (a current conception which is not altogether without foundation), then it must be true of this child what is true of all children; it must be given every opportunity to develop into intelligent manhood. What need we fear from light? What can we hope from darkness? If diseased eyes are not able to bear the light, well we must try to heal them, and they will certainly learn how to bear the light.”

It was necessary to present this picture of smooth eclecticism, not to belittle the eighteenth century, but to show that original impulses had deserted European philosophy by the time Kant gained full mastery over himself. Inanition marked the epoch for its own. Nevertheless, it must not be supposed that we can dismiss the precursors of deistic ‘Enlightenment’ thus summarily. Kant’s larger environment, while fraught throughout his youth and middle age with ineffectual

compromises, or negations, represented the 'sere and yellow' of a most significant vitality. And although the placid confidence of the latter days affected him strongly, by repulsion, the quivering conflict fought by an older generation reproduced itself in him positively enough. While we shall return to this later, a word must be said here, if only to prevent misconception.

From the appearance of Descartes' first book (*Discourse on Method*, 1637) till the posthumous publication of Hume's *Dialogues concerning Natural Religion* (1779), Europe had witnessed the embattled giants of Rationalism and Empiricism. The foremost civilised countries played their several parts—France, Holland, England, Scotland, Ireland, Germany. The fundamental question at stake can be stated in simple terms. Is human experience traceable to the senses or to thought? Is knowledge obtained from the 'outer' world through the body, or is it produced by inherent activity of the mind? After a prolonged debate, raising the possible issues, and involving not a few irrelevancies introduced by the little men, it became more or less plain that both answers possessed merits which, nevertheless, only served to raise further difficulties. For example, if Rationalism be true, then the clearness of ideas provides a touchstone of their adequacy. But, then, the clearness must have reference to contents, and these, in some part at least, do not proceed from pure thought. In short, no matter how clear its vision of the suprasensuous may prove, thought must still reckon with the sensuous. The formal distinctness of an idea 'in the mind' by no means explains its matter. Grant the validity of the

rationalist position so far as it goes, you land yourself in a stalemate eventually. For, does not an idea draw upon the senses, if not immediately, then mediately at some past time? Similarly, adopt the contention of Empiricism, agree that conceptual knowledge originates in sensuous perception, and you deny the supersensible. Nay more, you shatter the basis of science, deep laid in general propositions. Sense conveys information about separate events in discontinuous succession, it fails to furnish those inclusive concepts, best known to us in noun-names, which formulate perceptions, much more to guarantee their interdependence in universal judgments implying, or co-ordinated in, trains of reasoning. Briefly, this recourse, once adopted frankly, cannot but lead to the scepticism of which Hume became the courageous, and unanswerable, exponent. Here, as in the former case, even admitting the aptness of the empirical contention, you pull up in a blind alley. Thus, half-truths reveal their inner nature; their consequences point their inadequacy. Now, these rival theories had been exploited thoroughly by several of the profoundest minds in history—by Descartes, Spinoza, and Leibniz, by Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, to name no others. And, although nobody had eyes to see, Spinoza's acosmism, or Hume's nihilism, gave the net result. The reality of man's universe, like the validity of his thinking, seemed incapable of justification.

Nor was this all. The seamless garment of experience had been rent. Three dimensions of life, all equally legitimate as components of a *human* being, countered each other; reconciliation lay without the 'bounds of practical politics' in thought. Nature,

speaking authoritatively through the flesh, would take no denial; and English sensationalism, despite its strain of common sense, passed easily into French materialism, rounded but crude logically. Reason, seated securely in general principles, especially in mathematical conceptions, could not be slurred; and Cartesian rationalism led inevitably to Spinoza's proposition, that "the order and connection of ideas is also the order and connection of things"; but both orders hung in mid-air, and must needs be referred to a third, which is neither. Nor could Religion be done away; it had its peculiar postulates, rooted in the 'heart,' as the Pre-established Harmony of Leibniz hinted, even if this recognition were itself a product of 'reason.' Nay, Wolff, himself a martyr for freedom of thought, identified Spinozism with atheism, thanks to the spark that disturbed the clod of his otiose system. No one of the three could be extruded by its neighbours, and each tended to claim primacy in the human realm,—was it not able to explain the others on its own resources? No thinker had arisen as yet to point out that this division itself is the work of abstract reflection. So the *impasse* grew irremediable, and speculation went by on the other side. The issues presented at this great assize affected Kant profoundly, and, the results being what they were, the die was cast for him. Perforce, he had to create a revolution, by rethinking the whole problem in his own way. Such were the main factors of the larger environment, such the positive action upon the trend of his intellectual history.

Once more, when Kant was thirty-seven, the *New Heloïsa* appeared, followed by *Emile* one year later

(1762). Paradoxical though it may seem, when we recall Rousseau, the man, he exerted no little moral influence even over one so rigidly upright as Kant.

"This vagrant, this sluggard, this self-taught man who, after thirty years of idle musings, dropped one day into the midst of the brilliant Paris of the eighteenth century, where he seemed to be a veritable savage, but a real savage, very much more interesting than the one Voltaire painted; who began to publish towards his fortieth year; who, in the space of ten years, in the midst of almost incessant physical suffering, wrote three or four books—which are not particularly strong nor rare in thought, but show a new way of thinking and a sort of vibration unknown till then; who then sank into a slow kind of madness—and who, by these three or four books, caused, after his death, literature and history to be transformed, and the life of a people, to whom he did not belong, to deviate: what a prodigious feat to accomplish!"¹

Whatever may be said, and said justly, in derogation of Rousseau's external career, it remains true also that he kindled a new warmth for virtue in eighteenth-century Europe. Much heat with little light, some one will allege. But the *Héloïsa* and *Emile*, despite their equivocal features, do teach self-control and the primacy of will. Not that Kant stood in need of these reminders. Yet, the dominant movement of his age had been prone to enthrone abstract Reason in human affairs, while, on the other hand, sentiment and emotion, with their keen thrust into individual character, had fallen from fashion. Rousseau redressed

¹ Jules Lemaitre, *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, pp. 2, 3.

the balance and, if no more, enabled Kant to realise the differences between intellectualism and morality, between reflection and faith, just as Hume revealed the divergence of sense from thought. In both cases, Kant saw the opposition driven to breaking-point. For Rousseau was an obscurantist, Hume a sceptic; each despaired of knowledge after his kind. Thus, on all sides, the course of culture had been calculated to confront Kant with the philosophical problem in its acutest terms, and his epoch, content with more or less shallow makeshifts, offered no way out. His forty years of travail evidence from first to last deep traces left by the pressure of this larger environment. Narrow circumstances steeled his character, so that he developed the virtues of plain living. Contemporary evasions long filled him with dissatisfaction, so that he came to appreciate the opportunities of high thinking. The interminable debate between Rationalism and Empiricism set the form of his chief problem. The outbreak of Rousseau enlarged his field of vision, and taught him that no account of human experience could be completely whole unless it reckoned with morals and religion as well as with knowledge. His revolution resulted in evolution because, required to build from the bottom up, he found it necessary to provide for all material facts, and to forgo the seductive pleasures of systematic symmetry.

CHAPTER III

THE NEARER ENVIRONMENT

PARENTAGE—HOME AND SCHOOL—PIETISM

WE often contrive to isolate persons of distinction, by emphasising their exceptional qualities, forgetful that they are men of like passions with ourselves. Thanks to scanty records for the years ere he became a personage, Kant has suffered not a little in this way. It were well to insist, therefore, that, despite petty tales to the contrary,¹ he was a human being, not a soulless thinking machine—a human being whose origins, education, social relations, civil circumstances, and personal predilections cast some light upon the devious ways taken by his thought. No doubt, it is true, as the conventional record runs, that he was born in the remote city of Königsberg, the son of a poor artisan; that he received his education and absorbed his culture in his native city, beyond whose limits he never travelled farther than sixty miles; that he earned his daily bread, first, as a resident tutor, then as an academic teacher, on miserable pay till he reached middle age; that he attained universal fame among

¹ Cf. *e.g.*, Theodore F. Wright, in *The New Church Review* (Boston, U.S.A.), Jan. 1901: A Swedenborgian 'estimate.'

his countrymen; that he died in his birthplace, full of years and crowned with honour, but broken by physical and mental infirmity, a wreck of his once self. But all this

“is as common

As any the most vulgar thing to sense.”

Mere living implies little about a life; knowledge of the processes alone satisfies, especially in the case of one who served himself a mighty transitive force. These subtle ways may be few or many, they may be inaccessible or plain, their factors may be simple or elusive. In any event, they clamour insistently for attention, and it were foolish to ignore them, even should the inquiry prove bootless comparatively.

Immanuel Kant, then, was born on the 22nd April 1724, at Königsberg, the capital of East Prussia. Fortune had no smiles for his folk. His parents belonged to the hard-pressed artisan class, and for many years he suffered handicap in life's race thanks to the penury of his lot. His father was a strap-maker or leather-cutter, who, as the son tells us, never escaped poverty till death overtook him. As happens sometimes, Johann Georg Kant or Kandt (*d.* 1746), and his wife, Anna Regina (or Regina Dorothea) Reuter (*d.* 1737), who were married in November 1715, had many demands upon their limited means in the shape of children. No less than eleven seem to have been born to them. Immanuel was the fourth child and the third son; two brothers and four sisters died young, while three sisters and one brother, the philosopher's junior, reached maturity. The whole family predeceased him, except a younger sister, who tended

him in his last sad days, from October 1803 till his death. These inroads of death point either to a weak stock, or to unfavourable conditions of livelihood; we know that Kant himself was never robust physically, and attained old age only by observation of the strictest regularity. From sixty-five he begins to regard himself as a valetudinarian. Likely enough, too, exiguous nourishment, with bad hygienic surroundings, told their tale in his youthful years, and left their mark afterwards.

Turn for a moment to the mooted question of Kant's descent. He himself held the decided opinion that his paternal grandfather was one of the numerous Scots who crowded into the regions of north-eastern and east-central (Polish) Europe from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries. Like so many family traditions of the kind, this one cannot be verified in detail. The documentary evidence presents serious gaps. The main facts now recoverable are as follows:

"In the draft of an answer to a letter from the Swedish Bishop Lindblom, in which the Swedish descent of Kant's father had been stated, the philosopher says: 'It is very well known to me that my grandfather, who was a citizen of the Prusso-Lithuanian town of Tilsit, came originally from Scotland.'" ¹

It can be shown that, in old age (he was seventy-three), Kant here stated a conviction, and had not been at pains to sift its basis thoroughly. Johann Georg Kandt (b. 1683), the philosopher's father, was the second son of Hans Kandt, of Memel; the other brothers, Kant's uncles, were born in 1678 (Adam),

¹ Th. A. Fischer, *The Scots in Germany*, p. 231. Cf. Borowski, *Darstellung des Lebens und Charakters Immanuel Kant's*, p. 21.

and 1685 (Friedrich). Hans Kandt, like his son Johann Georg, plied the trade of a leather-cutter, and, as there was no guild of this craft in Memel, he was compelled to obtain the certificate of conclusion of due apprenticeship from the guild at Tilsit. Thus Kant's reference to this town is quite explicable. For the rest, we must be content with conjecture more or less. We happen to know of Hans Kandt's father, the philosopher's great-grandfather, Richard Kandt, who kept an inn at Werrden, near Heidekrug, a village to the north of Tilsit. Whether Richard was a Scot does not transpire with certainty. We hear of him in connection with a deed, executed on 4th June 1670, whereby, for certain considerations, Hans Kandt resigns to Hans Karr (Kerr), husband of his sister Sophia, all interest in the paternal home and trade at Werrden. This deed tells nothing of nationality. It is significant, however, that the brother-in-law bears a Scots name; that in the event of breach of contract, the fine is to be paid to the church at Werrden, or to the *Presbyterian* (Reformed) Church at Memel; and that two of the four witnesses are Scotsmen—William Murray and Thomas Scrymgeour. It is plain, therefore, that the philosopher's grandfather, Hans Kandt, did not come from Scotland. On the other hand, Richard Kandt (*scotticé* Cant) may have emigrated, and the connection of the family with the Presbyterian Church at Memel, where they lived, like the presence of the Scottish witnesses, are of moment as to the probability of his Scottish birth. He was an old man in 1667, and so may have been in Prussia or Poland for a long time. A Balzer Kant, "a very aged Scotsman," as the register runs, was in receipt

of poor relief at Tilsit in 1682, and about the same time there was a soldier, by name David Cant, in Lyck, on the Russian frontier of East Prussia. Whether they bore any relationship to the philosopher's family is unknown, although the former has been mistaken often for Immanuel's grandfather. Mr. Th. A. Fischer, the leading authority upon the Scottish influx into Poland and Germany, entertains no doubt on the subject. Writing of Königsberg, he says, "It is the native place of the great philosopher Kant, whose grandfather was of humble Scottish origin";¹ and again, "We must not forget the grandfather of the great philosopher Emanuel Kant who was born of Scottish parents."² Thus, the possibility is that we must remove Kant's Scottish descent back one generation, and come to the conclusion that his great-grandfather may have been one of the numerous Scottish emigrants. I do not attach great significance to the question, because the immigrant Scots were absorbed easily into the native population, often, it would appear, by intermarriage—with a keen eye to 'the main chance'! But it is interesting, and the facts, so far as ascertainable, deserve to be made clear. Mr. Fischer has shown that many thousand Scotsmen were abroad in these lands; he has also discovered that, while they eschewed some trades, they kept faith with their old proverb, "there's nothing like leather," and worked extensively in this commodity. Moreover, they left their mark, as a recent investigator notes.

"A very characteristic element of the population of German towns in Eastern and Western Prussia is

¹ *The Scots in Eastern and Western Prussia*, p. xii.

² *The Scots in Germany*, p. 231.

formed by descendants of former Scotsmen. Being exposed to many dangers and persecutions as pedlars, they gradually settled in the towns and married daughters of the citizens. The increase in strength and industrial capacity which this Scottish admixture instilled into the German was of the very highest importance, and it can scarcely be doubted that the peculiar compound of stubbornness and shrewdness which characterises the inhabitants of the small towns of Eastern Prussia has its root in the natural disposition of the Scot."¹

As is abundantly manifest, Kant enjoyed these qualities in generous measure.

Though born, like Burns thirty-five years later, "a very poor man's son,"² Kant shared one advantage with the Scottish bard. His parents were Pietists, and, from childhood through youth, he felt the profound educative influence exercised by a practical religion based on familiarity with the Bible. Like its later development, the Moravian Brotherhood, Pietism is a parallel phenomenon in Lutheranism to

¹ F. Schmidt, *Geschichte des Deutsch Kroner Kreises*, p. 145. The immense mass of facts assembled by Mr. Fischer in the two volumes cited seems to me to render it as probable as possible in the absence of complete documentary evidence (very rare in Kant's social rank), that the philosopher's own statement possesses substantial basis. Paulsen's summary dismissal of the point (cf. *Immanuel Kant, his Life and Doctrine*, pp. 26, 27, note) cannot be justified in any case. Moreover, the mixed character of the East Prussian population must be remembered. East Prussia might pride herself upon Copernicus, Lessing, Herder, and Hamann. But Copernicus' parents were Poles or Hungarians, Lessing was a Saxon, Herder a Slav by descent, while Hamann also had a distinct Slavic infusion. We have records of at least half a dozen Scotch Cants (or Kants) in Dantzig.

² Robert Burns, *Autobiographical Letter to Dr. Moore*, 1787.

the Methodist revival in the Anglican Church, and to the Evangelical revival in the Scottish Church. In a general way, it might be termed the German analogue of British Puritanism; yet with an essential difference. The Puritan held a militant faith; he had enrolled as a soldier of the Cross. The Pietist, on the other hand, satisfied his passion for the things of the spirit by a chastened attitude towards this present evil world; he would become a 'new creature.' Nature, Scripture and Conscience surrounded him with proofs of the divine effluence. But the greatest of these was Conscience. This doctrine appeared in Germany before the middle of the sixteenth century, as a protest against orthodox formalism, and attained widespread acceptance within the next century. In particular, its preachers abandoned the scholastic medium, Latin, and spoke forthright to the folk in the rich mother-tongue of Luther. "I would rather save one soul than make a hundred scholars." In such temper Joachim Lütkeemann taught at Rostock, and lost his chair for his pains. Was not this heresy? Thus the new movement grew amid chequered fortunes till, in 1675, Spener "set the heather on fire" with his *Pia Desideria*. Not intellectual illumination, but the light of the Holy Spirit revealed the true way. Renewal of the inward part by a divine leaven whereby direct knowledge of God permeates—this formed the core of the faith. Religion cannot be prisoned in correct opinions, it consists in a closer walk with God, the path made plain by the evangelical Scriptures. As might have been anticipated, this simple creed lapsed easily into mysticism and quietist contemplation, or led to ecstatic ebullitions

which, again, degenerated into fantastic performances, and justified a hasty contempt for intellectual effort and mastery. As a matter of fact, both consequences had clouded the pure flame of the 'inner light' ere the eighteenth century broke. And although they provoked the reaction to intellectualism which shaped the Enlightenment, Pietism itself, when it guarded its sanity, proved a real instrument of humane culture. Königsberg happened to be one centre where extremes found less encouragement from the leaders. The fulminations against it by Myslenta (*d.* 1653), the representative of theological orthodoxy, and the theological syncretism of Calixtus, taught in the university by John Behm (*d.* 1640), his son, Michael Behm (*d.* 1650), Pfeiffer (*d.* 1694), and Grabe (*d.* 1697), placed it between two fires. At length, in 1709, Lysius and, in 1713, Lilienthal came from Halle. By Kant's time the local school attended by him, and the university, were dominated by a Pietism which, despite tendencies towards formal morality, quickened education. The Kant family grew up in the atmosphere of a warm, sincere, highly moralised belief, impressed by the mother especially. This important circumstance brought the promising boy into contact from the outset with that larger view of humanity and its problems destined to claim his permanent attention afterwards. There can be no question that his simple household left indelible marks upon him, and gave him a juster idea of the scope of the "spiritually indispensable" than his predecessors, frequenters of courts and *salons*, could acquire. Unable to reconcile himself to indifferentism in face of the moral law, he could not regard conduct as mere decorum, an embel-

lishment to be classed with table manners. The disposition of will demanded a hearing with him, no less than the insight of intellect, and the vivid reality of feeling. In short, Pietism ranked as a formative element in his culture; it is one of the factors, drawn from the nearer environment, necessary to appreciation of his character as a thinker. Besides, it led to consequences of the utmost practical moment.

Although Pietism reached court and official circles, notably under Frederick William of Prussia, its main field of activity lay among the common people. For, after the Thirty Years' War, much degradation prevailed, and appalling ignorance abounded. Pastoral visitation brought this home to the Pietists who, in the person of A. H. Francke (1663-1732), sought to make provision for children bereft of opportunity otherwise. This led to the foundation of the celebrated *Francke'schen Stiftungen* at Halle (1695) which, at Francke's death, included a training college, a Latin school, a town school, and an orphanage. Naturally, these institutions were permeated by the religious views of their founder, so that their spiritual tone was no less distinctive than their influence as educational models. Nor did the Pietists neglect higher education. The university of Halle, an off-shoot of inimical Leipzig, was their headquarters, and its fervid activity soon affected Prussia. Its spirit penetrated even to remote Königsberg, and was destined to touch Kant most vitally. This need not surprise us, for, after the Thirty Years' War, Pietism alone sufficed to stir hope in the breast of the German folk. As we saw, two religious teachers, bred in the Halle school, migrated to Königsberg early in the eighteenth

century. Precisely on account of his relation to the Halle educational ideal, Lysius was to be the more important. A prosperous Königsberg lumberman, Gehr, a zealous Pietist, anxious for the welfare of his own children primarily, had founded a private school in the last decade of the seventeenth century. When Lysius arrived, he took charge, introducing Halle methods both in religious and secular instruction. The school attained such popularity under his guidance that official opposition arose. A committee of inquiry resulted. Its report testified to the exceptional efficiency of the establishment, not only in Latin, history, and other secular branches, but also in religious knowledge. This success, coupled with the favourable temper of the Government of the day, produced a great change in the status of the institution. It became a royal school in 1703. The king named it the *Collegium Fridericianum*, saying at the same time, that his purpose was "to extend God's glory and to bring souls to heaven." The institution covered elementary as well as secondary work, and had, in addition, a residential department which drew many boys from the Baltic districts. Thus its reputation extended beyond the city and, in Kant's time, local opinion ranked it first among the Königsberg high schools. Its good fortune did not end with the administration of Lysius. When Kant was seven years old, another typical product of the Halle movement came to Königsberg. In 1731, F. A. Schultz, high in the graces of the Prussian Government, entered upon the pastorate of the church attended by Kant's parents. To him, more than to any one else, the philosopher owed his chance in life.

According to Kant's own testimony, Schultz moved many by his pulpit eloquence. He had remarkable gifts of organisation, and left an impress upon *Fridericianum*, whose rectorship he soon received; upon the university, where he presided; and upon the school system of East Prussia to which, during his inspectorate, he added numerous new schools. Briefly, from Kant's boyhood, Schultz stood forth the foremost citizen of Königsberg. His pastoral relation to the family brought him into close contact with their private affairs, and acquainted him with their straitened circumstances. Kant entered the school in 1732, and remained for more than eight years. It seems certain that his continuance beyond the elementary stages was due to Schultz's persuasion, and to his mother's wisdom. Schultz's intervention, too, procured a university course for him later. It is even possible that the Pietist leader accorded him material aid, although an uncle, the mother's relative, prosperous in the shoe trade, deserves no little credit in this regard.

It must be noted, however, that the discipline of the *Fridericianum* was directed even more to the welfare of the soul than of the intellect. Although the school stood first among its peers, education had not emerged from the period of eclipse, and remained at what we should consider a low ebb. *Wissenschaft*, in the contemporary German sense of the term, hardly existed. Material resources and equipment were meagre in the extreme, and the available income very small. Kant himself complained, under Frederick the Great, that the Government spent money only on military affairs. The justice of his protest may be

gathered from the fact that his own professorial salary, even when he stood at the height of his fame, never ran beyond £90. As a result, the institution dispensed poor instruction at the hands of inexperienced men, many of them on the threshold of candidacy for the pastorate, while, worse still, an inevitable sequel, constant changes took place in the staff. As good luck would have it, one teacher stood head and shoulders above his colleagues during Kant's pupilage. This was Heydenreich, "an elegant scholar," to use Kant's phrase. The future philosopher, and his ablest classmates, Ruhnken (afterwards professor at Leyden, and among the foremost classical scholars of the age), Cunde (who became rector of the Latin school at Rastenberg), and Kypke (later a professor at Königsberg), were drawn to him. Thanks to his ability and enthusiasm, and to the stimulus of association with Ruhnken and Cunde especially, Kant grew to be an admirable latinist, familiar with Horace and Virgil, devoted to Lucretius, from whose poetry he must have obtained his first taste of speculative problems. We are aware, nevertheless, that he gave no evidence of powers that presaged philosophical or scientific eminence. He himself used to smile in after life, when he thought of his scholastic introduction to mathematics and logic, and he enjoyed no opportunities whatever in science. History he obtained indirectly from the Scriptures. Thus, on the whole, the secular subjects left much to be desired, although keen discipline in the Latin language was a fortunate exception. Kant spoke and wrote Latin well, and had been taught to appreciate the matter no less than the form of the great Roman writers,

thanks to Heydenreich's commendable methods. As might be expected, Greek occupied a less important place, and was subordinate to study of the New Testament. Modern languages, even German, received little or no attention.

The school brought steady pressure to bear upon the religious side. Too much so; for the weaker tendencies of Pietism showed themselves here. It was not merely that catechising abounded, but a round of formal observances—prayer at early morning, at the opening and dismissal of classes, long hours of religious instruction, and the like—harried the youth, while the school atmosphere favoured manifestations of hypocrisy, even of fanaticism, as Kant thought afterwards. The system designed to produce conviction of sin, and urged the necessity for repentance. Thus it led to emotionalism unnatural in the young, to premature, even morbid, self-examination, and, in some cases, to undesirable assurance amounting to self-righteousness. Rogge records: "The weakness of Pietism was its drill system, into which it fell in its exaggerations. When the religious instruction of children became a strait-jacket, it lost its attractions for the youthful mind." In other words, the external observances that brought Pietism into ridicule were by no means absent, and produced regrettable features. Kant's refusal to join in public worship, and his distaste for all institutional religious ceremonies, so noteworthy after he reached manhood, must be traced to his reaction against these artificial aids to belief. Plainly, the process repelled him, did not convert. On the other hand, his sensitive conscience, and the respect for the moral law so insepar-

able from his teaching, flowed from the same source. Able to see both sides of a question, he testified to the better element in Pietism with no uncertain sound.

“The religious ideas of these times, and the prevalent notions of virtue and piety could hardly be said to be either clear or satisfactory, but the root of the matter was in them. Say what you will of Pietism, no one can deny the sterling worth of the characters which it formed. It gave them the highest thing that man can possess—that peace, that cheerful spirit, that inner harmony with self which can be disturbed by no passion. No pressure of circumstance or persecution of man could make them discontented, no rivalry could provoke them to anger and bitterness. Even the casual observer was touched with an involuntary feeling of respect before such men. I still remember what happened on one occasion when difficulties arose between the strap-makers and saddlers regarding their respective rights. My father’s interests were affected seriously. Yet, even in conversation, the difference was discussed by my parents with such tolerance and indulgence to the opposite party, and with such a fixed trust in Providence, that, boy as I then was, the memory of it will never leave me.”

On the whole, then, it may be said that the influence of Pietism proved formal mainly. It gave Kant a certain ‘set.’ So far as it affected his character vitally, we must look to his cherished memories of its practical illustration in the walk and conversation of father and mother, and to its generous sweep in the activities of Schultz, rather than to the conventional round of his schooldays. Nay, it might be alleged that even

these gracious recollections, together with the narrow, perhaps gloomy, conditions of his childhood and youth, explain the *bourgeois*, almost philistine, qualities from which he never emancipated himself completely. Notwithstanding, they also reveal the secret of his extraordinary moral tenacity and intellectual straightforwardness. The uplift of Pietism persists, to be directed to new, unanticipated ends.

CHAPTER IV

THE NEARER ENVIRONMENT (*continued*)

ACADEMIC INFLUENCES—SOCIETY AND URBAN LIFE—THE INNER MAN

A SERIOUS break occurred in Kant's home ere he went to the university. By the death of his mother, in 1737, Pietism was deprived of its closest, probably most profound, influence upon him. More than this we cannot say, because we do not know how her removal affected the family around its inner hearth, nor are we aware how it touched the adolescent boy. In any case, however, like many a Scots lad of his social position, Kant proceeded to the university on the maternal assumption that, one day, he might "wag his head in a poo'pit." Recalling the temper of the institution, it would be natural to anticipate his confirmation in an ecclesiastical, or at least theological, career. When he was a mere infant (1725), Fischer had been expelled from his chair, much in the same fashion as Wolff at Halle two years sooner, because he had ventured to espouse this philosopher's Rationalism, and to oppose local Pietism with some acerbity. Like his master in South Prussia, he was restored when

Frederick the Great came to the throne, but, despite royal favour, he did not escape further, and severe, censure. In the third year of Kant's attendance, Fischer's book, entitled *Rational Thoughts concerning the Essence of Nature*, "a production of pantheistic tendencies," was suppressed, thanks to the activity of Schultz and other Pietists, the author excommunicated. Evidently, Pietism still maintained a strenuous vitality in Königsberg. Yet, notwithstanding this, and Schultz's continued patronage, Kant drifted away from theological prepossessions—if, indeed, they ever gripped him—during his academic course. Neither the aspiration of parents, nor the desire of his benefactor and pastor, could stay the inevitable. Unfortunately, we are in total ignorance at this point regarding any spiritual experiences he may have undergone. But he was now old enough to appreciate, and condemn, the inquisitorial, underhand methods of Francke and Lange towards Wolff, as of local Pietism towards Fischer, in the dark days of Frederick William, about which he must have been informed. No doubt, too, his studies had progressed sufficiently to enable him to appreciate the feebleness of Schultz's recent critique of Fischer's book. While the attacks of the orthodox party upon Schultz himself, and his like-minded colleagues, cannot but have been fresh in Kant's mind. In particular, if he had imbibed any taste for freedom of thought, if he appreciated even the commonest fair play in matters intellectual, he must have been aroused to disgust by the insane exhibition of theological delation on the part of Quandt, a local preacher, whose ugly blackguardism was equalled only by his superstitious stupidity. He had alleged, in 1740, that Salthenius, a distinguished

co-worker with Schultz, was guilty of entering upon a compact with the Devil, and had called for his dismissal on this ground. In short, the university was torn by controversy which served to reveal the depths possible to theological animus, and was well calculated to repel a student of Kant's quality. For the rest, and to supplement these possibilities, we must fall back upon such information as may be recovered now.

During his student days Kant continued a familiar of poverty, and tutored his fellows to eke out a most meagre purse. Amusing, nay pitiful, tales survive of the expedients to which he was put even in the matter of clothing. But intellectual conditions altered. His good start in Latin did not avail him directly. Classical learning ran low in the university, and the stimulus imparted by Heydenreich fell away, in the absence of a professor who could carry the student further. Indeed, the situation drove Ruhnken to Wittenberg. It is on record that Kant had thoughts of turning to medicine, and his first work bears a dedication to Bohlius, a member of the medical faculty. The likelihood seems to be that he matriculated with a view to the ministry; that, as time passed, he felt less and less sympathy with the manifestations of dogmatism inseparable from pietistic beliefs, so rife in the city; and that, as a result, his course took an eclectic direction, making for a broad, general education, till, at length, it came to be oriented round science (mathematics and mechanics), and philosophy, as represented by the two most efficient professors, Knutzen and Teske.

Nor were circumstances connected with the larger

environment devoid of significance. The reign of Frederick William had been a period of repression, when intellectual freedom lay at the mercy of the legal bludgeon, when distinguished scholars, like Wolff and Fischer, could be threatened even with the common hangman. Upon the accession of Frederick the Great a sudden transformation occurred, and a liberal renaissance, destined to mighty illustration in Winckelmann, Lessing, Herder, Schiller, Goethe, and many others, began to stir. Liberty of thought, shackled hitherto, went on its way rejoicing, and, curiously enough, distant Königsberg was to become a chief centre of this development. The fact that Winckelmann at Halle, Lessing at Leipzig, Ruhnken at Wittenberg, and Kant himself, were all intended for the Church, and betook themselves to different paths during their academic residence, implies not a little. In all probability, other outlets appeared less hopeless under the new conditions and, quite certainly, academic instruction found a broader sweep and more vital tone, while the conflicts, sometimes degenerating into squabbles, between the Pietists and their opponents, raised doubts, when they did not sicken eager young intellects. Accordingly, Kant's once landmarks grew indistinct, and his studies ceased to be a gateway to theology, with two compensating advantages. On the one hand, he sought knowledge for its own sake in many fields, giving careful attention even to Schultz's theological lectures, "because he desired to learn," as he said to his pastor. On the other hand, liberated from the *arrière pensée* of "preparation for life," that bane of the so-called 'student' to-day, as of the philosophical faculty in the eighteenth century, he

could forgo prescribed *Brodstudien*, and attach himself to men. Thus he fell upon the most important and fruitful relationship of his academic years.

Kant never lost regard for Teske, professor of physics, but Martin Knutzen (1713-51), a junior member of the staff, extraordinary professor of philosophy, shone the bright, particular star among his mentors. Knutzen had only reached his majority when he received this professorship, in 1734, thanks to Schultz's favour. He proved a teacher of astonishing activity, and his writings throw invaluable light upon the internal causes that brought decline upon Wolfianism. His zeal as a student, productivity as an author, and constant labour as a lecturer, wore him out; he died, from overstrain, at the early age of thirty-seven, leaving Kant, still in the first flush of scientific devotion, to shift for himself. But much had happened ere this lamentable event. Kant's connection with Knutzen did not stop short at the formalities of the classroom, or even at the closer contact of the *seminar*. Private discussions of problems interesting to both, direction of reading, the loan of books and, above all, urgent advice to original and independent thought—a necessity enforced somewhat brusquely in Kant's first publication,—made for intimate relations. Kant saw philosophy in its most persuasive guise, as a pursuit absorbing the scholar completely. And it is noteworthy that the subjects to which Knutzen dedicated his being remained dominant with Kant also. While it is impossible now to trace any of Knutzen's specific doctrines in the Kantian system, this teacher furnished the pupil with the

general perspective characteristic of his first period at least.

Although Knutzen might be termed an eclectic without derogation, his thought possessed distinct vitality of its own. It did not suffice him to pick and choose in order to construct a patchwork scheme. Recent and current doctrines failed to satisfy him, and death found him midmost an effort to achieve more satisfactory footing. A Pietist by religious affiliation, he felt, far more deeply than Schultz, the necessity for an ultimate foundation in philosophy. And if he subordinated his reflection to justification of religion, dogma could not deter him from critical inquiry; indeed, had he been spared, he might have reached conclusions in the spirit of Spinoza. True to the tradition of Leibniz, and in consonance with an outlook which the present subdivision of science has rendered almost impossible, he was a polymath. That is to say, he not only ranged over the entire field of philosophy, but spoke with some authority upon the mathematics and physics of the day. Metaphysics, logic, rational psychology, rhetoric, moral philosophy, natural law, natural philosophy, even mnemonics, fell within his philosophical sweep; he also taught geometry, algebra, and the infinitesimal calculus. In this respect Kant became Knutzen's spiritual heir, his wide activity as an academic teacher reminds one of the master's example. His courses included metaphysics, logic, moral philosophy, philosophical encyclopædia, pedagogy, anthropology, natural law, natural theology, physical geography, physics, mathematics, mechanics, and mineralogy. Of course, such varied interests were practicable at that time, without suspicion of dilettanteism, the more that

the philosophical faculty offered instruction on a high school level. For the positive sciences had not yet hived off from philosophy, experimental methods were in their infancy, and cosmological speculations furnished a direct link between the several disciplines, as the Scots academic term, 'natural philosophy,' survives to attest. The easy exchange of one chair for another by professors illustrates the same thing. Kant himself, who had been offered the chair of poetry and rhetoric, owed his promotion to the professorship of logic and metaphysics to a fortunate vacancy in the chair of mathematics, which Buck desired; and Buck's predecessor, if I mistake not, had been transferred from a professorship of Oriental languages. The Scots Regents of the olden time may be recalled in this connection.

These conditions conspired to render Knutzen an eclectic, not simply in the sense that he combined Pietism with Rationalism, but also in the constitution of his Rationalism itself. Unable to adopt Wolff's conclusions upon authority, he tried to supplement them from the side of science, gleaning new material from the study of Newton more especially. Wolff, intent upon system, clearness, and utility, failed to appreciate the constructive idealism of Leibniz, whose *New Essays* were yet to be published. In particular, he diluted the Monad theory by placing emphasis upon the individual character of these self-sustained existences, minimising their representative, or universal, aspect. In like manner, he curtailed the sweep of the Pre-established Harmony by limiting its application to the *nexus* between soul and body. Thus, the real influence of one monad upon another

seemed to be lost, and a purely ideal efflux—a bare shadow—alone remained. The universe, divested of its unity, was reduced to the level of a mechanism, whose final ground is the absentee God. In short, all unconscious, Wolff had made serious concessions to Empiricism. Accordingly, the question of the actual relations between natural phenomena in detail pressed for further consideration. An unbroken flow of material phenomena, and an unbroken flow of mental phenomena, may constitute our universe in the last analysis. But what of the internal bonds peculiar to each order, what of the connection between the two orders? Disappointed of a solution by Wolff's shilly-shally here, Knutzen went to Newton, with the result that he replaced the Pre-established Harmony by a theory of *influxus physicus*, one not without affinities for certain recent speculations of biological origin, where consciousness and energy become the Janus faces of a single, underlying dynamism. But, be all this as it may, the important point is that Knutzen started Kant along lines that led at length to a four-square reckoning between the Rationalism (idealistic and universal) of continental Europe, and the Empiricism (realistic and individual) of Britain. Kant thus entered that tortuous course whose "sun-clear statement" lay thirty years in the future; his mission in life had been suggested not long after his twenty-first birthday.

When we think of Kant, the poor, humble, diffident boy; thereafter, the struggling undergraduate, to whom white bread spelled luxury; and when we recall the sharp separation between social classes, a heritage from mediævalism still characteristic of

Germany, not least of East Prussia, we may be surprised to learn that, not only as a professor, a person of official consideration, but even as a *Docent*,¹ he mixed freely, and with distinct acceptance, amongst the highest folk of the province; that he could grace a great lady's *salon* with touches of French gallantry; that he displayed fastidiousness in dress—was the “beautiful *magister*” of local gossips; that he could take a hand at cards, and, like Herbert Spencer, play a good game of billiards; that he became something of a *bon vivant*, delighting to entertain and to be entertained; that he developed into a notable *causeur*. Strange though we may deem it, the future held all this for the out-at-elbows student. As might have been expected, he blossomed into a familiar of literary men. But, as was hardly to be anticipated, he secured the friendship of nobles, generals, high officials, prosperous merchants—of the directing classes, in short. While, as if to emphasise the change of status, his sisters remained servant-girls, and married in their own station. So far did Kant drift away from them

¹ It should be explained, perhaps, that, in a German university, the staff contains three grades—professors in ordinary, extraordinary professors, and *Docenten*. The difference in the professoriate is primarily one of emolument, to a certain extent, of status. The *Docent*, on the contrary, receives no salary, is dependent upon the fees of his hearers, and may not underbid the professors. On the other hand, the professoriate is recruited from the ranks of the *Docenten*, rarely from another source. So this grade is the first step on the ladder of academic promotion, and, to gain it, the candidate must display approved proficiency in some selected field. In short, the *Docent* is not unlike the American Instructor, although, in the United States, this official receives a fixed salary, and no fees. It may be added that, since Kant's time, the docentship has become a position of distinctly greater consideration, and implies more than the American instructorship, as a rule, on account of its independence.

that, as is alleged, he did not see them for twenty-five years, although they lived in the same town,—another revelation of the power of class distinctions surmounted by him. How came he, then, to acquire social ease, graces, and experience?

Curiously enough, his very poverty forced upon him the opportunity to make acquaintance with circles far apart from those where the artisan household moved. His maternal relative, Richter, who had helped him during schooldays, as we have seen, paid for the publication of his first essay, and also found the fees for his promotion to a degree and to the academic staff, a decade later. Despite this indispensable aid on extraordinary occasions, it is probable that the death of his father, in the spring of 1746, threw him upon his own resources, certain that it severed closest ties with the family. Very likely, Kant had completed his course in 1744; in any case, he 'floated round' the university for another eighteen months. Orphaned, he adopted the one recourse open to poor scholars at that time, and, disappointed of a mastership in a Königsberg school, sought a situation as resident tutor in the country. This was to be his means of livelihood—though hardly his main occupation—from 1746 till his return to the university in 1755. For this period, important on account of its formative processes, definite information in detail lacks. As was natural, looking to his Pietist affiliations, Kant found his first appointment in a clerical home. His employer was one Andersch, village pastor of Judschen, near Gumbinnen, a town some sixty miles east of Königsberg, not far from the Russian frontier. In 1748 he entered the service of the country gentry (*Junkers*),

becoming tutor in the von Hülsen family, whose estate, Arnsdorf, lay about five miles from Mohrunen. This town, known to fame as Herder's birthplace, is about fifty-five miles south, slightly west, from Königsberg, and stands in the lake district south-east of Elbing, a league or two from the Polish boundary of East Prussia, as it was then. It is interesting to note in passing that these were the extreme limits of Kant's travel. After he settled in Königsberg, he seems never to have strayed more than forty miles from its limits; indeed, one writer has hazarded the striking suggestion that he did not even trouble himself to see the Baltic. But this must be an error; for, during his holiday excursions from Königsberg, the professor visited Pillau, on the south-western point of the northern portion of the giant spit that separates the Frische Haff from the sea. Kant continued on friendly terms with the von Hülsens for many years, and took general oversight of a younger scion during his residence at the university. It is more than likely that he exercised much influence with his pupils. For, thanks probably to his emphatic views about the subject, this family was among the foremost to emancipate its peasants from serfdom, a condition which the philosopher learned to abominate during his contact with country affairs; an indignation rekindled, no doubt, by his ardent espousal of the views of Rousseau.

The position of resident tutor with the Prussian gentry one hundred and sixty years ago cannot have been an enviable lot. Disparity of social degree often caused the scholar to be treated little better than a menial, while the remuneration was on a very modest

scale, say, £10 a year. On the other hand, it gave the incumbent a chance to acquaint himself with the manners and outlook of the upper classes, no small matter at a period when society was so constituted that culture often ran to birth rather than to desire, or, perhaps, to merit. These advantages outweighed the disabilities, apparently, in the case of Kant's relations with the Keyserling family, who had bought the Prussian estate of Rautenberg, near Tilsit, in the early forties of the eighteenth century. The countess seems to have been his chief chaperone to the ways and usages of the 'great world,' and he always held her in profound regard. On her removal to Königsberg, where she had her permanent residence soon after Kant received his professorship, he became a frequent, honoured, and most welcome guest at her table, an ornament of her *salon*. Cultivated men and women of the world, as the world wagged then, the members of the Keyserling house were thoroughly prepared to appreciate the rising thinker at his real worth.¹

Thus, although Kant's memories of these years spent among East Prussian pastors and *Junkers*² never afforded him unmixed satisfaction, the experience did much to fit him for that social prominence in Königsberg which began soon after his accession to the university staff. Curiously enough, once more, the way to this, the brightest spot in his otherwise lonely life, was

¹ The available evidence concerning Kant's connection with the Keyserling and Truchsess-Waldburg families has been summarised admirably by Dr. E. Fromm, Curator of the State Library at Aix, in *Kantstudien*, vol. ii. pp. 145-160 (1898).

² The East Prussian *Junker* type has been embodied with great power by Sudermann, in his Baron v. Röcknitz, one of the chief characters in *Das Glück im Winkel*—perhaps his best drama.

opened, very likely, by an event that delayed his promotion, and always affected his official emoluments. The Seven Years' War depleted the resources of the Government, harried East Prussia, and Königsberg itself was in Russian occupation from 1758 till 1762. Kant enjoyed friendly relations with the officers of the garrison, many of whom flocked to hear him, and for their benefit he delivered courses on physical geography, fortification, and pyrotechnics, by special request. In all probability, this association first drew him into the social whirl, where he remained much in evidence till 1783, when, having purchased a house, he withdrew more and more into a select circle of intimates, and congenial acquaintances, whom he entertained almost daily in his own characteristic fashion. Indeed, Kant frequented company to such an extent during the years of his docentship that his distinguished fellow-citizen, Hamann, expressed anxiety lest these distractions should interfere with his intellectual work. This was not to happen. Nay, the intercourse with all sorts and conditions of men furnished excellent material for his humanistic writings. He did not travel, but he knew the macrocosm in the microcosm thoroughly; and this not from books only, although he devoured travellers' tales.

Königsberg, the immediate sphere of Kant's activity, helps us to understand, if scarcely to explain, certain aspects of his life and work. But, we must approach it in terms of the eighteenth rather than of the twentieth century. Split into many minor kingdoms, duchies, and provinces, Germany possessed no capital, a lodestone to talent, the pivot of government, justice, literature, commerce, and national culture. On the

contrary, several centres developed—Leipzig, Halle, Wittenberg, Weimar, Jena, Munich,—and places that seem insignificant on a modern scale grew important and attractive, to such an extent that present metropolitan centres exerted lesser spell upon notable men, to wean them from local allegiance. Kant himself could not be lured to Erlangen, or even to Halle. The situation bore resemblances to that in the contemporary United States, where little towns, like Ann Arbor, or Berkeley, or Madison, outshine cities several times more populous, and found a distinct parallel in the Edinburgh of Hume, Robertson, Burns, Stewart, and Scott, which overshadowed London. This widespread vitality, its bearers scattered hither and thither, was intensified in Germany by the individualistic movement, of which the extraordinary Weimar-Jena group—Goethe, Schiller, Fichte, Schelling, Hegel, and many lesser lights—is the most illustrious example. Thus, Kant's Königsberg, with its 45,000 people, furnished a more favourable atmosphere for the "Prussian Hume" than might be expected from the busy, expanding, twentieth century city, of 200,000 inhabitants.¹ Contemporary Berlin, did it come to be called, like old Königsberg, the "capital of philosophy," would not arouse our wonder; this might well happen. For, as things go to-day, a second Kant would find it

¹ A recent writer, of undoubted competence, goes so far as to assert : "It is not too much to say that the culture of the far north and east of Prussia is a local, provincial culture, with which the intellectual and political life of the nation as a whole has little in common" (William Harbutt Dawson, *The Evolution of Modern Germany* (1908), p. 21). The whole of Mr. Dawson's second chapter serves to throw light upon the class distinctions which Kant must have felt during his years as a tutor.

nigh impossible to withstand the manifest advantages offered by the world-home of *Wissenschaft*, on the Spree; or by the Mecca of very modern art, literature, and music, on the Isar; or by the great book-making city, where the Pleisse, Parthe, and Elster join.

Königsberg, as a metropolis set apart, felt the breath of a spirit that exhaled inevitably from isolation; nay, the place was persuaded by this very remoteness to deem itself "no mean city." So, remembering the difficulties of intercourse when railways were not, when roads conjured abomination, we can sympathise with Kant, and readily, even if his statement savour of *naïveté*. In the preface to his *Anthropology*, a fitting niche, he says:

"A large city, the centre of Government, where the officers of State are found; which contains a university for the advancement of the sciences, and is also so placed as to have commerce by sea; which is favoured with rivers for communication with the interior, as well as with more distant, yet adjoining lands, of various languages, and customs; such a city, for example, as Königsberg on the Pregel, may be regarded as a suitable place for enlarging one's knowledge of the world, a place where this knowledge may be gained even without travel."

Königsberg could loom large then, because the possibility of provincialism did not haunt its consciousness. It may have been a "learned Siberia," it was 'learned' in any case. The first partition of Poland lay on the lap of the gods, and the present Vistula province interposed between East Prussia and Brandenburg. Kant's native land thus formed an enclave, surrounded on all sides by foreign territories,

inhabited by non-Teutonic peoples. Königsberg, the titular capital of the Prussian kings, whither they repaired for coronation, was the focus of government. Racially, its university drew upon a cosmopolitan constituency. The great political, military, judicial, and religious functionaries, in charge of what might fairly be termed a kingdom of their own, congregated here. The city gave a natural outlet to German sea-borne commerce, exporting lumber, grain, and flax, importing many manufactured articles, and luxuries, such as wine, and the preserved fruits beloved of Kant. In his lifetime the customs receipts exceeded those of any Prussian city. Accordingly, merchants flocked to it, and some foreigners, engaged in trade, adopted it as a residence. Several of these—Englishmen and Scots—had no inconsiderable influence upon Kant's knowledge of their literature. This, and its peculiar position as the headquarters of a German territory thrust into a Slavic country, lent variety to its population; while its prosperity as a port, where some eight hundred vessels discharged annually, brought many sailors, full of strange tales, to its harbours. Germans, Poles, Russians, Scandanavians, Jews, Dutchmen, English, and Scots chaffered in its markets.

Nor was Königsberg a stranger to interest in the unseen things of the mind. We have heard that its Pietism took a humane, and even intellectual tone. The city also bore its part in the humanistic renaissance that leavened and transformed Germany between 1750 and Hegel's death in 1831. Nobles, civil officials, soldiers, and merchants there were, to say nothing of professors, clergy, and *littérateurs*, who sensed the new thought, or contributed to its advance by publication.

Schultz, Herder, Hamann, Hippel, the Keyserlings, Vigilantius, Kraus, Hagen, Green, Sommer, the Motherbys, Meyer, Hay, and others, formed an enlightened circle representative of the educated classes, clerical and lay, military and civilian, gentle and simple, academic and commercial, native and foreign; while the house of the *Burgomeister*, Hippel, was as much a recognised resort of culture as the hall of Countess Keyserling. Nor did Kant's intercourse with the 'upper crust' stop short at urban comings and goings, which might be more or less formal—a tribute to his academic position. He often visited the Keyserling seat at Capustigall, ten miles from Königsberg; he was Baron von Schrötter's guest at the Wohnsdorf estate, not far from the field of Napoleon's great fight, Friedland; his favourite holiday resort was Modritzen, where his friend Wobser, chief of the Government forestry service, lived, a man for whom he entertained lively admiration. In this place, surrounded by fine woods, he wrote his first æsthetic work, *Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime*. He also visited General von Losson at his seat near Insterburg, some forty miles on the way to Gumbinnen, the scene of the first tutorship. An active mind could not rust here, and an intellect like Kant's, eager for rounded knowledge of the world, found material cast before it profusely. Thanks to Königsberg, and its human kaleidoscope, the philosopher could thumb his *Æsop* at home. He could abide within the narrow range of her fortifications and yet affirm, with perfect justice:

“Much have I seen and known; cities of men
And manners, climates, councils, governments.”

Withal, too, his needy youth, and weary wait for a promotion retarded by misfortunes brought upon his province and city by war and pestilence, had annealed in him that

“One equal temper of heroic hearts
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield.”

Fragmentary though the available evidence is, these hints enable us to frame a general picture of the man in his dwelling-place. He was no morose recluse, buried behind his books in the study, but one who fared forth among his fellows, for many years, as opportunity offered. Heine's account, quoted so often because of its piquancy, has relative truth for Kant's declining years; plainly, it distorts his early and middle manhood.¹ Can we approach the person more closely, then?

Kant's wonderful intellect had been set in a frail tabernacle; we are reminded of Pope. Nature had not compensated him for his scrimp stature—about

¹ Cf. *The Works of Heinrich Heine*, translated by Charles Godfrey Leland, vol. v., especially pp. 135 f. Heine's *Germany*, often cited by its longer title, *Religion and Philosophy in Germany*, must be taken with many grains of salt. He was no philosopher, and the acquaintance displayed with the Kantian movement is most superficial. Nevertheless, the book scintillates with witticisms that hit the bull's-eye sometimes. The work is essentially a *tour de force*. It may be added that the English translation is at least as entertaining as the original, because the notes, often set down in correction of the text, go to prove that 'Hans Breitmann' had not fathomed the great gulf fixed between folk-lore and philosophy. To take a case. The merest tyro must be aware that the information imparted on p. 85 (*“Tractatus Theologico-Politicus”*; this work is the principal source of modern German Rationalism) represents a perfect nest of fallacies. And there are other comments like unto it!

five feet—with any of that ‘stockiness’ often the portion of short men. Physically, he formed a decided exception to the Scots proverb, “good gear in sma’ bulk.” With chest flat, almost incurving, abdomen prominent, the right shoulder twisted back, the left depressed, the head hanging to one side, the bones small, the muscles flaccid, “his body seemed to have received from nature the impress of debility.” In old age, this distortion of chest, shoulders, and neck became more manifest, as the emaciated frame and parched skin gave clearer sharpness to the anatomical outlines. The fine head must have enabled Kant to discount the impression left by the trunk, and it is noticeable that, in the classroom, the head alone was visible. The broad brow, the strong mouth, the prominent, curved nose, the high cheek-bones, the fresh, ruddy complexion, beyond all, the large, piercing, blue eyes, are said to have exercised strong fascination, especially when touched to mobility by the fervour of private conversation or public speech. Every one knows Herder’s enthusiastic appreciation:

“His open, thoughtful brow was the seat of unfailing cheerfulness and joy; the profoundest language fell from his lips; jest, wit, humour stood at his command; and his instructive address was like a most entertaining conversation.”

This is Kant in his prime. Unfortunately, our information relates chiefly to the period of physical decline, and we possess no full account of the thinker in the hey-day of vigorous youth. Yet we do know that he threw a powerful spell over both friends and pupils, so that the spirit, gleaming through the eyes, playing about the face, must have more than counter-

balanced other disabilities. And, unquestionably, the character of the man told its own tale.

It is difficult always, impossible often, to reach an impartial estimate of an eminent person, the more if his achievement be enshrined in a system of thought rather than in a career of action. For, although thought possesses its motives no less than action, their subtlety is apt to defy search. Kant forms no exception to this rule, and his case is the more baffling that materials for an intimate portrait of his youth and middle age are few and far between. Still we cannot well escape some conclusions.

To begin with, his physique had a double effect upon him. On the one hand, his was no strenuous nature, scenting battle on the breeze, eager for conflict, instant in strife. Much more, he was fitted to be, what he became, a type of the quiet scholar, who saps and mines painfully, who pursues the even tenor of his way heeding others little, content to follow the inner gleam. He enjoyed none of the strength, so conspicuous in his predecessor, Lessing. His body did not permit this. Never, perhaps, was an existence so peaceful, almost prosaic, destined to exert such leverage. On the other hand, his very frailty threw him upon his own resources, causing him to nurture self-reliance, a habit engendered by early poverty and a long, precarious apprenticeship, confirmed by the physical limitations which, always present, asserted themselves openly in later years. But the fragile frame held an indomitable spirit. Hence, it may be affirmed that will-power lay at the centre of Kant's being. Scarcely a man with a mission, he nevertheless set himself a definite task, and, after 1770, the thirty years of preparation ended,

devoted himself to it with more and more concentration of purpose. The enigma of his nature, if enigma there were, roots in the combination of Prussian precision and intellectual ruthlessness with a certain moral quality. Manifestly, the mind, intent upon theoretical inquiry, dominated, permitting no rival near the throne. At the same time, the utilitarian tendency of the eighteenth century persuaded Kant to believe that, after all, practical interests furnish the *raison d'être* for everything else. Nor need we wonder. Reconstruction saturated the air; so, in name of the happiness of mankind, yet chastened by a profound sense of the unalterable moral law, the great thinker faced his task. It was the ever old, ever new, story—"Speak to the children of Israel that they go forward."

But many voices there were then, and more echoes. And the import of the message betokens the temperament of the speaker, always a mixture past analysis, because devised too cunningly in the laboratory of character. Friendly, and companionable, if never expansive, Kant lacked the *Gemüthlichkeit*, or abandon, of his southern countrymen. The stern inflexibility of his selfhood stamped him for an individualistic soul, little pervious to the changing climates of popular opinion. The epitome of a transitional period, his person seemed devoid, somehow, of human interests. For despite its worship of the moral imperative, the pale cast of its thought presaged "the decay and death of a regulative system no longer fit, before another and fitter regulative system has grown up to replace it."¹ The conscience, no matter how tense, staggered under the partnership in stupendous issues forced upon it

¹ Herbert Spencer, *The Data of Ethics*, Preface, p. iv. (London, 1879).

by the intellect. Consequently, we must realise that Kant's power proceeded from acumen, didactic insistence, and complete devotion to a *mental* aim, which he believed to be *good*, far more than from that ability to overwhelm one with the mystery, or infinite wealth of existence, so inseparable from the other philosophical type, illustrious in Plato, Spinoza, and Hegel. A rigorist towards himself most of all, a nature in whom truth and rectitude held sway without appeal, Kant could not be termed by any stretch of imagination "a god-intoxicated man." Penetrating more than sagacious, analytic, not synthetic, a devotee of the law rather than of the gospel, his attitude to the world and humanity partook of the cross-examiner's art, hardly of the poet's insight, or the prophet's effervescence. Thus, his insistence upon the autonomy of man, though based on emphatic ethical conviction, served to isolate, not to unite. "Many people," he says, "have no idea what they want; hence they act according to instinct and authority." Accordingly, a product of the *sæculum rationalisticum*, he could never exclaim, in the fraternal spirit of emancipation from *Rationalism*, whereof he served himself the father by his singleness of heart:

"Who shall be stronger, still must ease his strength
As I, in speaking self forth in the speech
Of great souls, great by self-poised circumstance,
Not blindly passion-warp'd, but more and more
Personal, comprehensive of world-life!"

From all this we may glean a just estimate of his personality.

I have heard an ecstatic youth call Kant "an old wife," in the jest that is sometimes own brother to

truth. And, doubtless, this describes his chief limitation, if in callow terms. Law and order made him their prey. As in his immediate surroundings—his classroom, for example—things had always to be ‘just so,’ in like manner the critical habit marked him for its own; then hardened into system; till, at length, enmeshed in a veritable web, he became unable to appreciate antagonistic views, to tolerate contradiction, or to endure fools gladly. Nay, the process went so far that he could arouse no interest even in friendly comments upon his masterpieces. While much of this developed with age, its seeds lay latent from the outset. His positive mind, governed by an almost fierce, and therefore moral, indignation for truth, struck the metallic note already in his first publication. Respect? Yes! But, more precious, independence at any price, if only for ‘the cause,’ rings in these words:

“My freedom in contradicting eminent men will produce unfavourable results for me. The world is much inclined to believe that he who is better informed on some points than a great scholar, imagines himself superior to him. I venture to say this is an error.”

Kant had endured hardness; the effects were to prove at once his bane, and his blessing. His bane, in that they narrowed his disposition, lending him the air of a pedant to the man in the street, or of a ‘decent’ citizen to fluent tempers in the Herder and Fichte class. Hence the pettifogging gossip of conventional folk; hence, too, the no less mystifying regrets of spirits attuned to the music of the spheres. For, in one sense, Kant obeyed the scriptural injunction too well. Unsatisfied to say, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, he had no left hand. So,

in many ways, he impresses one as a species of intellectual bureaucrat, whose red tape, admirable, even indispensable, in its way, cannot measure the universe. He would circle the celestial city with a foot-rule. Accordingly, the immeasurable tends to escape him, or, as is more usual, fails of its due.

His blessing, too. For, the age, new freed from a *doctrinaire* pseudo-classicism, about to plunge headlong into an equally *doctrinaire* romanticism, had sore need of a monitor who, his eye on many aspects of the case, could say, "Thou ailest here, and here!" Kant himself was in and of this very age. His independence, his inability to brook mental restraint, his intolerance of authority, more especially of the forms—institutional, academic, and social—wherein it arrays itself at the behest of the past, fitted him rarely for his part as the 'all-destroyer' in a day fervent to disown a yesterday of evil memory. Narrow he may have been, but only because he sensed his regnant purpose so sharply. As the feeble body encased a compelling spirit, so the straitened character compressed a potent force. This exterior must be pierced, if we would hold an even balance with him. Thus, for instance, endowed with a splendid memory, Kant never permitted himself to fall a slave to 'facts.' Fact differed no whit from fiction till illuminated by the law or principle that he laid down to it. Nor did this principle seize him unawares, in the shape of a haphazard guess. He won it, as he won his moral intensity, by severe application, and continuous trial. Not that he minimised enthusiasm, or had been an utter stranger to its charm. In his Rousseau period, when he was just turning forty, he committed himself to something of this sort. "Any

one inspired by a principle due to moral emotion is dubbed a fanatic by those who are unable to experience it, hindered by a chill, and often base, heart. . . . Nothing great was ever accomplished without passion." He was perfectly aware that man must have a motive force. At the same time, his intellectual caution warned him against acceptance of results upon trust, just as it delayed their utterance till after a thorough test. He scorned to dissimulate, but, equally, he deemed it useless, even imprudent, to speak all that he suspected. His remarkably late development—his epoch-making works all came after his fifty-fifth year,—a striking departure from the general rule, witnessed to practice of his precepts. 'Slow and thorough' might well stand for his motto; a prosaic legend, no doubt, but the guarantee of quality. So, despite the element of crankiness, we may realise readily the enthusiasm of pupils and friends. To quote Herder once more :

"Nothing worth knowing was indifferent to him. No cabal or sect, no prejudice or reverence for a name had the slightest influence with him in opposition to the extension and promotion of truth. He encouraged and gently compelled his hearers to think for themselves; despotism was foreign to his disposition. This man, whom I name with the greatest thankfulness and reverence, is Immanuel Kant; his image stands before me, and is dear to me."

And if, in the autumn of life, Kant became something of a valetudinarian, almost hypocondriac, as some would judge, we must recall that, for many years, full of arduous toil, he "had never been well or ill." If he displayed some traits of the martinet, we must admit

that *the* land of the drill-sergeant gave him birth, and that he governed himself first, to quite conscious ends, moreover. If he took service with criticism rather than with construction, we must insist that the clear exhibition of the conflicting interests which rend human nature, the mighty work wrought by his cold analysis, was a necessary prelude to the twin achievement of the Occident since—positive science and triumphant democracy. The stream of his thought hit hard, and penetrated far, because, if confined, it was also directed under complete control. Europe, just emerging from centuries of sacerdotal, legal, intellectual, social, and regal oppression could not be freed by any mild, courtly, winning soul. Kant, set in his own peculiar ways, and sure of them, conquered immortality through the very qualities that appear to render his personal life a torso. He endured all things—for a purpose, and the purpose proved worth while beyond his most confident hopes. In the evening of his days, beset by the rising tide of an idealism which he deemed mere folly, he penned a prophecy, proven little short of miraculous by the event. He wrote to Stägemann, in 1797: "I have come with my writings a century too soon; after a hundred years people will begin to understand me rightly, and will then study my books anew, and appreciate them." Yea, verily! What says the most brilliant historian of modern philosophy, Kuno Fischer? "Certainly the present bears witness that in our time the writings of no philosopher are so zealously studied, as fountains of *living* truth, as are the works of Kant." What says the author of *the* book on Kant in our tongue, Edward Caird? "Kant's work was a work of patient mining,

of experiment after experiment, criticism upon criticism, nor did he ever leave any question till it was thoroughly exhausted. And it was just because his method was thus exhaustive that the revolution of thought produced by it was so great and irreversible."

The personal convictions necessary to such assurance, as to such achievement, created the puzzling tangle of negative and positive that characterised the man. In either aspect, if taken by itself, the real person eludes the critic; for the union of the two movements *is* Kant, just as it is the Critical Philosophy likewise. So mightily did the intellect, made tense by a Stoic self-repression, sway him, that we might find the best clue to his character even in a description of his problem. He walked the streets of Königsberg a man, but a man apart,

"taking on
New burden, new responsibility,
By very virtue of aspiring lift
And spring of the year."

The "organed equipoise" of his feeble body expressed his distrust of finite inclination "to wander beyond our proper sphere and establish relations with another world," as Benno Erdmann says. Accordingly, his account of the problem peculiar to his age, and incarnate in himself, may, as I have suggested, suffice almost for a pen-portrait of the inner man. Writing to Lambert, the mathematician, in 1770, he says:

"It seems that metaphysics should be preceded by a special, *though merely negative*, science, in which the *first principles of sense* have their authority and their

limits fixed, to prevent them introducing confusion into judgments about objects of pure reason, as has hitherto almost always been the case.”¹

An irksome matter, verily; but how much more irksome for the human being who shaped and constrained his mortal span to the end that he might *live* the issue through for the sake of his race. Such sacrifice cannot but nurture, and inflict, austerity. But truth was ever brutal, not least to her chosen and choicest soldiers. Their martyrdom, or loss, the fated price, need not always be exacted by a world in alarm. As in this instance, it may well become a free-will offering, even to the uttermost farthing. Of such stuff was the inner Kant, illustrating afresh, in a ruder age, and under far other skies, the imperturbable spirit of Socrates.

We must expect to put up with something when mere men command the sun to stand still in Gilboa.

¹ The italics are mine.

PART II

DEVELOPMENT

CHAPTER I

THE PERIOD OF SCIENTIFIC ECLECTICISM

KANT'S WRITINGS, ETC.

1746. "Thoughts on the True Estimate of *Vis Viva*, and a Consideration of the Arguments of Leibniz and Others in the Mechanical Controversy, with preliminary Remarks on the Force of Bodies generally." (This essay marks the position reached by Kant at the end of his academic studies.)
- 1746-55. Resident Tutor.
- 1749-56. Swedenborg's *Arcana Cœlestia*.
1751. Knutzen died.
1754. Wolff died.
1754. "Consideration of the Question: Whether the Earth has undergone an Alteration of its Axial Rotation." In the Königsberg *Wöchentliche Nachrichten*. (English trans., in *Kant's Cosmogony*, by W. Hastie, Glasgow, 1900.)
1754. "The Question: Whether the Earth grows Old? considered physically." In the *Nachrichten*, as above.
1755. "Universal Natural History and Theory of the Heavens; or an Essay on the Constitution and Mechanical Origin of the Whole Universe, treated according to Newton's Principles." (English trans., of Part I., and Part II., chapters i.-vii., by Hastie, as above.) The most important work of this period; a remarkable anticipation of the conclusions of modern physics.

1755. "A Brief Account of Some Thoughts on Fire." (Latin Dissertation for admission to a degree.)
1755. Lessing's and M. Mendelssohn's "Pope a Metaphysician," contrasting the respective standpoints of the philosopher and the poet, with special reference to the optimistic maxim, "Whatever is, is right."
1755. Sulzer's translation of Hume's *Enquiry concerning Human Understanding*.
1755. "New Exposition of the First Principles of Metaphysical Knowledge." (Public Latin Dissertation for qualification as *Docent*.)
1755. Great Earthquake at Lisbon.
1756. "The Use of Metaphysics associated with Geometry in Natural Philosophy" (usually known as the "Disputation on the *Monadologia Physica*"; a public Latin Disputation to fulfil the statutory qualification for a professorship. In Königsberg, an applicant for a professorship was required to have defended three Latin treatises).
1756. "Upon the Causes of the Earthquakes from which the Western Parts of Europe suffered towards the End of the preceding Year." In the *Nachrichten*, as above. (English trans., in *Kant's Essays and Treatises*, by A. F. M. Willich, 2 vols., London, 1798.)
1756. "Descriptive Account of the most Remarkable Incidents in connection with the Earthquake which shook a large Portion of the Earth at the End of 1755." In the *Nachrichten*, as above.
1756. "Supplementary Remarks on the Recent Earthquakes." In the *Nachrichten*, as above.
1756. "New Remarks in Explanation of the Theory of the Winds."
- 1756-63. The Seven Years' War.
1757. "Outline and Announcement of a Course of Lectures on Physical Geography, together with an Appendix, giving a Brief Consideration of the Question: Whether the Moisture of the West Winds in our Region is due to their Passage over a Great Sea."
1758. "New Doctrine of Motion and Rest."
1759. "Some Observations upon Optimism."

From the standpoint made familiar to us now by the minute, and progressive, subdivision of the sciences, it would be easy to assert that, when Kant turned from nature to mind, a great intellect was lost to physics. But, while one may admit that some accounts of his manifold activities subordinate Kant's empirical studies overmuch, it would be an exaggeration to lament his entrance upon the speculative field. For, —to bring the date home by a literary reference,—at the time of Fielding's death (1754), even physical research had not yet hived off from cosmogonic generalisations, and won its present position as a *positive* science, appealing solely to observation and experiment. To be plain, Kant's excursions into the realm of nature possess a philosophical framework from the outset. Although dissatisfied with the academic metaphysics, upon which he had been fed, he made no bones about the fundamental character of philosophy even in his maiden essay. "It is apparent," he says, "that the first and primary sources of the operations of nature must undoubtedly fall within the scope of metaphysics." Only when we view his speculative physics thus can we appreciate their significance, or escape the tendency to treat them superciliously, even to disregard them, according to the frequent habit of scientific men, who ought to know better. Without thermodynamics, which awaited the genius of S. Carnot (1824), of William Thomson (1848-49), of Clausius and Macquorn Rankine (1850), the Prussian tutor was unable to devise a "natural history and theory of the heavens" on other than speculative lines. And, speculation being thus in the ascendant, his thoughts bore necessary reference to

the philosophical temper of his day, especially in Germany.

It is a well-known historical fact that, after his restoration to Halle by Frederick the Great, with every circumstance of distinction, Wolff never recovered his former primacy at this seat of learning. His system had begun to go to pieces from internal weakness. Moreover, this fate overtook it *ere* Kant's student days. Further, in his teacher, Knutzen, Kant came under the sway of a Wolffian who sat loose to the current doctrine, nay, who played a conspicuous part in the development of controversies that led to its supersession. Besides, the supplementary material, introduced by Knutzen to its undoing, was drawn from Newton mainly. Here we catch the secret of Kant's preoccupation with physical problems throughout his first precritical period which, accordingly, we may call the stage of scientific eclecticism. For, retaining Wolffianism in broad outline, Kant attempts to expand it from other quarters and, as a consequence, produces a combination of views, heuristic in character. His base-line is fixed, but, inquiring, he moves from point to point. Admittedly, it is difficult, in some respects impossible, to recover the intellectual situation of the young thinker. But we can detect his drift at least.

Modern philosophy developed along two parallel lines prior to Kant. They might be called the continental and the insular respectively, because Descartes and Spinoza represent the one, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, the other. The former group desired to attain a single, fundamental principle of complete certainty, and to deduce, or rather 'compose,' from it the universe of experience. On the whole, Kant was little

affected *internally* by the methods and results of the continental school. Indeed, it is fair to assert that he had not studied them with any thoroughness. The British thinkers, on the other hand, started from the principle of 'individuation.' That is to say, given the existence of individual things separately, the problem converges upon their interaction. While this approach was grateful, apparently, to the temper of the English mind, it did not lack exponents abroad. Kant knew it through Leibniz and Wolff, nay, he was nurtured in its midst. Particularly, Wolff's insistence upon the law of Identity (a term is always one, continuous, and exclusive in itself) prepared the way for the initial position of his cosmology. If it be the business of philosophy to analyse the possible, and if the characteristic mark of possibility be agreement between finite things, then we arrive ultimately at simple existences, or 'corpuscles,' which, in association, form the world experienced by man. Therefore, the aim of cosmology is to deduce the universe from these finite data. Grant them, *plus* a mind capable of understanding them, and the process becomes a straightforward piece of dogmatic procedure. From a few elementary propositions a whole science, charged with complicated results, can be charmed by mere analysis. Wolff himself was aware vaguely that no considerable success had been achieved on this method. But, intent upon system, he did not pause to ask why. Accordingly, his dogmatic twist throws empirical verification into shadow. A keen sense of this inherent defect moved the youthful Kant, who had learned Wolffianism at a time when its own supporters were demanding more extensive employment of the principle of in-

dividuation. A return to 'facts' thus gave him his early cue.

Accordingly, the first essays seem to be consequences of struggle for more light, and in two directions principally. On the one hand, an extension of data is demanded, hence the fascination of 'concrete' science, especially in its most hopeful line as represented by Newton. On the other hand, Wolff's formal separation of the simple elements of experience is retained, but the validity of the resultant system never rules unquestioned, and an effort ensues to fill it out. Troubled in this way, Kant avails himself of current discoveries, but, markedly, of current methods, that seem to promise results, and exhibits more or less eclecticism. When he lights upon information fitted to supplement Wolff's system, he adopts it, and endeavours to reconcile doctrines which, as contemporary opinion ran, *appeared* to conflict. If Descartes, Leibniz, and Crusius, to say nothing of Newton, can be placed under tribute, why not? So the empirical interest is accompanied by a distinct eclectic drift. We may review the former first, noting only the salient points.

The student essay on 'living' force was Kant's contribution to a debate which, as he says, had caused a great schism among the geometers of Europe. The facts are as follows. In 1644 Descartes published his *Principia Philosophiæ*, where he discussed the laws of motion and the vortex theory. With respect to motion, he says: "It is wholly rational to assume that God, since in the creation of matter He imparted different motions to its parts, and preserves all matter in the same manner and conditions in which He created

it, also preserves similarly in it the same quantity of motion.”¹ The ‘force’ of a body in motion was regarded as a fixed quantity, the product of the ‘weight’ into the velocity (mv). Now, for Descartes, extension was the ‘essence’ of matter, the ‘quantity of motion’ in the universe a constant, and ‘force’ proportional to ‘quantity of motion.’ On the other hand, Leibniz disproved the first proposition, held that the ‘quantity of motion’ is not constant, but that it is constant in a given direction. In 1686 he attacked the Cartesian doctrine, pointing out that, while by a lucky accident it holds for machines, it fails to furnish a true expression for the ‘measure of force.’² ‘Force’ and ‘quantity of motion’ were distinguished accordingly, and the former could be measured only in terms of ‘energy.’ A reference to the velocity acquired by falling bodies offered the obvious example. Hence, if a real relation between cause and effect is to be maintained (the problem that most interested Kant), the proper formula is the product of the ‘body’ into the square of its velocity (mv^2). Descartes’ idea of extension as an ‘essence,’ and his doctrine, that ‘force’ also is an ‘essence,’ served to confuse the issue, which later mathematicians dismissed as merely verbal. D’Alembert was the first to do so, in 1743. But Kant evidently had no acquaintance with the *Traité de dynamique*. The truth is that neither Descartes nor Leibniz grasped the conception of mass, and Leibniz is especially obscure on the subject of resistance. Nor is this wonderful. The strange intellectual atmosphere

¹ *Prin. Phil.*, ii. 36.

² “A Short Demonstration of a Remarkable Error of Descartes and others,” etc., in the *Acta Eruditorum*.

wherein the debate originated may be gathered from the fact that Leibniz hit upon the basis of his criticism in a theological connection. If the 'essence' of matter be extension, then it becomes impossible to hold either the transubstantiation or the consubstantiation dogma. Nevertheless, Leibniz is more scientific than Descartes, but both alike fail to separate the problem of the 'measure of force' from that of the constancy of the sums involved in the formulæ. Thus, for example, if we wish to find the duration of time (t) in which a 'body' (m) can move with a velocity (v) against a force (p), the fundamental equations of mechanics give the expression $t = mv/p$: if we wish to find the distance (s) through which a 'body' will move, the expression becomes $s = mv^2/2p$. If Leibniz had always distinguished clearly between momentum (*vis mortua*) and kinetic energy (*vis viva*), his doctrine would have occasioned less misunderstanding. Nor was Kant destined to settle the controversy. He attempted to reconcile the Cartesians and the Leibnizians. To this end he divided motions into two kinds: those that persist indefinitely in any body which has received them, so long as they are not opposed; and those which "run down" mysteriously as soon as their causal agency is withdrawn. For the one case Leibniz is right, for the other, Descartes; or, Descartes is correct theoretically, Leibniz in empirical practice. A lame conclusion, and one without basis so far as the division of motions is concerned. Yet, the essay possesses importance. Kant has seized the dynamic idea and, above all, is intent upon the possible cause whence dynamism proceeds. Matter occupies space, because it is a system; what is the active force whence

it proceeds, whereby it is maintained? The attitude forecasts the declaration that was to be made many years after:

"Natural philosophy will never reveal to us the internal constitution of things which, though not appearance, can nevertheless serve as the ultimate ground for the explanation of appearance. Nor does this science require this for its physical explanations. Nay, even if such grounds should be offered from other sources (for instance, the influence of immaterial entities), they must be rejected, and not used in the course of its explanations. For, these explanations must be grounded solely upon that which, as an object of sense, can belong to experience, and be brought into connection with our actual perceptions according to empirical laws."¹

In short, Kant sees thus soon that hypothesis, to be serviceable, must admit of verification or disproof—precisely what lacked in orthodox Wolffianism.

During the period of silence, after 1747, Kant gave himself to cosmological studies, and elaborated his daring book, the *Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*. In the course of his researches, he threw off the paper on the "Retardation of the Earth's Axial Rotation." Here we find his first original contribution to physics. So far as history went, he could glean no evidence of retardation. But, as it exists, he came to the characteristic conclusion that a physical cause, operating steadily, must be at work. This he discovered in tidal friction. As the tide sweeps round the earth from east to west, it acts as a break upon the rotation, "the result of which must become in-

¹ *Prolegomena to any Future System of Metaphysics* (1783), sec. 57.

fallibly perceptible through long periods." This unprecedented inference remained unknown for a century, when, after the mean density of the earth had been determined (Cavendish, 1783), and the modern theory of energy had been formulated (Helmholtz and Joule, 1847), new investigations arose which, though resulting in the correction of Kant's shaky figures, served only to establish the fundamental truth of his conjecture, as of the striking corollary wherein he explains why the moon always turns the same face to her primary.¹ Once more, and with greater success than in the previous essay, Kant made an effort to pierce the puzzling maze of effects in order to reach true causes.

The subsequent paper, "On the Ageing of the Earth," is another by-product of the cosmogonic masterpiece. Mainly critical, it prophesies the *method* of modern geophysics in significant fashion. According to Kant, the single feasible plan is to analyse changes amenable to observation, and to draw inferences such as the ascertained data warrant. In other words, the uniform operation of accessible effects may be employed to wrest their secrets from causes deemed inaccessible hitherto. Present processes, if analysed carefully, open roads of return to past conditions, and, no less, enable one to forecast future changes. Catastrophe plays a minor *rôle* in a vast, gradual evolution. As before, though 'down in the concrete,' Kant concentrates upon the abstract questions of method, and of the equivalence between cause and effect.

The dissertation on "Fire" may be dismissed with the *proviso* that it is noticeable for Kant's acceptance of

¹ Cf. G. H. Darwin, *The Tides*, p. 286.

the dynamic view of matter, as for his enunciation of the undulatory theory of light and heat, all vibrations being modes of a tenuous, underlying substance—the ether, in short. In the “Remarks on the Theory of the Winds,” Kant made another capital discovery, unaware that he had been anticipated by George Hadley (1735). Hadley’s hypothesis was advanced to explain the trade winds of the tropics. These atmospheric currents were due, he thought, to the wide range of temperature between the polar and equatorial regions, while their deviation was caused by the rotation of the earth. In particular, he took it for granted that currents moving along a meridian were referable to these causes, while those on a parallel of latitude exhibited no such deviations. The science of aerodynamics had not progressed sufficiently to point the error of this assumption, and Hadley’s hypothesis remained in vogue till the Tennessee schoolmaster, Ferrel (1817–91), founded dynamic meteorology in 1858–59. As in his cosmology Kant went beyond Newton, so, here, he took a wider sweep than Hadley. He did not confine himself to tropical currents, but considered also the westerly winds of temperate regions. He came to the conclusions, verified since, with many differences in detail, by Ferrel, that the horizontal motions of the atmosphere are traceable to a westerly trend from the equator to the pole, and *vice versa*; and that the rotation of the earth is a component in these phenomena. Hence, north-easterly winds prevail on the north side of the equatorial belt, the northing due to the gradient, the easting to the earth’s rotation. Similarly, the westerly breezes characteristic of Britain and the Atlantic coasts of Europe, are caused by the

arrival of the current at regions of diminishing rotatory velocity. Kant's theory seems to have been forgotten by historians of meteorology, and it is much to be desired that an expert in this science should compare his conclusions with those of Poisson (1839), Dove (1852), and Ferrel, to say nothing of later developments. One would be especially interested to learn how he fared in the debate between the followers of the Hadley-Dove and the Ferrel theories. For the present purpose, it may suffice to record that, in Kant's time, mathematicians had not determined the influence of the rotation of the earth upon the motion of a body passing freely along its surface, so, much was hidden from him. He did not realise that the polar areas of low pressure are caused by a convectional interchange in currents between the equator and the poles, passing over a rotating sphere. He did not attack the practical problem of the general direction of winds in a given latitude and on a known gradient. Nor did he appreciate the application of mathematical analysis to systems such as the trade winds, even if his view of monsoons be correct, without condescending upon details, where, no doubt, he would have stumbled. He did not grasp the significance of belts of pressure, and, likely enough, knew little about the typical system illustrated in the "brave west winds" of the "roaring Forties." But this is only to say that meteorology had not come to its own. Yet his paper, like his cognate exploits, is remarkable for its strong grasp upon the idea of the unity of the physical universe. In sum, he insists that all physical occurrences can be referred to physical causes. Periodic winds form no exception to this rule; as

effects, they are amenable to explanation precisely like other events in nature. Their systematic character suggested this to Kant, and here, as in the other scientific writings, he followed the clue unerringly, if only as a pioneer. Ignorance compels me to refrain from the affirmation that Kant's "theory is in almost entire agreement with that now received." But it needs no technical mastery to observe that his method has been adopted universally. Nor is this strange. For, while mathematics—still in lusty youth—alone could reach results of permanent value, Kant advanced the postulate essential to mathematical treatment—the mechanical view of the universe. His fundamental purpose is to link observed effects with discoverable causes. Delivered from the scholastic morass of *causa æquat effectum*, he points to the sure path of observation, even although the day of experiment had not dawned.

Kant closes his essay on the earth's axial rotation with the remark, that he is about to publish "a system under the title, 'Cosmogony, or an Attempt to deduce the Origin of the Universe, the Formation of the Heavenly Bodies, and the Causes of their Motion, from the Universal Laws of the Motion of Matter, in conformity with the Theory of Newton.'" This describes his most famous scientific work better than the title adopted finally. For, the emphasis upon the cosmogonic aspect serves to make plain that the treatise deals with 'natural philosophy' in the old sense. That is to say, while the body of the work considers physical questions in empirical detail, the setting as a whole implies constant reference to ultimate principles—to philosophy. In the clear

Preface, noteworthy for its modern tone, Kant delineates this dual aim.

"Air, water, heat, when viewed as left to themselves, produce winds and clouds, rains, rivers that water the land, and all those useful consequences without which nature could not but remain desolate, waste, and unfruitful. But they bring forth these effects not by mere chance or by accident, so that they might just as easily have turned out harmful; on the contrary, we see that they are limited by their natural laws so as to act in no other way than they do. What are we then to think of this harmony? . . . Now then, I confidently apply this idea to my present undertaking. I accept the matter of the whole world at the beginning as in a state of general dispersion, and make of it a complete chaos. I see this matter forming itself in accordance with the established laws of attraction, and modifying its movement by repulsion. I enjoy the pleasure, without having recourse to arbitrary hypotheses, of seeing a well-ordered whole produced under the regulation of the established laws of motion, and this whole looks so like that system of the world which we see before our eyes, that I cannot refuse to identify it with it."¹

The empiricism of Newton, which had stopped short at the solar system, and had thus left room for divine interference elsewhere, is to be extended so as to rationalise Lucretian atomism. Equally, Lucretian atomism is to remove the necessity for miraculous interference at any point. The Latin studies of Kant's schooldays have their effect here.

"I find matter bound to certain necessary laws.

¹ Hastie's trans., pp. 22, 23.

Out of its universal dissolution and dissipation I see a beautiful and orderly whole quite naturally developing itself. This does not take place by accident, or of chance; but it is perceived that natural qualities necessarily bring it about. . . . These are the grounds on which I base my confidence that the physical part of universal science may hope in the future to reach the same perfection as that to which Newton has raised the mathematical half of it. . . . I have with the greatest carefulness kept clear of all arbitrary hypotheses.”¹

Accordingly, Kant’s decisive enunciation of the nebular hypothesis was undertaken, not in the interests of positive science merely, but also to prepare for a sound metaphysic. Newton had confined himself to the solar system, where observation could replace speculative inferences. His enthusiastic, but independent, disciple went far beyond the master, to show that one law rules throughout the entire universe, visible and invisible. In particular, he sought to detect simple forces of nature where Newton had seen “the immediate hand of God.”

“The simplest and most general properties which seem to be struck out without design, the matter which appears to be merely passive and wanting form and arrangement, has in its simplest state a tendency to fashion itself by a natural evolution into a more perfect constitution. . . . A constitution of the world which did not maintain itself without a miracle, has not the character of that stability which is the mark of the choice of God. It is therefore much more in conformity with that choice to make the whole creation

¹ Hastie’s trans., pp. 25-26, 30, 35.

a single system which puts all the worlds and systems of worlds that fill the whole of infinite space into relation to a single centre." ¹

So, exhibitions of supernatural power come to be superfluities. By the law of parsimony, the reach of causal relationship received indefinite extension. The *origin* of stellar systems, no less than the present mutual connections between sun and satellites, can be referred to the action of known physical causes. Given tenuous matter, composed of minute particles endowed with attraction and repulsion, it can be proved, according to ascertained mechanical principles, that all material systems must have originated in the same way, that they reach maturity identically, and that a common collapse awaits them without exception. The principle of 'individuation' rules everywhere. When the separate empirical 'atoms' are granted, the rest follows inevitably from the primitive nature of the component elements, no extraneous, 'impressed' action being necessary. The cosmos becomes a self-explanatory whole.

Of course, Kant recognises that "speaking generally, the greatest mathematical precision and mathematical infallibility can never be required from a treatise of this kind." ¹ And, science being what it was, he commits errors. His vortical whirl in the nebulous mass is an improper assumption, because he failed to see that no dynamic system can of itself increase its 'moment of momentum'; his 'planets' could never have developed the direct rotation which the known universe manifests. His mathematical resources did not suffice to reveal this blunder. The same held true

¹ Hastie's trans., pp. 74, 141

² *Ibid.* p. 36.

of his calculation (for the first time) of the diurnal period of Saturn, as of his deduction of axial rotation in general. He mistook the reason for the small density of the sun, and, thanks to absence of thermodynamics, fell into the false idea that the universal process could start once more from nebular 'clouds' when, as a result of the collapse of systems, dissociation had reproduced the original state of tenuity. Nevertheless, these errors in detail were inevitable. As Hastie well says, to insist upon them "is like finding fault with Kepler for not having worked out Newton's law of gravitation."¹ The fact remains that Kant's general hypothesis has held its ground just because it was at once so penetrating and so inclusive. How great an advance it signalises may be gathered most readily from a comparison. Contrast the *Natural History and Theory of the Heavens*, with Malebranche's amazing stuff, in his *Recherche de la Vérité*, written only forty-four years earlier (1712); or, to adorn the tale more emphatically, with the absurd physico-theologies rife in the eighteenth century. Nor was Kant unconscious of his feat. The qualities that render it so remarkable appear at their height precisely in Part II., the most important section in the author's view, the one, also, where he is entirely original, being under no obligations to predecessors such as he acknowledges to Thomas Wright, of Durham, in Part I. His permanent merit is to have seen clearly that the origin of the physical universe is a scientific question, to be solved by appeal to the forces of attraction and repulsion in scattered particles of matter. He delivered himself from contemporary

¹ Hastie's trans., p. civ.

prepossessions to such a degree that his theory clashes far less with modern discovery than that of his renowned successor, Laplace. In addition, he is abundantly aware of the limits of hypothesis, and does not hesitate to tell where he gives rein to 'scientific imagination,' as in his explanation of the eccentricity of comets; or where he is ignorant, as in his notions about the inhabitants of other worlds; or where he proceeds perforce by speculative inference, as in his concluding remarks on the immortality of the soul. Sometimes, too, he avoids problems which, in the state of knowledge at that time, it was hopeless to attack—for instance, the pre-nebular condition of matter. Little wonder, then, that his Preface has been termed *the* Preface to all cosmogonies, and that the magnificent seventh chapter of Part II. ranks with the most moving pronouncements on the subject.

Although, thanks to the untimely bankruptcy of its publisher, the book fell from the press still-born, and missed its immediate object, it marks an epoch in natural philosophy. Law replaced Lucretian chance, simplicity expelled Cartesian involution, mechanism dispersed the clouds of mysticism raised by Malebranche, the seductive physico-theologies, which bemused Wright and even Newton, were evaporated; Herschel and Laplace had to submit, not to anticipation only, but their positive errors, slurs on the cosmological validity of their systems, were avoided with astonishing intuition. In short, Kant's powerful intellect, guided by the logic of pure reason, succeeded in penetrating whither none of the professional mathematicians of the age had been able to go. Nay, as if this were not enough, he was the first to forecast the

epoch-making conception of Evolution, and his dynamic hypothesis remains adjustable to the immense advances overtaken since, from Prout to the most recent researches of contemporary physicists and chemists. It is scarcely too much to say that the principle of his cosmogony is identical with that of any parallel construction possible to-day. And why? The answer may be given in words penned by himself, a generation later, in his masterpiece, the *Critique of Pure Reason*. "The wildest hypothesis is preferable to an appeal to the supernatural."

The *Natural History and Theory of the Heavens* thus established two results for human thought. First, all physical relations can be referred to causal connection, and it is the business of positive science to exhibit this in detail, carrying the explanation to the extremest limit possible. Second, the nature of causality, like kindred ultimate problems, belongs to philosophy. In his cosmogony Kant pursued the first as far as was practicable with the scientific attainments of his age. Thence he passed to the remanent questions, and spent the rest of his life in their elucidation. They lay latent in his empirical period, just as, in his philosophical stages, the scientific aspect never lost its influence. To this side of the matter we turn now.

We have noticed that Kant tended to mediate between contrary views in his scientific writings. In the *Vis Viva* essay he unites Leibniz with Descartes, in the cosmogony he combines Epicurus and Lucretius with Newton. Despite his independence and originality, the hand of the past lies heavy upon him. A similar process recurs in the philosophical works, but the

eclectic movement possesses more significance here, on account of its bearing upon the presuppositions of scientific thought. To understand this, we must remember that, as in our own time, the progress of science gave a lead to metaphysical reflection. Every one knows that empirical inquiry, particularly in the biological, psychological, and historical fields, has exercised enormous influence over contemporary speculation. And every one ought to know that this result has flowed, not from the technicalities of these disciplines, but far rather from the master-idea that animates them. No doubt, we have learned much from microscopic observation of physiological processes, from experimental study of mental states, from analogical reconstruction of the remote past. But, even so, the average man appreciates the refined methods of cytology, psycho-physics, and anthropology, in their daily routine, no more than he realises the recondite operations of the pure mathematician. On the other hand, the hypothesis of Evolution has appealed to him powerfully, firing his imagination. Not the particular phenomena, no matter how entrancing, but the *ultimate* interpretation of the whole scheme

“holds him with his glittering eye—. . .
He cannot choose but hear.”

Nay, he is aware vaguely that, thanks to this central idea, great changes have overtaken, and still threaten, the judgments he may pass upon the values of life.

“He went like one that hath been stunned,
And is of sense forlorn :
A sadder and a wiser man,
He rose the morrow morn.”

Now, a parallel reversal affected Kant, because Newton's stupendous conception, in its cosmic application, was winning its way to acceptance in continental Europe, and furnishing food, not for a learned caste only, but for all thoughtful folk. Celestial mechanics was blossoming into a theory of the universe. And, just as Evolution raises the problem of the ultimate nature of reality, so Motion, when productive of a cosmology, forces the question, What is the relation of mental constructions to the things which we perceive in space through the senses? For, plainly enough, pure mathematical reasoning may consist of a chain of ideas perfectly invulnerable '*in*' the mind, and yet it may not be called upon to justify the claim that it furnishes a true account of things as they are, or of historical conjunctions in the past. That is, it may be quite valid in itself, and have no necessary reference to the *is* of objects, or to the actual career of our race. Now, just as we face the Evolution hypothesis within a certain framework, the creation of post-Kantian thought mainly, so Kant met his cosmic difficulties from a standpoint that had passed to him from the philosophy of the Renaissance, especially in its Leibnizian phase. For him, as for us, the scientific facts and the older ideas mingle within the matrix and, from the admixture a wider outlook is precipitated, one intent upon an interpretation that will suffice for the morrow. Thus men create epochs—when, representing the present, they transform the past, and mould the future.

While Kant's scientific inferences surprise by their originality, the same cannot be said of his philosophical reflections at this period. Assuredly, he struggles

with real problems, but the past oppresses him and, notably, the forms that were his heritage hide the deeper import of the fundamental issue. So, he is restive, and dissatisfaction with current solutions aggravates him. Nevertheless, the *tripotage* of the schools ensnares him, so that he is unable to rise above compromises. Or, to state the case in a sentence: the supplementary material, drawn from mathematico-physical sources, palpitates with progressive vigour; on the contrary, the principles of Leibniz-Wolffianism tend to produce a species of philosophical coma. As a consequence the *Nova Dilucidatio* and the *Monadologia Physica* are the least independent performances of the first stage. Yet they hint significantly, even if they scarcely display, the central problem.

The system of Leibniz was susceptible to enlargement, and eventual transformation, by Newtonian empiricism, because it attempted to deal with the universe from the side of the 'individuation' principle. It took ground characteristic of positive science. What is the individual? If you separate it from the great universe, and gift it with a certain reality in its own right, so to speak, How conceive it? An obvious answer lies ready to hand. The individual is in itself—I=I; for an individual exists just because it is *this* individual. But, even, so, we seem to be put off with a "miserable account of empty benches." For does not every individual possess an active nature, that is, a nature manifested thus and so? And, this admitted, must we not agree that individuality finds its peculiar centre in force of some sort? Leibniz's philosophy proposes a solution of these problems. When you

define the individual, making it a truth of reason, you arrive inevitably at an identical proposition ($I=I$, $A=A$). In other words, the individual contributes a primary, inviolable unit. But, when you try to bore into its reality, making it a matter of fact, you uncover conditions of dependence, possibly to infinity, and, in any case, phenomena of interaction or, at least, of mutual relation, clamour for notice. It is impossible to disregard them. Thus, the individual presents two insistent aspects—a lone selfhood, having “no windows through which anything could come in or go out,” as Leibniz said;¹ and a coexistence of manifold units in a larger whole, with accordant participation of all members in common. Now, you may either think through this paradox (of the isolated individual, and the unity of many individuals), and face the difficulty squarely, or you may appeal to daily experience (‘common sense’), alleging that, always and everywhere, you *do* meet such and such co-ordinate relations between real individuals. On the whole, Leibniz, and far more emphatically Wolff, adopt the latter course. The Leibnizian principle of God’s “choice of the best” is a lame counsel of expediency. It takes the given facts of experience and, without critical regress, refers them to a divine order. The dilemma solves itself—in heaven! The individual is individual, because God has willed it to be this separate self. The relations between individuals are as we find them ordinarily, because this arrangement subserves God’s purpose, it is his choice of the best means to perfection. Thus, when we come to ‘compose’ a universe from individuals, we merely discover what we had perceived

¹ *Monadology*, sec. 6.

already, namely, that the parts *are* conjoined in space. And even if the peculiar relation between soul and body seem to form an exception, it can be no more than a special case within the known order. Thus, the entire problem is postponed, or rather, referred to a force which does not belong in the world that confronts us. *Reasons* for the truths of reason we may obtain; but *the* reason for truths of fact we cannot compass. That is, the necessity for the scheme of nature escapes us.

Wolff, obsessed by the rage for utility, and a master of the obvious, rid himself of Leibniz's difficulties by conventionalising the system. He rendered it a more systematic philosophy by a clever move—he omitted the philosophy. He dismissed summarily Leibniz's recognition of a difference in kind between ideal and real relations by referring the principle of Sufficient Reason to the law of Identity. The problem of the universal organisation disappeared, and individuals were stranded in static isolation, to be 'composed' as common sense might find need. Thus, while they exist, they are incapable of 'becoming,' that is, of development in an *order greater* than themselves. Their pre-established harmony may be held a superfluity, even if it must be admitted that soul exerts a direct action over body, and not an ideal or indirect influence, as Leibniz had held. The individual *is*—the individual, and, so far from being a representative microcosm, it exists merely as a part conjoined with others in a macrocosm sustained by application of God's power. God 'composes' our universe of individual elements—a view adopted direct from common sense by the 'philosophy for the world.' But, if this be *all*

that reason can tell, it has fallen upon plain bankruptcy. Whither, then, may we turn for a less insolvent solution? A single alternative presents itself. Reason having cozened us, we apply to experience. Knutzen had arrived at this point, and Kant followed the steps of his teacher. But the professor never caught the ultimate implications, and many years of toil awaited the pupil ere the scales were to drop from his eyes.

Naturally, then, the Latin exercises for admission to the staff of the philosophical faculty betray eclecticism. We may put the case thus. To this point, some grave problems had been raised, and the repugnant, but inexpugnable, factors had baffled the acutest intellects. Necessarily, certain results had emerged in the long course of the discussion, and, no matter how they might antagonise one another, they were available for use in the construction of a more solid platform, as it seemed to Kant. He did not yet apprehend the need to re-originate the whole problem in a different way. Among the many critics of Wolff, C. A. Crusius (1712-76), a prominent professor at Leipzig, wielded the greatest influence. Crusius launched his first attack while Kant was a student (1743), and the important works, containing his assault upon the popular philosophy, were published before our author returned to Königsberg. It is not surprising, therefore, that the *Nova Dilucidatio* attempts to square this criticism with Wolffian principles, not yet discarded, nor that, remembering what has been said already, Kant fails to attain a position above both combatants. It would be unfair to allege that he tinkers consciously, but he does espouse reconciliation, and this without subjecting the given doctrines to farther, deeper, analysis. Thus,

in the *Nova Dilucidatio*, Leibniz, Wolff, Crusius, and the mechanical theory derived from Newton, as expanded in the cosmogony, are playing upon Kant at once.

This essay probes the problem of relations between particular existences in a possible world. How are we to think of the cosmic organisation revealed to us in experience? Kant takes his stand upon Wolffianism in this way. Leibniz had distinguished between the logical law of Non-contradiction, and the principle, or better, axiom, of Sufficient Reason. The former rules 'necessary' propositions, *i.e.* those that deal with 'essences' and species, whose existence is not demanded for the truth of the judgments in which they are the subjects. The latter governs 'contingent' propositions, *i.e.* those that involve successive states or sequences in existence. Plainly, then, the former must be concerned with universal and necessary truths, the latter with individual things, except the existence of the 'universal-individual,' God. Leibniz did not offer a decisive explanation of the precise connection between the two principles, and his peculiar doctrine of final causes tends to confuse the issue. For Wolff, the greed of system annuls this difficulty at a blow. Sufficient Reason is carried back to Non-contradiction. Kant assumes this position, substituting the law of Identity for that of Non-contradiction, but his Newtonian studies had convinced him of the need for fuller accommodation to empirical facts. So, he at once finds a field for the operation of Sufficient Reason, more or less in the Leibnizian sense. A student of physics could not remain blind to the importance of the principle, that every effect must have a causal ground.

Accordingly, he introduces 'determinant' reason, as he calls it, following Leibniz's earlier usage. And, immediately, he is brought into that realm of knowledge where we meet a real interdependence of phenomena under law, involving succession and coexistence. Now, this faces two ways—to knowledge, with its peculiar ground for relations among ideas, and to 'things,' with their peculiar ground for relations among matters of fact. Thus we have a conjunction which cannot be referred to the law of Identity, for, to take the most obvious instance only, *different* occurrences *do* follow one another of necessity. As a result, Kant proceeds to a further analysis. Determinant Reason has two species—the reason which determines the consequent, and the reason which determines the antecedent. The former is the reason whereby I know that I can add a predicate to a subject; it tells me *why* I am able to do so, but not *how* the process takes place whereon I base my judgment. When I see that my ivy has grown a few inches, I *can* say, 'it is higher,' but I am not made aware thereby of the plant's physiological changes. The latter is the reason of being—the reason in 'concrete'—which at once explains and effects the relation. In the one case, we pass from an event to a principle of logical connection, in the other, we catch the principle at work in fact.

Once more, still in dependence upon Wolff, Kant had assumed that the "natures of things" are necessary, *i.e.* for our thought there cannot but be something in which the qualities live and move and have their being. Accordingly, the reason which determines the antecedent faces two ways in its turn—to truth (intellectual) and to existence (real). Ideally, every

possible judgment must have a reason. But, so far as concerns existence, this is not true, because a concept by no means guarantees existence. The chemical atom may be an excellent working hypothesis, and may not exist. Still, we are bound to hold that every phenomenon must have a phenomenal reason, and that, at last, all events of this character must be carried back to a reality whose antecedents no reason determines; or, translating into scientific language, to a cause, which, being a cause, can never become an effect. That is, to be perfectly candid, we cannot know why finite things exist, although we are forced to assume them. A divine intelligence is posited, and in a definite way—it creates. Thus, we do have separate individuals, and we do have real relations between them, such as we learn from physical science. But all alike depend upon a principle of unity which is not a member of the mere series. Empiricism gets its pound of flesh; notwithstanding, behind the contingent changes—which are of God—lie those ideal essences, the “natures of things,” also of God, and, as a consequence, God supports all causally. The universe known to us in space and time presupposes God, who is not in space, and who, from before the beginning of time, has endowed individual existences with permanent relations to one another. Some of these relations we know under the condition of space, others belong to ideas, where such a condition has no meaning. Thus, thanks to Wolffian principles, elaborated along the lines of ideal and real reason suggested by Crusius, but drawn so as to exclude his charges of fatalism, Newton’s natural law is at once extended, *and* shown to be secondary. As a result, experience really presents

itself in two systems, one real, and yet secondary, the other ideal, and yet primary. The paradox that bothered the continental pre-Kantians has been reinstated openly, and in such an acute form that, had Kant not been engrossed in Newtonianism, he must have reverted to something like the acosmism of Spinoza. The old problem—of the real individual, and the ideal universal—is raised on the old scale. Kant perceives no avenue of escape. He has not even come to doubt the possibility of escape. Thoroughly awake, he has won no full measure of philosophical independence.

In the *Nova Dilucidatio*, then, the manifold reciprocal actions of the things known to us in space and time are outward manifestations of the divine Being. God creates natural objects, and endows them with relations to one another in a finite order. That is to say, all things are linked according to an ideal mutuality. In the brief essay *Monadologia Physica*, Kant passes to consider some of the particular relations thus revealed. His 'monads,' or original individuals, are, unlike the Leibnizian, simple, material substances. They occupy space, as is proved by their possession of repulsion and attraction, for these qualities must belong to a body. In short, Kant adopts the Newtonian type of dynamical theory, and his monads are really 'atoms,' peculiar, however, in that they form unextended centres of force which can act at a distance. Now, this physical hypothesis involves distinct philosophical presuppositions. The simple individuals do possess a nature, or 'essence' of their own, which is motivated exclusively from within outwards. What men know, therefore, as in physical science, is not this nature in itself, but the states—

repulsion and attraction—that characterise the separate individuals when they interact. Nevertheless, Kant by no means institutes a difference in kind between the ‘natures’ and the ‘states.’ It may well serve a convenient purpose to say that the former are ‘real,’ the latter ‘phenomenal,’—that they stand to each other as the rain to the rainbow. But, even so, both are direct manifestations of the Being of Deity, which creates them. So, all we are entitled to allege of the difference between the two is, that the ‘essence’—something ideal—precedes the ‘states.’ Briefly, then, there would be no separate existence of given individuals, and no commerce between them as members of one universe, did not something else, different from each or any, intervene. And this implies either, that the isolation and independence of individuals is a mere *façon de parler*, or, that God can no longer be regarded as a being external to them. Thus, the spacious Leibnizian approach to the problem inclines to replace Wolff’s narrow way, and this despite Kant’s empiricism. Yet, thanks precisely to this empiricism, the problem penetrates deeper, and its terms become more urgent. But these fundamental implications were hidden from Kant at the moment. And the dilemma, inseparable from this type of theory, was to force him towards scepticism ere other considerations could rouse a profounder criticism. He has not closed the epoch of his birth.

The “Observations on Optimism” serve to indicate that Kant still clung to a variant of previous Rationalism. This is the ‘best of all possible worlds,’ because God has so chosen. The contingencies, confusions and limits, bound up with the finite things of

our knowledge, exist because they serve a divine plan. Meantime, however, Kant fails to draw the evident conclusion—that finite things possess no reality of their own, and therefore, that the real cannot find place in human experience. For, this experience implies particular relations, while the ultimate Being excludes, even negates, such fluid states.

To this point, accordingly, Kant's development has been little more than tentative, because his eclecticism has presented an insuperable barrier to the origination of more adequate views. One may allege that he took the new demands of physics seriously. But many ideas, cloaked in the authority of general acceptance, oppressed him, and barred his progress to the point where he could be serious with the new demands of philosophy. Nor can we count this against him. For he himself was destined to formulate these very demands eventually. Indeed, his philosophical revolution came by this road.

CHAPTER II

THE PERIOD OF HESITATION

KANT'S WRITINGS, ETC.

- 1751-72. *Encyclopædia of the Sciences, Arts, and Trades*, edited by Diderot; height of the French *Eclaircissement*.
1759. Frederick the Great defeated at Cunersdorf; period of the greatest strain upon Prussian resources begins.
1759. Birth of Schiller, one of Kant's most eminent disciples.
1761. Rousseau's *New Heloise*.
1762. Birth of Fichte, the founder of post-Kantian Idealism
1762. Rousseau's *Social Contract*, and *Emile*.
1762. "The Erroneous Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures." (English trans., in *Kant's Introduction to Logic*, by T. K. Abbott, London, 1885.)
1763. Swedenborg's *Sapientia Angelica de Divino Amore et de Divino Sapientia*.
1763. Letter on Swedenborg to Fraülein v. Knobloch.
- 1763-66. Hume in France with Lord Hertford, in high philosophical repute.
1763. "The only Possible Ground for a Demonstration of the Existence of God." (English trans., in *Kant's Essays and Treatises*, by A. F. M. Willich, 2 vols., London, 1798.)
1763. "An Attempt to Introduce the Conception of Negative Quantities into Philosophy."
1763. Death of F. A. Schultz.
1763. Peace of Hubertsburg; end of the Seven Years' War.

1764. German translation of Macpherson's *Ossian*; the impression created by it may be said to presage Romantic tendencies.
1764. "An Inquiry into the [Evidential] Clearness of the Principles of Natural Theology and Morals." (English trans., by Willich, as above.) Berlin Academy Prize Essay, *written in 1762*.
1764. "Observations on the Feeling of the Beautiful and the Sublime." (English trans. by Willich, as above.)
1765. "Programme of Lectures" for the Winter Semester of 1765-66. (Important for the light it throws upon Kant's attitude towards German Rationalism and British Empiricism.)
1765. Leibniz's *New Essays concerning the Human Understanding*.
- 1765-66. Correspondence with J. H. Lambert.
1766. Lessing's *Laocoon*, signalling the decline of pseudo-classical criticism.
1766. Death of Gottsched.
1766. "Dreams of a Visionary explained through the Dreams of Metaphysics." (English trans., in the *Dreams of a Spirit-Seer Illustrated by the Dreams of Metaphysics*, by E. F. Goerwitz and F. Sewall, London, 1900.)
1766. Letters to M. Mendelssohn on the "Dreams," as above.
- 1766-67. Wieland's *Agathon*; Rationalism succeeds Pietism (Klopstock's *Messiah*) in the realm of pure literature.
1767. Herder's *Fragments upon Modern German Literature*; beginning of genetic, or historical, criticism, and of the decade known in German literature as the *Geniezeit*—the prelude to the movement away from or, as many would say, beyond, Kant's mature attitude of critical reserve.

We must remind ourselves sharply that the use of the term "stages" is for our own convenience. The development of a thinker who, like Kant, proceeds

tentatively and very slowly, reveals no sudden or complete breaks. The transformations occur gradually and, at the moment, their subject was, in all probability, far less conscious of them than are we, who grasp them synoptically after a long interval. Accordingly, as we pass from the first to the second "stage," we must recall that precise information about the daily, or weekly, or monthly, or yearly course of the ferment fails us. Six years elapse between the Latin Dissertations and the "Erroneous Subtlety of the Four Syllogistic Figures," broken only by the "Observations on Optimism" as concerns our present theme. And the "Optimism" essay points to the static past rather than to the dynamic future. All we are entitled to say is, that Kant's self-orientation is moving towards a new centre. Theories of nature framed in the Leibniz-Wolff-Newton perspective begin to pale before—not *theories* now—but problems, in the strict philosophical fields of metaphysics and epistemology. The truth seems to be that, by 1759, or thereby, Kant had exhausted the possibilities of reconciliation between Leibniz, Wolff, Newton, and the critics of the current academic philosophy, and that, without clear perception of the fact, he had found himself baulked of an answer to the ultimate problem. In any case, it is evident that he had undermined the neat, but superficial, individualism of Wolff by concessions in the spirit of Newton. Real things in space do change their states *per* mutual repulsion and attraction. Nevertheless, he still entertained the doctrine that produced Leibniz's Pre-established Harmony. The 'things' of the physical universe are dependent upon an ideal Being, in whose nature

their separate individualities vanish. Of course, these incompatible assertions reach no unity in an all-inclusive theory, but coalesce, thanks to the interposition of a divine *fiat*. Now, this is only to say that the unity is adopted ready-made from the daily intimations of common sense. The *popular philosophy* rules as yet, the emphasis being upon the adjective when ultimates are in need, upon the noun when matters of fact come in question. The primary, as men must judge, ends in paradox, the secondary, as they perceive it actually, works well enough. But, even so, "organised common sense" cannot do duty for philosophy, and the genuine thinker is compelled to try another route.

If, as we have seen, it be fair to characterise the first stage as a readjustment to Wolffianism in which empirical conjunctions and eclectic mediation played a principal part, we may say further that, on the whole, the former gained the upper hand between 1760 and 1766. It is true, I think, that Kant never became a thoroughgoing empiricist in any sense, and that he did not seize Hume's precise argument, and adopt Locke's sensational, or Shaftesbury's moral sense, theories. Nevertheless, British thought, especially in its Voltairean dilution, now attracting the attention of Europe, left a mark. Moreover, Kant had acquaintance at first hand with several of its representatives. On the contrary, he never escaped recollection of Leibniz and Wolff, and so he tended to hark back, if not to their specific doctrines, then to the scale of problem-values with which they had familiarised him. In short, while he moves from scientific to philosophical empiricism, traces of the prior eclecticism are preserved, and the component

takes the form of hesitation, more or less. Thus, no new standpoint is indicated *ab initio*. Further, we have to reckon with the onset of the reaction against Rationalism. This touched Kant in the persons of Rousseau and, in a very different way, Swedenborg. And, although it might be urged that Hume's influence served to bolster the rationalistic bent, I incline to the opinion that, at this period, Kant's footing with the 'bad man' of Edinburgh was rather that of a bowing acquaintance than of an intimate friend. As we are aware, Kant never knew the "Treatise," and it is difficult to believe that he had taken the "Essays" seriously by the early sixties. Thus, the tentative character of the previous stage persists, although its perspective alters. It is no accident that, in his "Programme" of 1765, he advises the "zetetic" method for philosophical instruction, because investigation, not straightforward doctrine, continues to be the prominent feature of his own mental processes.

The short essay on the "Syllogistic Figures" discusses a debatable technicality in Formal Logic, which need not detain us here. Yet it points the course of his development, because it shows that he has begun to ruminate upon the nature of human thought. No doubt, Wolffian premisses are adopted, but with clear recognition of one novel consequence at least. Logical processes aim at distinct conceptions which, in turn, enable men to distinguish between objects. Thus, we possess a "secret power," denied animals, which "enables us to render our own ideas the objects of our thoughts." Now, this "power" to connect ideas with objects is precisely the grist in the mill of one

great section of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. There is little or no evidence to prove that Kant appreciated the fact meanwhile. But it is important to notice that his eye rests no longer upon nature, mind has sailed into his vision, as we may gather from his epistemological distinction between Understanding and Reason, the former furnishing immediate judgments of single objects, the latter mediate judgments based on comparisons of objects, and issuing in unification of attributes with subjects. The precedence given to analytic method betrays the lingering influence of Wolff, and, as a result, fundamental treatment of complex judgments is not attempted. They may be, and, as in the case of causality, are, adopted from experience. So the ultimate inquiry into the unity of experience, with thoroughgoing discussion of the thought-reality enigma, sleeps on. Kant has not

“In the vast dead and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter’d.”

But, like Hamlet, he begins to feel “’tis very strange,” and he “will watch to-night,” and

“Give it an understanding, but no tongue.”

Naturally, then, the other publications of this period are much more important, because they indicate his sceptical attitude towards some solutions of eighteenth-century philosophy, which dismiss the final problem too easily. And even if it must be said that the difficulties are dictated to him, not originated within his own reflection, the drift of his replies is manifest enough.

Kant was now thirty-eight, verging upon mature

power; since schooldays he had been a voracious general reader, and was one of the best-informed men of his time. It is little surprising, therefore, that the theistic and Berlin essays, and the epistemological paper on "Negative Quantity," abound in acute remarks, and wise suggestions, none the less grateful that they do not proceed from a compacted system. On the other hand, we must recognise that the points are scored somewhat sporadically, as it were. But, when we penetrate beneath this fascinating give and take, we find two more or less pivotal, even permanent, positions, which serve to control his attitude as a whole. In the first place, he is developing a critical, if not hostile, front to Rationalism and many of its works. He thinks that prominent doctrines, accepted by his contemporaries, lack fundamental basis. To be plain, he is winning his emancipation from Wolff, though hardly from the Leibnizian outlook. In the second place, he evinces suspicion that, maybe, the most difficult problems set by the human mind lie beyond its competence. He breaks with the school-philosophy of his youth and, for the rest, inclines to scepticism about the possibility of any system. Granted, then, that the writings now in question present many traces of an intellect such as Kant's, on the threshold of its maturity, it may be affirmed generally that the critical rebound dominates the productions of 1762-63, sceptical irony the *Dreams* of 1766, which, from a literary standpoint, is one of Kant's most admirable performances.

These indications are of profound interest for our inquiry, where we are concerned, not so much to reproduce Kant's ideas in detail, as to detect the

transient movement of his thought, cross-currents notwithstanding. The *Demonstration of the Existence of God* presents its theme in a Leibnizian perspective, because it presupposes the familiar discussion about Identity and Sufficient Reason, with its pendant, the distinction between logical possibility and factual existence. At the same time, Kant strikes a note destined to ring through his thought later. He insists upon the practical or moral aspect of the question, and co-ordinates this with the intellectual or metaphysical difficulty. Nay, when he pronounces, in his conclusion, that "it is altogether necessary we should be convinced of God's existence, but not so necessary that we should be able to demonstrate it," he foreshadows a view that was to sway him profoundly twenty-five years after. While, therefore, he starts from the thought of a previous generation, he proceeds in his own way, and this, again, takes no little direction from his early Pietism. Further, he connects his present work with a doctrine formulated in the cosmogony of 1755, he even summarises the argument of the *History of the Heavens*, and elaborates the physico-theological considerations advanced there. In the spirit of critical revolt, he gives short shrift to the proofs of God's being conventionalised in current metaphysics. He denies that the conception of God furnishes a ground whence to infer existence, as Anselm and Descartes had maintained. For, existence is never a mere predicable quality, because predicates imply possibility, while possibility demands a ground in existence, the means of passage to further attribution. As a result, it is absurd to attempt demonstration of God's being on the methods in vogue with Natural Theology.

Appeal to design avails nothing. Nay, it only seduces the lazy to abandon empirical search for true causes, and lands them in otiose contentment with subjective expectations. No demonstration of a divine Being can be extracted from empirical events, or from that portion of human experience which proceeds from direct commerce with nature. Thus, at a stroke, Kant dismisses the motley teleologies of his century. Hydro-theology, Pyro-theology, Litho-theology, Astro-theology, and a dozen others, with their thoroughly external approach to nature, afford no sufficient reason for the existence of God. They bemuse the mechanical order with fanciful analogies that make confusion worse confounded. Accordingly, the ancient ontological, and the contemporary cosmological, types of demonstration simmer down to mere verbalism. Nay, the sceptical current sets so strong that the futility of all such proofs suffices to hint the inherent futility of metaphysics itself. And the reason must be sought in absence of fundamental analysis—a conclusion that presages the Critical Philosophy. Kant therefore abandons the unscientific schoolmen of his day; authoritative texts and teachers cannot stay his scepticism. Yet he is reminiscent of his Pietistic tendencies in practice, as of his *History of the Heavens* and *Nova Dilucidatio* in theory.

To this point in philosophical effort, then, according to Kant, metaphysical demonstrations have been irrelevant. On the empirical side, they cannot carry us beyond probability, and probability is not proof; on the *a priori* side, they end in fatuity, as numerous examples exist to show. Yet, if any demonstration of God be possible, one must proceed *a priori* in the

nature of the case. Accordingly, Kant reverts to an earlier position of his own which he elaborates with some detail and not a little scholastic apparatus. Seeing that he was not to raise the knowledge-reality problem now, he had no better recourse, probably. The method is to proceed from the possibility of a consequent to an existence that suffices to determine it. Obviously, the conception of God is possible to human experience. But this possibility presupposes a being which furnishes its ground. If not, admitted possibility would become impossible. Moreover, the formal argument from logic may be reinforced by an appeal to cosmology. As matter of record, the sciences of mathematics and physics prove the world of experience to be a congeries of separate consequences harmonised in a unity. Any proven natural law manifests itself in numerous, diverse events. But all co-exist in combination, so that the oneness of the whole dominates the differences. And while it is not merely possible, but advisable, to explain these connections by a mechanical theory, the unity must possess some ground.

“Is this unity, this fruitful harmoniousness, possible apart from dependence upon a wise Author? The prevalence of a regularity so wise and ubiquitous forbids this. But as the unity in question has its foundations in the very possibilities of things, there must be a wise Being, apart from which all these natural objects are impossible, and in which, as an inclusive basis, the constituent natures of endless natural objects enter into regular relations of union.”

In the issue, therefore, we are driven from a possible world to an existence that provides an adequate source

of the contrasts we experience. Thus, on both counts, a necessary Being must exist, to guarantee our conception of it, and to endow our cosmos with its primordial, substantial unity. In other words, one being exists in relation to itself, therefore it is absolute, and all that can be predicated of God belongs to it already.

Throughout this discussion, Kant is at his strongest in his cosmological references, and in the undercurrent of appeal to moral need. But both of these take their rise from common sense, and, to this extent, he has not disengaged himself from the philosophy of his age. In addition, his formal arguments might be riddled easily. For example, his dualism between thought and existence is sufficient in itself to baulk demonstration of an absolute. And when he passes from the experiential relation between the possible and actual to a reality behind both, and therefore superadded to them, his procedure savours of scholasticism. Indeed, it could be shown that he merely inverts the well-worn ontological proof. But these criticisms possess no vital moment for our present theme. The points to be remembered are: that Kant cuts loose from Wolff, Baumgarten, Crusius, and the conventional authorities generally; that he begins to detect—obscurely, to be sure—the significance of opposition between elements as *in an experience for us*, and the same elements as *in a supposititious nature of their own*; that he carries the contrast between possibility and existence to a point where the partition from the thought-reality problem wears very thin; and that he sends his plummet to a new depth when he realises that, somehow, differences of attribution and of actuality

are overcome in the God of his demonstration. Now, all this is to say that the sceptical rebound generates problems, without as yet arousing any keen consciousness of their profound implications. For, Kant's drift has run to method more than to matter.

The same preoccupation with method reappears in the Berlin Prize Essay, the chief concern being with evidence. As before, we are confronted with a familiar issue in contemporary academic debate, and with a return to considerations advanced in the cosmogony of 1755. There is the same step back, as it were, followed by the same step aside, but not by the requisite step forward. Nevertheless, various matters are clarified for Kant, as a result of the movement. The general contrast between formal principles, which are capable of demonstration, and material principles, which must be assumed, passes into the more specific contrast between the method of science, especially mathematics, and that of philosophy. As we had occasion to see already, modern philosophy is affected deeply by the biological hypothesis of evolution. This has replaced the spatial analogy from celestial mechanics that deflected philosophical method so strongly from Descartes to Leibniz, and even later. In the demonstrative form peculiar to Spinoza's *Ethics* it attained its most memorable illustration, and Kant knew it well from Baumgarten's *Metaphysics*. Accordingly, he protests against this confusion, and proceeds to institute a sharp contrast between the method proper to mathematics and that suitable in philosophy, taking middle ground, however, on the 'reform' wrought by Newton. The mathematician can begin with definitions, for instance, "conceptions of magnitude—conceptions

at once clear and sure"; he can then proceed "to see what can be inferred from them." Philosophy has no partnership in this *arbitrary* method; arbitrary because peculiar to a special field and to particular cases, and ready to accept the dictates of sensuous consciousness. It cannot create its objects by synthesis, and still remain true to itself. It is not called upon to combine *quantities* on a basis of sensuous reference, but to analyse *qualitative* conceptions which are given confused, in order to determine their validity as possible factors in a future construction. That is to say, science may adopt its material straight from common-sense experience, philosophy never. Definition, where science begins, may be reached eventually by philosophy, but only after a tedious process of evaluation. So, Kant strikes a sceptical attitude towards contemporary metaphysics, and seeks surer footing in his Newtonian studies.

Philosophy must abandon its slap-dash constructions, and adopt a circumspect analysis of experience in the spirit of Newton. The physicist determines the laws governing phenomena, simplifies by disengaging them from the welter of events, and in such a way that the greater simplicity is already a kind of explanation. Similarly, the philosopher ought to proceed upon sure internal experience, and thus elucidate the factors common to his concepts. He will find that there are many indemonstrable ideas, and he will refrain, accordingly, from premature synthesis. Nor does Kant's attitude of hesitation stop here. "Metaphysic is the most difficult of all human efforts after insight," so much so, that "it has never been written so far." Long travail with the analytic method must supervene

ere it will be practicable to compass positive synthesis. In this connection it is important to note Kant's wavering mood. He nowhere declares that philosophical synthesis must differ from mathematical, he even hints at the extension of the latter into new fields. In other words, he has not reached the point where he could perceive the impossibility of a demonstrative metaphysics, and so he is not struck by the "superfluity of naughtiness" involved in any proposal to demonstrate the universe. As a result, he still leaves a convenient loophole for return to demonstrative philosophy in the eighteenth-century sense.

Finally, he finds parallel dogmatism in the region of morals. Just as the notions of 'cause' and 'spirit' are befuddled, so is that of 'obligation.' A problematical obligation falls short sadly of a 'moral imperative,' which is obligatory precisely because it recks not of consequences. And this Stoic 'must' can never become the subject of demonstration. Particular duties may be justified formally, but, in the last resort, the 'why' of duty under all circumstances lies beyond the ken of intellect. Nobody knows how the antithesis between flesh and spirit is overcome—but it *is*.

While it cannot be affirmed that these essays are popular, in the sense that he who runs may read, they are calculated to interest the average student more than the technical paper on "Negative Quantity." After a manner, they train with Locke and Shaftesbury rather than with the expert followers of the 'high *a priori* road,' upon whom Kant directs his irony. Indeed, they represent a departure from fashionable intellectualism, even if they can hardly be termed concessions to the 'common consciousness.'

This change was due partly to Kant's growing scepticism of the popular philosophy, whose pretensions appeared to him in inverse *ratio* to its success, and partly, no doubt, to the influence of Rousseau, which gripped him at this time, as we shall see later.

But, despite his hesitations and doubts, we find Kant still plodding at his mental toil in the "Attempt to Introduce the Conception of Negative Quantities into Philosophy." He reverts here to the technical question of the difference between logical and real opposition, which had disturbed him for years, and had been brought before him forcibly in his investigation of theistic proofs. Conformably to the ideas of his age, he tells us that all opposition is of two kinds, logical and real. The former consists essentially in a statement that affirms and, by consequence, denies, in a single judgment. That is, if the ground be sufficient, the positive assertion excludes the negative, but implies it, and the matter ends there. In real opposition a very different situation occurs. Two statements may be repugnant mutually, nevertheless, they may be equally positive, therefore negation can ensue only upon their union. To take his own case. Impenetrability may be regarded as negative attraction, and negative attraction is real repulsion. Consequently, occupation of space follows from the opposition between the two. Thus, conditions governing conceptions must differ widely from those governing matters of fact, and so "we often deceive ourselves by mere words, without understanding the thing." As a result, Kant returns upon the old distinction between logical and real ground. The logical law of Identity affords a very patent reason why we can pass to a consequent. But,

with reality, the case is far other, and the question comes to be, "How can I understand that because something is, therefore something else also is?" We could fathom causality, were it logical; but it happens to be real. And Kant is conscious that he cannot tell "how something follows from something else, and not by virtue of the law of Identity." For, "our knowledge of this connection always culminates in simple, irreducible conceptions of real antecedents, whose relation to their consequents can never be made entirely clear." Whether Kant was affected *directly* by Hume in this declaration, we are quite unable to say, as I believe. At best, it must remain a disputed point. Anyway, he is face to face with Hume's problem, so much so, that he is already prepared to be affected profoundly by the thrust of Hume's argument. For, if *real* relations between antecedents and consequents be incomprehensible, if we must rest content to accept causality as a simple *datum* from ordinary experience, then, on Kant's own principle, of the priority of analysis over synthesis, we are bound to fall back upon a thorough examination of the conditions under which the *inseparable* connection is given *in* experience. Plainly, Kant is now ready to move the reckoning from the *objective* field occupied by the dogmatic metaphysics of his youth to the *subjective* sphere which his critical epistemology was to delimitate. A single pertinent inquiry remains: How long will he take to discover this readiness to himself, what means will avail?

The eighteenth century has been sorely bethumped with words. We learn on all hands that it was an age of scepticism, rationalism, revolution, and other evil propensities. We are not told so often that, as a matter

of fact, it was notable for conflict between reason and crude supernaturalism, freedom and injurious privilege, public education and class culture. That is, the 'isms' foisted upon it popularly met strenuous opposition, their counterpart. Wesley, Whitefield, Reid, Francke, Rousseau, and Swedenborg are as much avatars of the epoch as Tindal, Chubb, Hume, Bahrdt, Voltaire, and Reimarus. Absorbed in the problem of cause, as they were, men lent heed no less to the presence of spirit. The acute division between matter and mind, long characteristic of thought, could not eventuate otherwise. We have seen that, in the causal realm, Kant took Newton for his master. In the tenuous region of spirit he found no master, but he studied Swedenborg's *Arcana Cœlestia* as a classical guide to the doubtful land of *Weissnichtwo*. And if years had to pass ere he divined the reason for Newton's metaphysical limitations, he discovered forthwith that Swedenborg's "knowledge of the other world can be obtained here only by losing some of the intelligence which is necessary for this world." The expert as to the sky may be a plain fool upon earth below. This attitude dominates the *Dreams of a Visionary*, perhaps the most attractive of all Kant's works to the general reader—a masterly piece of ingenious construction and ironical byplay.

Here we find Kant delivered from hesitation for the moment, and possessed by a mood of what looks like settled scepticism. A relation of exact correspondence between the natural and spiritual worlds may indeed obtain on condition that the "confused individual places objects of his mere imagination outside of himself, and views them as real and present things. . . . It is not astonishing, then, if the visionary believes himself to

see or hear many a thing which nobody else perceives but him ; or if these fancies appear to him and disappear suddenly ; or if they beguile the sense of sight, for instance, and can be apprehended by no other sense (touch for example), and thus seem to him intangible." So blurred are the boundaries between wisdom and folly. But, grant this, and the construction of a spirit world becomes child's play. And, worse luck, this proves to be the kind of thing with which professed metaphysicians have busied themselves. Their case is hardly less deplorable than that of the ecstatic. Accordingly,

"Let us leave to speculation and to the care of idlers all the noisy systems of doctrine concerning such remote subjects. To us they are really negligible, and the reasons *pro* and *con* which prevail for the moment, although they decide the applause of the schools, possibly, decide hardly anything about the future destiny of the righteous. Human reason was not given wings strong enough to cleave clouds so high above us, clouds which withhold the secrets of the other world from our eyes. The curious who inquire about it so anxiously may receive the simple, but very natural, reply—that it would be best for them to please possess themselves in patience till they get there. But, as our fate in the other world depends probably very much upon the manner in which we have filled our place in the present world, I conclude with the words with which Voltaire, after so many sophistries, permits his honest Candide to conclude: 'Let us look after our own happiness, and cultivate our corner of the garden.'"

For, "what is the necessity which causes a spirit and a body to form a unity; and, once more, what is the

cause which breaks this unity in case of certain disturbances? These are questions which, among others, are above my intelligence."

Accordingly, Kant dismisses the whole subject of spirit,—“in future it concerns me no more,”—and, forsaking the great reach, confines himself to “the mediocre, fitting the pattern of his plans to his powers.” Scepticism seems to have marked him for her own. But, fortunately, some men must unravel the tangled skein of mind for their fellows, and we soon meet him in attack upon the ultimate problem by a soberer method. Leibniz read through Swedenborg furnished an amusing episode, meet for high hilarity. But, tickled by his own sport, half angry at his own interest, as at the futility of vaunted philosophical aids, Kant missed the real issue. Spirit and matter are indeed antinomies. Nevertheless, they do happen to coexist in man's unitary experience, so be we can ask any question about either. No display of dialectical swordsmanship upon a given *corpus vile* can avail a Kant, or anybody, in place of serious thought. No trained thinker could abide simple topsy-turveydom. And the beginning of the end lay just within Kant's sight.

CHAPTER III

THE END OF AN EPOCH

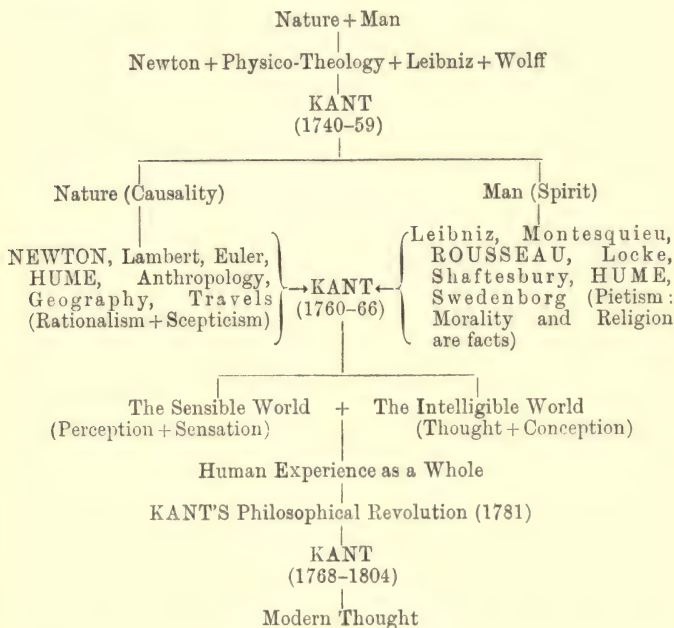
KANT'S WRITINGS, ETC.

- 1768. "On the Primary Ground for the Distinction of the Regions in Space" (in the Königsberg *Wöchentliche Nachrichten*).
- 1768. Murder of Winckelmann.
- 1769. Napoleon the Great born.
- 1769. Euler's *Letters to a German Princess*.
- 1769. Swedenborg's *De Commercio Animæ at Corporis*.
- 1770. Kant's appointment to the Chair of Logic and Metaphysics.
- 1770. "Dissertation concerning the Form and Principles of the Sensible and Intelligible Worlds." (English trans., in *Kant's Inaugural Dissertation of 1770*, by W. J. Eckoff, New York, 1894.) Read on assuming the duties of the Professorship.
- 1770. Baron d'Holbach's *Système de la Nature*.
- 1770. Birth of Hegel, the greatest post-Kantian idealist.
- 1771. Parliament of Paris abolished (revived 1774).
- 1771-72. Letters to M. Herz, throwing light upon the genesis of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.
- 1772. First Partition of Poland; East Prussian territorial junction with Brandenburg by the acquisition of West Prussia.
- 1774. Death of Louis xv.; accession of Louis xvi.; Turgot minister.
- 1774. Goethe's *Werther*.

- 1775. "On the Various Races of Mankind" (Programme of Lectures on Physical Geography; Kant's popular course).
- 1776. Declaration of Independence by the British North American Colonies.
- 1776. Death of Hume.
- 1776. Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*.
- 1776. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (vol. i.).
- 1777. Death of Lambert.
- 1778. Death of Voltaire.
- 1778. Death of Rousseau.
- 1780. Frederick the Great's *De la Littérature Allemande*.

There can be little question that Hume is the most significant, if not the greatest, thinker yet born of the English-speaking world. Thanks to the peculiar genius of our complex culture, our poets, naturalists, and publicists, rather than our professed philosophers, have punctuated epochs. Scotland aside, the professorial type has not led our world. Thus, when we seek to personalise our 'thought,' we revert more to Shakespeare and Milton, Burns and Wordsworth, Newton and Darwin, Emerson and Carlyle, Browning and Ruskin (with some subconsciousness of Cromwell and Pitt, Washington, Lincoln, and Gladstone), than to Locke, Berkeley, and Spencer. If only he had added 'Shakespeare' to his stature, Bacon would be our ideal 'thinker'! Little wonder. Our technical philosophy lacks *positive* philosophical quality. And so, Hume, who *ended* an epoch, stands forth our prime philosopher. Kant, on the contrary, ended an epoch in his own person, to create another for mankind. The following table may serve to illustrate the extraordinary manner in which he acted as a pivot, and to

indicate the point in his development where we have now arrived. It may also afford us occasion to take further stock of the man.



This diagram serves to show that, at the outset, in Newton, Physico-Theology, Leibniz, and Wolff, the two contrasted factors of human experience, Nature and Man, were given joined mysteriously, and that Kant, swayed by these influences during his education, was inclined to accept the union ready-made from common sense, without deeper investigation. This marked the stage of scientific eclecticism. Next, gathering opinions from many quarters by a very

wide range of study, he began to suspect that the factors circled apart so decidedly that no fundamental justification of their unity could be reached. In any case, attempts to elucidate the basis for it had been miserable failures so far. This was the period of hesitation. Further reflection brought him to see, however, that the "Sensible World" manifested itself in one range, the "Intelligible World" in another, but that, nevertheless, they did form a unity in human experience as a whole. The "year that brought me great light" (1769) prefaced the decade of almost total silence. The subsequent publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), where Kant presented a thorough-going critical examination of the conditions under which, in his view, the union of the two factors does occur as a matter of fact, opens a new era for modern philosophy. For, Kant sought to justify at once the causal (natural law) standpoint of physical science, and the idealistic (spiritual) conviction of morality and religion. In other words, the two streams met in his person, revealed the manner of their unity there, and flowed thence, their oneness investigated fundamentally. Modern thought, in its preoccupation with its own marvellous acquisitions of detail in the natural sciences, on the one hand, in the human (historical) sciences, on the other, has often tended to miss the import of Kant's achievement. So much so, that it has reverted sometimes, as in materialism, to causal Nature alone, sometimes, as in Lotze's neo-Leibnizianism, to free Spirit alone, thus going behind the Kant of 1768-1804, and concentrating upon the half-worlds which, as he had shown, are never mere halves, even when separated by the mental

device of abstraction. For, nature is causal,—a ‘spiritual’ judgment; while spirit is ‘natural,’—a patent ‘fact’ in our universe.

Kant, then, served as a pivot almost uniquely. Yet we know that, after he had wrought his system, he paid little attention either to his critics, or to the constructive thought of those who professed to adopt and elaborate his principles. His development coming so late, he stood set in his ways and, conscious of the task he had accomplished, preferred to hold his own solutions undisturbed. Moreover, he was no accurate historical scholar, like so many recent professors of philosophy, his own commentators not least notable. We cannot class him as a “reading philosopher.” His acquaintance with Plato and Aristotle does not appear to have been profound. Stranger still, he had not studied his greatest predecessor, Spinoza, with minute care. His knowledge even of Leibniz had filtered through Wolff in no small measure, although he always worked more or less in the Leibnizian atmosphere. On the other hand, his keen interest in human affairs led him to become a voracious general reader, a habit confirmed by opportunity during the years of his librarianship (1766–72), while his wonderful memory, and faculty for concentration, enabled him to retain vivid impressions of endless interesting and suggestive facts, adapted admirably to illustrate his popular lectures. So far as we know, it was after his return to Königsberg that he learned to devour books omnivorously. As a result, in the period which we have just been discussing, he drew many intellects to himself. Thus he fell under the influence of several thinkers who may be said to have *seeded* his mind.

But, at our late day, thanks to meagre records, we cannot recover in detail the processes of germination and growth. We do know, however, that Newton maintained his hold till a late period, supplemented by Lambert and Euler, in the decade 1763-73. Others, like Locke, Hutcheson, Shaftesbury, Rousseau, Swedenborg, Hume, and the Leibniz of the *New Essays*, lent Kant's thought fresh stimulus. Of these, Rousseau, Hume, and Swedenborg, especially the Swiss and the Scot, were most important, for I cannot think that Swedenborg's part was more than negative. It may enable us to approach more closely to Kant, the middle-aged man, and to gain a clearer grasp upon his pivotal position, if we turn to these new forces for a moment.

Although I cannot recover the reference, I have chanced upon a statement to the effect that, in all three "Critiques," Kant drew the form of his problems from Rousseau. It could be shown, I believe, that his philosophy of religion owed something to the Savoyard Vicar's confession of faith, with its pronouncements upon God, Freedom, and Immortality, and upon agnosticism concerning the supersensible. But one would overshoot the mark far were he to derive the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and the rest, from *Emile*, say. Thus, the question arises, What was Rousseau's relation to Kant, when he burst upon the Prussian tutor in the early 'sixties? We have reason to know that the philosopher admired the wayward sentimentalist. It is recorded, too, that, when Kant came to possess a home of his own (1784), Rousseau's portrait was the single decoration permitted in that dingy Königsberg workshop, "cleared for action" otherwise,

and guiltless of such superfluities. Still, it is a far cry from these records to the blunt proposition, that Rousseau, the obscurantist, moulded the ideas of a thinker whose analytic minuteness abates no toll of reason. The fact seems to be that Rousseau struck in upon Kant at an opportune moment, after the reaction against the excessive intellectualism of the Illumination had well begun, giving direction to a new estimate of relative values in human life. We find this significant expression in the *Demonstration of the Existence of God*. "Providence has not willed that those convictions which are most necessary for our happiness should be at the mercy of subtle and thin spun ratiocinations, but has imparted them direct to the natural, common understanding." Here was soil prepared for Rousseau's seed. Moreover, thanks to his lowly origin, and to his horror of social abuses, serfdom in particular, aroused during the years of his tutorship, Kant had been ever ready to espouse the cause of the poor against the privileged. Nay, as he declared to Moses Mendelssohn, in 1766, he had long practised Rousselian precepts in his stern fight with untoward fortune. "I am sure that I shall never become inconstant and guilty of altering my appearances with each shift in the world around me, after having learned through the longest part of my life to do without and to despise most things that commonly corrupt the character." Ready to believe that worth is not dependent exclusively upon the accident of opportunity to acquire culture, sceptical of the judgment that describes human nobility in the abstract processes of intellect only, Rousseau's plangent words hit home to Kant. In one way, he heard tell on a sudden all things

that ever he did. He learned why there may well be a range of man's being where prince, peasant, and philosopher share and share alike. His inherent protestantism and republicanism received powerful stimulus. If, as Rousseau held, reason progress through the passions, no man is worse off than his neighbour. Nature has set all on the same plane. Be the intellectual virtues what they may, goodness and faith root elsewhere.

Such thoughts, scattered broadcast by Rousseau, moved Kant the more that he was on the point of deserting his first love, Nature, and was about to turn to human nature which, as matter of fact, is not *all* intellect. Accordingly, Rousseau not only helped to confirm Kant in his defection from Rationalism, but furnished acceptable material for another synthesis. The judgment of 1784, that "Rousseau was not far wrong when he preferred the savage state," because, whatever our intellectual culture, "much is wanting ere we can call ourselves moralised," is a late echo of a conviction formed under guidance from the *Social Contract* twenty-two years earlier. No man could have been more unlike Kant personally than Rousseau. Nay, the obscurantism of the Genevese was calculated to arouse the philosopher's deepest indignation. Notwithstanding, between 1761 and 1764, thanks to Kant's uncertainty, he was captivated, and with two results. In the first place, Rousseau detached him finally from the Illumination, by teaching him that intellectual culture never suffices of itself for the happiness or betterment of mankind, and that, in particular, moral advancement involves the will,—change of 'heart,' not mere precision of ideas, con-

ditions it. In the second place, Rousseau confirmed him in the study of human experience, as contrasted with Nature, a course to which he was just committing himself, and taught him to descry the common bond of humanity, not in knowledge, but in the basal elements of the moral life. Yet, Kant had been ready for this revelation long since. Indeed, Rousseau may be said to have produced a reversion to Pietism. Thanks to him, Kant recovered a sane view of the permanent truth that underlies the Pietistic attitude and interest. Overlaid sadly, no doubt, by later experiences, this had been familiar to him from his mother's knee: it now stood forth clarified before his expanding view of human nature. But these seminal ideas, with their significant swing in perspective, must needs ferment long ere they could be absorbed in a final system. Thus, despite Rousseau, or rather, because Rousseau was no accurate thinker, at pains to justify and equate his thronging views, we find Kant still condemned to proceed upon his lonely way, heartened, but not deflected from his sterner purpose.

The Swedenborg incident, particularly if taken out of connection with Kant's entire development, is apt to puzzle, despite the fact that it too harks back to his parental traditions in morality and religion. Swedenborg's youth and middle age were occupied mainly with scientific questions, technical pursuits (mining), and administrative affairs. He abandoned these in 1747, after he had arrived at a conviction that he enjoyed intercourse with an angelic world whence he received personal revelations.¹ His bruited powers of clairvoyance, which nonplussed Kant, seemed to

¹ Cf. William White, *Life of Emanuel Swedenborg*, pp. 77, 89, 141.

offer evidence of his credibility. Kant, intent upon all human affairs, proceeded to investigate, and read Swedenborg's extensive theological work, *Arcana Coelestia*, forming a low opinion of its value, and remaining perplexed by its author's alleged 'experiences.' The fairest account of the manner in which Swedenborg impressed him occurs, as I think, in his notable letter of 8th April 1766, to Moses Mendelssohn, part of the correspondence that ensued upon the publication of the *Dreams*. Kant confesses,

"The attitude of my own mind is inconsistent and, so far as these stories are concerned, I cannot help having a slight inclination for things of this kind; and, indeed, as regards their reasonableness, I cannot help cherishing an opinion that there is some validity in these experiences despite all the absurdities involved in the tales about them, and the crazy and unintelligible ideas that deprive them of their real value."

Like Rousseau, Swedenborg found Kant at a time when his thought had strayed farthest, not from religion and spiritual things, but from confidence in the possibility of solutions for problems originated by the inner life. The Swede, who was a dogmatic gnostic, did not persuade Kant that a 'world beyond' breaks through here and now. On the other hand, there is reason to infer that he did reinforce Kant's native tendency to hold that morality and religion are real factors in human experience which must be met and, if at all possible, equated with all that comes from that other factor—sensation. As the *Dreams* show, Kant was nonplussed, piqued perhaps. Swedenborg's phrase, where he speaks of the "Spiritual world as a very real universe"—the *mundus intelligibilis*,

which must be distinguished from the *mundus sensibilis*, is not without parallels in the *Dissertation*, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and the ethical works. On the other hand, no stress can be laid upon the Latin terms used by both authors. They were familiar figures in current manuals. Besides, Kant never adopted the objects of Swedenborg's ecstatic vision, nor could he entertain the belief that men can learn of a spiritual land by special messages and messengers. On the contrary, he took his point thus: the human intellect is able, of its own motion, to furnish experience with constitutive principles for which we search vainly in sense. That is to say, according to Swedenborg, our *extraordinary* day may be illumined by spirits from another realm; according to Kant, our *normal* experience involves two dimensions, both present here and now, neither having any relation to a universe where our conditions are conspicuous by their absence. The "Sensible and Intelligible Worlds" of Kant are equally part and parcel of man's *human* equipment.

It is not wonderful, then, that, as Kant declares, "my own mind is inconsistent." For, prepared by nature to lend ready ear to the gravity of spiritual questions, persuaded by consecutive reflection to admit the double nature of experience, Swedenborg's dogmatism, and appeal to abnormal psychological states, repelled him nevertheless. Like Socrates, he came to recognise the possibility that intellect may fail to grasp its object and, driven by this movement of antagonism (antinomy), he strove to discover why. As a consequence, he encountered occurrences which, to adopt Herschel's phrase, "ought not to happen according to received

theories." His own thought forced him to this conclusion independently and, with Swedenborg, he grouped these 'occurrences' under the name *mundus intelligibilis*, a familiar term of the schools,—not a supernatural universe, but an unsuspected range of human activity. In short, Kant's 'transcendental' is not transcendent; it is never *ad hoc* of

"The undiscover'd country, from whose bourne
No traveller returns";

on the contrary, it is *cum hic* of our daily sense-experience.

Thus, the inbreak of Rousseau and Swedenborg intimates not a little concerning Kant's personal outlook at the time, although I am persuaded it conveys scant information about the sources of his eventual system. It reveals a human more than a philosophical 'document.' Chastened by the passage of years, done with the outworn ideas of a previous age, Kant found himself unable to rest longer in the belief that logical ratiocination, mathematical formulæ, or physical hypotheses based on the evidence of the senses, would suffice to account for the entire sweep of human experience. Morality and religion are facts no less than sight and taste, they have their peculiar effects, with which one must reckon on their own terms. Nay more, events do not simply happen for man; they are compacted in a vast unity. Science bears witness to powers beyond its sober conclusions. May not the intellect itself supply principles of construction that transform the sense-world, removing it from the chaos of chance sequences, and lifting it to the plane of cosmic significance? But, once more, How? Here

Kant, the student of human limitations, could obtain little help from the Swedish theophysicist, the prophet of God's purpose in his creation.

Rousseau, by quickening Kant's appreciation of the distinctive worth of simple manhood, played a part in preparation for the later ethical metaphysics; and, possibly, the visions of Swedenborg, emphasising a correspondence between spirit and sense, affected Kant similarly. But, after all, this aspect of the experiential problem had not yet attained a level of importance co-ordinate with the intellectual question. A sapper for so many years among the foundations of physical science, the rôle of theoretical reason engaged Kant still. Rousselian affirmations, perhaps Swedenborgian suspicions, were to return for judgment in due season. Meanwhile, the sense-world, as *organised* in scientific *theory* — a product of reason — claimed attention. Now, men are nowise responsible for their sensuous conditions; as a result, their rational processes, compelled to operate upon a foreign element, may fall short of the actual truth. If so, to what extent can and do they pierce to any truth? Consideration of the limits placed upon knowledge by empirically given 'fact' may disclose an answer. At all events, there is no other method. And, at the outset, it is quite plain that 'fact' is given empirically in the framework of space. To this Kant passes in his essay, "On the Primary Ground for the Distinction of the Regions in Space," which represents a departure from the scepticism of previous years, and a slight swing back to the rationalistic position.

Till this time, Kant had been content to regard space in a Leibnizian way. The substances that underlie our sense-phenomena exist out of space,

because they are force-centres. As a result, space seems to presuppose relations between bodies, because it is made known by their motions. But, in 1768, Kant adopted the Newtonian view in so far as he came to hold that "absolute space" must possess a reality of its own, if divisible matter exist. A body, that is, not only enters into relations with other bodies, but also has relations to (within) itself, and these last demand space as precedent to their being. But *this* space is not perceptible to the senses, on the contrary, it is a 'work of the mind,' indispensable to human percipience. Unlike Leibniz's doctrine, this theory presents one immense difficulty—the space which it alleges cannot be composed of real parts. And two questions emerge forthwith, insuperable by Kant at the moment. First, How can a universe in this space be deemed a self-maintaining unity, with nothing beyond? Second, How can we analyse it into primitive elements so primary that analysis must at once cease and find satisfaction? As a consequence, the testimony of *sense-perception*—that the universe is such a unity, and that it is 'composed' ultimately of such elements—stands in flat contradiction with the conclusion forced upon us by mathematico-physical *reasoning*—that space cannot but be a prerequisite of the objective universe. The house of experience is thus divided against itself, and there seems to be no choice but to throw ourselves, as it were, into the arms of sense *or* of pure intellectual theory. An antinomy has been established in fundamentals. Doubtless, Kant's traffic with empiricism would favour the former alternative. But some echo of Hume's 'short way' with this counsel of common sense gave him pause.

The moot points, about the date and relative force of Hume's influence, cannot be raised here. Suffice it to say that Kant knew the German translation of the "Enquiry" so early as 1756, that in the essays of the 'sixties he committed himself to statements quite in the Humian spirit, and that for some years after 1769 Hume's evisceration of causality (*i.e.* of science) disturbed him. I believe that we are not in a position to recover the precise course of the subtle relations between the two thinkers, and that we may magnify the case too readily. There is ample evidence to show that had an intellect of Kant's power and acuteness possessed intimate acquaintance with the complete presentation of the Scot's scepticism, its course must have been deflected more decidedly than it was. I incline to conclude, therefore, that we should conceive of Hume's interference somewhat in the same manner as Rousseau's. Briefly, Kant owed little, if any, of his material to Hume, and he did not attempt a formal disproof of sensational empiricism; but Hume enabled him to substantiate the fact of experiential antinomy, and this in a most conspicuous, far-reaching example. That is, Hume's exhibition of the inner logic of empiricism hastened the precipitation of Kant's characteristic problem. Kant's eyes were opened more speedily to the imminent peril. He saw that Hume had closed an epoch, and that this reckoning set his new task. Besides, despite the temporary mode of its presentation, the clamant question at issue was neither more nor less than the central, irrepressible problem of all philosophy: What is the relation of a *thinking* subject to the *existent* universe wherein it takes its humble place as a part? Hume's mordant conclusions

stimulated Kant so that he confronted the tremendous implications consciously. The problem must be approached from an untried side, by a thorough analysis of the conditions under which thought eventuates logically; the matter afoot is to determine the possibility, extent, and objective validity of subjective syntheses. The *unity* of nature may well seem to persist in 'matter,' as dogmatic empiricism and irreflective common sense allege; it is incapable of justification or guarantee save in and by intelligence.

But we have been anticipating. Very probably, some years (1770-74) elapsed ere Kant inferred from Hume's scepticism that no accumulation of instances suffices to explain universal and necessary affirmations. And we have still to consider the famous *Dissertation* of 1770, which closes his stage of hesitation, and presages his final system. Much labour and ingenuity have been expended in the debate over the exact place of this essay in Kant's development. Is the "Inaugural" pre-Critical or Critical? An elementary arithmetical comparison may serve to hint one reply. Kant devotes some 63 per cent. of the *Dissertation* to the 'Sensible world' mainly; 13 per cent. to the 'Intelligible world'; about 24 per cent. to the method of approach to each. Contrast these proportions with the *Æsthetic*, *Analytic*, and *Dialectic* of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and you have food for suggestive reflection. At all events, you can adduce relevant grounds for the inference that the *Dissertation* represents a movement of transition. It opposes the Leibnizian doctrine of sense, and the Newtonian doctrine of space, thus keeping touch with Kant's past. It reiterates the Platonic apposition between

apprehensions of sense and apprehensions of thought, thus disclosing a future which Kant was never to forsake. On the other hand, it misses the question, How comes it that apprehensions of thought *do* apply in a world where apprehensions of sense are inevitable? And this omission shows us where to look for the difficulty that the *Critique of Pure Reason* was to attack. So far as I know, this aspect of the complicated inquiry is envisaged clearly for the first time in the letter of 21st February 1772, to Marcus Herz. Accordingly, we may say that, in the *Dissertation*, Kant is disengaging himself rapidly from his traditional mentors; on the contrary, he has not yet become what later generations know as '*Kant*.' The new territory lies in sight, exploration remains to be undertaken.

The marrow of the *Dissertation* consists in the delimitation of intellect from sense. They are so distinguished that the difference comes to be one of kind rather than of degree. With the Leibniz of the *New Essays*, Kant holds that ultimate truths are present 'virtually' in sensuous percipience; unlike Leibniz, however, he finds them, not in the discursive understanding, but in those pure intuitions that are the transcendental prerequisites of sense-experience. Mere receptivity, as fundamental in the one case, forms a polar opposite to constitutive faculty, as fundamental in the other. And, on the whole, throughout his development of this broad distinction, Kant contemplates a substitute for Leibnizian rationalism, not a reply to Humian, or other, empiricism, a fact which interposes a difficult obstacle to succinct estimate of Hume's influence, because Kant's accordant tendency was to state Hume's question in Leibnizian rather

than in empirical terms. The limitations of the *Dissertation*, especially its somewhat mechanical, not to say wooden, attitude, root here. Kant's anxiety converges upon the following point. Sense differs from thought as the particular from the general, and yet sense interferes with thought, so that it is impossible to *perceive* in specific examples what we *do conceive* in universal, or at least ambient, principles. In other words, events sealed from sense may happen in thought, and they are just as completely part of experience as the intimations of sight, and the rest. To take a modern instance, you cannot touch or taste Evolution, but the efficiency of the idea as a component of experience—even in application to objects which you can touch, etc.,—is not minimised a whit. This analysis enabled Kant to uncover the source of the insoluble contradictions that had afflicted metaphysics immemorially. They were born of a confusion between two entirely different sources of knowledge.

"When we are dealing with any object, not as an object of sense, but through a universal and pure conception of reason, for instance, when we are regarding it as a thing or as a substance in general, we are led into many misconceptions if, at the same time, we bring it under the fundamental principles of sense."

Hence the 'dialectical' character of reason—opposition inheres in it by its very nature.

"For all intuition is limited by some principle of form under which alone anything can be *discerned* by the mind immediately or as a *singular*, and not merely conceived discursively by general concepts. . . . The intuition of our mind is always *passive*, and therefore

possible only in so far as something can affect our senses. But the divine intuition,—the cause, not the consequence, of objects—being independent, is the archetype, and perfectly intellectual accordingly.”

Two pertinent inquiries emerge from this demarcation forthwith. First, when intellectual conceptions are taken as standard, what is the value of our knowledge of objects? Second, when sensuous perception is taken as the starting-point, what do we really know of phenomena? Kant omits the former and, accordingly, cannot reconcile experience with itself. That is,—as indeed he saw,—the *Dissertation* ends negatively, although it furnishes the preface requisite to a possible, and positive, solution later. For, it is out of the question to *explain* experience by the simple device of abstraction from one, or any, of its inexpugnable elements. Meanwhile, the positive reference, such as it is, runs back to an intelligence quite inconceivable by us,—“the divine intuition,”—even if, somehow, this reconcile the demands of reason with the limitations of sense. The *Dissertation* implies the doctrine that “all existence is existence for a self,” but Kant has not caught the inevitable implications thus far. As he says in the Herz letter, about two years after, “an essential factor is lacking.” Nay, in the *Dissertation* he associates this want with past failures, Swedenborg’s particularly, I suspect.

“Hence folk discuss all sorts of inane questions; for example, concerning the places of immaterial substances in the corporeal universe—of which in the nature of the case there is no sensuous intuition, nor under this form, any representation,—or the seat of the soul: and as they mix sensuous objects with

intellectual objects improperly, like square figures with circular, it happens often that one of the disputants appears to be milking a billy-goat, the other holding a sieve below."

It remained to show that conceptions of reason are not ways in which a Final Cause determines finite things "in mutual commerce," but principles shot through *its own* experience by a self-judging consciousness. If 'conformity' there be, our universe conforms, not to a mythical *deus absconditus*, but to human reason. Even science intimates no less, and we need not press the more powerful evidence of history, in religion, morality, society, and art. "I asked myself," Kant writes to Herz, "on what rests the reference to the object of that which we call ideas in us?" This question formulated, investigation is whirled at a stroke from its old, conventional theatre—a physical universe of registered design—to the self-maintaining unity of man's spirit. And we who watch are witnesses privileged to see the darkling twilight of one epoch flush into the blushing dawn of another.

It may well seem passing strange that a lone thinker in a lone town of a lone province should have brought these grave matters to birth. But, "the wind bloweth where it listeth" here, for the very reason that epochs are of men, for men, by men. In them the microcosm tells the macrocosm all things that ever it did, but only after slow preparation. This preparation has claimed our notice thus far, and what a story it is! Great issues converged upon Kant from every side. A contemporary, judging harshly, as contemporaries are wont, said, "We live in an age in which superfluous

ideas abound and essential ideas are lacking." On the intellectual side Kant lived through these ideas, whatever their value. Leibniz, Wolff, and continental Rationalism sustained his youth, and he soon sought more substantial fare in Newton and cosmic speculation. Later, he came to know British Empiricism in Locke and Shaftesbury, in Hume most of all. Then Rousseau, aflame with enthusiasm, warmed and widened his zeal. And, thanks to Swedenborg possibly, he was moved to inform popular thought, in the *Dreams*, that,

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

Once more, if his intellect had been nurtured thus broadly, socio-political circumstances conspired to enlarge his outlook upon humanity. The difficult struggle from straitened boyhood, the anomalous position as a private tutor, and the low pulse of national spirit proved factors potent to anneal his tense individuality. Moreover, by a kind of paradox, they also issued in his sympathy with all sorts and conditions of men, and taught him to side wisely in the mighty conflict of aspirations that sapped and liberated his era. The Seven Years' War ran its course under his very eyes—a terrific panorama—eliciting qualities in his countrymen that found eminent epitome in his theory and practice. Finally, whatever may have been his distaste for the formalities of religion, his inbred Pietism served as a constant reminder of the superindividual element in a developed manhood. Profound experience, and that best of all teachers—human example—had convinced him that

“man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.” The deep that calls unto deep within us, turning our terrible frailty into matchless strength, had been familiar to him time out of mind. And it may be pertinent to remind ourselves that, this recognition absent, philosophy is bereft of its power to originate commands, and finds itself reduced to the ranks of feudalised scholarship.

The forty-six years that had now elapsed saw these elements commingle in the matrix of Kant's personality. The outcome was an embodied force charged with manifold latent capacities. Having at long and last attained the summit of his moderate worldly ambition, Kant thenceforward turned his ripe power upon the revelation of the new epoch bred in him by these several warring affinities. He thus became the means of transition from the chaos that was to the cosmos still inhabited by modern thought.

PART III

THE PHILOSOPHICAL REVOLUTION

CHAPTER I

THE THEORETICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY

KANT'S WRITINGS, ETC.¹

1781. Death of Lessing.

1781. "The Critique of Pure Reason." (English trans., in *Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason*, "in Commemoration of the Centenary of its First Publication," by F. Max Müller, 2nd ed., London, 1896.)

1782. Garve-Feder Review of the above, in the *Göttingische Gelehrten Anzeigen* (19th Jan.). (Represents the standpoint of the 'Illumination'; imputes Berkeleianism to Kant, who was much incensed.)

1783. "Prolegomena to Every Future Metaphysic that can Appear as Science." (English trans., in *Kant's Prolegomena and Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science*, by E. B. Bax, London, 1883; and in *Kant's Prolegomena to Any Future Metaphysic*, by P. Carus, Chicago and London, 1902.)

1784. "An Answer to the Question: What is Illumination [*Aufklärung*]?" (English trans., in *Kant's Essays and Treatises*, by A. F. M. Willich, 2 vols., London, 1798.)

1784. Js. Schulze's *Exposition of the Critique of Pure Reason*. (Approved by Kant.)

¹ In this and the two subsequent chapters, the classification has reference mainly to the dominant interest of the works mentioned—theoretical; moral, social and historical; teleological and religious.

1785. The *Allgemeine Litteraturzeitung* founded in Jena as the organ of the Critical Philosophy. Edited by Schütz and Hufeland.
1785. "On Volcanoes in the Moon." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)
1786. Goethe in Italy.
1786. "What does it Mean to Orient oneself in Thought?" In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)
1786. "Metaphysical Bases of Natural Science." (English trans., by Bax, as above.)
1786. Death of Frederick the Great.
- 1786-87. Reinhold's *Letters concerning the Kantian Philosophy*. In the *Deutsche Merkur*. (Approved by Kant.)
1787. Jacobi's *David Hume concerning Belief, or Idealism and Realism*. (Criticising Kant from the standpoint of the 'Faith-philosophy.')
1787. "Critique of Pure Reason." Second edition (from which later editions, to the Seventh (1828), are reprinted). (English trans., in *Critique of Pure Reason*, by J. M. D. Meiklejohn, London, 1878.)
1788. "On the Use of Teleological Principles in Philosophy." In the *Deutsche Merkur*.
1789. Reinhold's *Attempt at a New Theory of the Human Faculty of Conception*. (Disapproved by Kant.)
1789. The *Philosophisches Magazin* founded in Halle as the organ of opposition to the Critical Philosophy. Edited by Eberhard.
1790. "On a Discovery whereby all New Critiques of Pure Reason are to be Replaced by an Older One." (Directed against Eberhard.)
1790. "On Sentimentalism and its Remedy."
1794. "Some Remarks about the Influence of the Moon upon the Weather." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)
1796. "Upon a certain Genteel Tone Apparent recently in Philosophy." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)

1796. Goethe's and Schiller's *Xenienkampf* against Nicolai and the popular philosophers. Kant's contribution to the debate was, "On Bookmaking: Two Letters to Herr F. Nicolai" (1798).

As we have had occasion to note, the *Dissertation* of 1770 may be likened to the metamorphic strata of Geology. It represents a deposit formed at the period when Kant was in the act of passage to his distinctive theory, but the transition had not culminated by any means. Yet, the reasons for certain subsequent doctrines, essential to the Critical Philosophy, had been assembled and, not only this, they had produced consequences. The sharp distinction between the Sensible world and the Intelligible world, as different in kind, was never abandoned. In the same way, metaphysical positions characteristic of the Dialectic in the *Critique of Pure Reason* later, assert their presence, even if concealed under the mask of the old Rationalism. On the other hand, Kant had hardly begun his minute epistemological investigations concerning the limits of knowledge, which attained their full bloom in the Analytic of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, and so he had not faced the problem of the objective validity of thought. The uneven division of the *Dissertation*, with its Benjamin's share to the Sensible world, suffices to establish this. But the root of the matter lay there—the problem could not but emerge with clamant appeal. For, a dogmatic separation between thought and sense in their generic nature led inevitably to questions about objects, whereon Hume's destructive inferences bore with extreme pertinence. Moreover, as is plain, this dis-

cussion affects the realm of the Sensible no less than that of the Intelligible.

A decade elapsed ere Kant could think his way through to permanent conclusions. As he told Moses Mendelssohn, the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the outcome of at least twelve years' reflection, was shaped within four or five months, as it were on the wing; while the greatest care was bestowed upon the matter, little care was expended on the style, or in rendering it easy for the reader. During the interval between the masterpiece and the *Dissertation* he contrived to liberate himself, not from the form, but from the outlook of Rationalism. And the advance manifested itself essentially in a shift of the centre of gravity. The discussion of the Intelligible world in the *Dissertation* could be brief and, as Kant declared two years after, unsatisfactory, because it contained an assumption dictated by philosophical tradition. Thus, while space and time may be mental arrangements wherein the matter furnished by sense must acquire 'objective' reference for us, on this very account they fail to eventuate in relations of actual objects. These belong to the Intelligible world which, in its turn, consists of secondary 'substances' that are given in mutual connection because a primary substance, God, bestows this common unity upon them for our benefit. In other words, the ultimate problem of the Intelligible world is evaded, for a ready-made relation amounts to an abandonment of the quest. Or, to put it otherwise, the rational character of the 'objective' universe is imposed upon human intelligence, and search for its relation to the activity of this intelligence becomes superfluous forthwith. This

knowledge is 'criticised,' not by a 'critical' examination of its nature, but by reference to a superhuman world that furnishes no applicable method of inquiry. The truth within experience has been removed to a sphere whereof, by this very fact, experience can say nothing. For, clearly, the intelligible for us finds its guarantee precisely in what is unintelligible by hypothesis. The object, rational because relative to a subject, becomes, as concerns reality, an event in a universe whither this subject cannot penetrate. The gulf between the Sensible and the Intelligible worlds divides two incommensurables. But experience itself contradicts this helpless conclusion. Somehow or other, knowledge does possess objective validity. How? That is, How are the two worlds connected, despite appearances to the contrary?

Kant's approach to this problem, like his solution, was very tortuous, because contemporary thought compelled him to face two ways. On the one hand, he wished to deliver experience from the onslaughts of empirical scepticism; and yet he desired to safeguard the validity of the empirical as he had learned it from Newton. On the other hand, he wished to escape the pseudo-science of current metaphysics, and yet he aimed to vindicate the constitutive power of mind. This double aspect in each of the two problems determines him always. By 1772 he had sensed the situation.

"I ventured to say in the *Dissertation*, that the ideas of sense represent things as they *appear*, while the conceptions of the understanding represent things as they *are*. But how can the ideas of these things be given to us, if not by the mode in which they affect

us? Or, if the pure conceptions of them be due to our own inner activity, whence comes the agreement that they are presumed to have with objects which, nevertheless, are not their products? How can pure reason prescribe axioms about things without any experience of them?"¹

Kant's reply contains a negative and a positive element. He abandons the doctrine, that intelligible conceptions inform us regarding objects as they really are, and, refusing to bridge the gulf between the subject and the object, reduces the latter to a "permanent possibility of sensation." This desertion of the conventional universe of 'secondary' substances, with their predetermined mutual 'commerce,' leads, however, to a positive inference of the greatest importance. So far as man enjoys a unitary experience possessed of rational validity, it is traced, not to an extrinsic first cause, but to the combinations which self-consciousness constructs according to the operation of its own nature. *This is the revolutionary position introduced by Kant.* Examination of human modes of *transcendental* (synthetic) apprehension is substituted for surmise about non-human, *transcendent*, existence.²

Of course, such a revolution could not be completed at a stroke, and Kant is hampered in many ways by the past course of his own thought. The distinction

¹ Letter to M. Hertz, 21st February 1772.

² Readers will save themselves much trouble if they now grasp, once for all, Kant's definitions of these terms. "I call all knowledge *transcendental* which is concerned, not with objects, but with our mode of knowing objects so far as this is possible *a priori*." "A principle which removes the limits of experience and, indeed, requires us to overstep them, is called *transcendent*."

between things as they appear and things as they are¹ remains embedded in the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Similarly, Kant continues to regard thought as if it were the possession of a single person. Accordingly, he eschews an investigation which would determine the relation of thought to any thinker, and prefers to proceed as if the question were individual or psychological. Thus, while the transcendental operation of the mind suffices to regulate the matter presented by sense, it falls short of objective reality. That is to say, the problem is approached as if the sensible and intelligible were two disparate elements, and as if experience followed upon their unification. Yet, such is the nature of experience, that each factor must be called irrational apart from the other. In separation from conceptions intuitions are unthinkable, and *vice versa*. This see-saw serves to obscure the fundamental trend of the Critical Philosophy, and renders the *Critique of Pure Reason* one of the most puzzling, and debated, works in the whole range of philosophical literature. Nevertheless, it becomes more or less obvious at length, thanks to the other *Critiques*—one of them a part of Kant's original plan,—that a main trend does characterise all. In short, the limits of the intelligible fade away when the full content of experience stands unveiled. As we proceed, we must keep close hold upon this profound, if gradual, alteration in sweep. All things considered, the dead hand of the past restrains Kant in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, while, in the later *Critiques*, he tends to escape its weight by rising to a level where its grasp finds nothing to grip. At the same time, the principle that

¹ Cf. *Dissertation*, paragraph 4.

enables him to surmount the false distinctions of his formative period haunts the masterpiece also. The letter of the past and the spirit of the future are at war here, hence the remarkable difficulty of decisive interpretation.

Perhaps it is advisable to illustrate this at the outset by reference to the various interpretations that can be placed upon the *Critique of Pure Reason*. If stress be laid upon the factor contributed by the Intelligible world, the synthetic, originaive power of Reason acquires prominence. From this point of view, "the Understanding imposes laws upon nature." In other words, Reason operates transcendently in such fashion that, thanks to its activity, a new range of experience supervenes. A knowledge beyond the ken of the senses seems to be vindicated, and this so emphatically that Reason, as one might allege, determines the nature of reality. Accordingly, Sensationalism in any of its forms is ruled out. On the contrary, if stress be laid upon the factor contributed by the Sensible world, Reason, despite its power of arrangement, is degraded from the 'spiritual' level granted by the former interpretation. Its results lose validity except in relation to material presented by the senses. Thus its 'creative' function hangs in mid-air, as it were. For, if sense phenomena be necessary to its manifestation, then every attempt to penetrate to the source of its unique capacity is baffled. That is to say, Reason prefers demands which it cannot satisfy. We are unable to gloze the fact of its ability to produce new valuations, but we must seek the justification in a suprarational region. Push the former conclusion, and you seem to insist upon the retention of a supranatural

universe on rational grounds or, at least, to deny the reality of the external world. Push the latter, and you seem to have adopted premisses whose only logical consequence is a sensational subjectivism, or, at least, a phenomenalism in which all basis for ultimate principles disappears in relativity. So, by a curious paradox, you either treat Kant as Hume's executioner, or render him Hume's most effective ally.

Nor is this all. Knowledge itself may be regarded either from the particular or the universal side. In the one case, it belongs to individual men, therefore the main task must be to investigate its 'concrete' processes in special instances, and psychology assumes primacy among the philosophical sciences. In the other case, all men are held to share knowledge mutually, and under certain conditions. Accordingly, the important quest relates to these conditions—what are they? In especial, what light do they cast upon the possibilities of human experience? The analysis may reveal certain definite restrictions compelling the exclusion of reference to ultimate reality. The ultimate may turn out unthinkable under the ascertained circumstances, or, on the contrary, we may be led to infer the existence of real being within which human experience takes its place as one of a series of determinations. Here, although on a different orbit, we have the same antithesis as before. And the *Critique of Pure Reason* abounds in riddles precisely because, if one select certain expressions or isolate certain parts from the whole or from the other *Critiques*, evidence may be led decisive, apparently, for any of these interpretations. As a result then, we are entitled to conclude, in any case, that all these

tendencies, with their accordant problems and possible solutions, were present to Kant's mind more or less. They furnished active elements in the ferment of his thought. For this reason, were there none other, the *Critique of Pure Reason* is at once tortuous and of primary importance for the subsequent course of modern philosophy. It remains to attempt a survey of Kant's achievement in this work. What did he discover as a matter of fact? Did his discoveries satisfy him?

The beginning of the Preface to the first edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* runs as follows:—

"Our reason has this curious fate in regard to one portion of its knowledge, that it is oppressed with problems which cannot be ignored, because they spring from its own nature, and which cannot be solved, because they transcend all its powers.

"Nor is human reason to be blamed for this. It starts from principles which it must follow in the course of experience, and which are justified abundantly by experience. . . . Thus, however, reason becomes caught in darkness and contradictions; and while it may infer, accordingly, that errors must be present somewhere, it is unable to discover what these errors are, because the principles which it employs transcend the limits of experience, and so withdraw themselves from empirical tests."

Here, already, Kant discloses the secret of the oscillations that characterise his one difficult book. From the standpoint of Wolffian dogmatism, reason is credible and justifies itself. From the standpoint of Humian scepticism, reason generates myths and its credibility cannot be defended. Perched, as it

were, upon the shoulders of both views, Kant sees round them, and would at once accept and reject their conclusions. Each is true, *and* each is false. Yet, the essence of the matter is, that his method differs widely from Wolff's and Hume's, and so, dogmatic or sceptical as his results may be, he reaches them by a new route, leading to new possibilities. Nevertheless, he remains reminiscent of his predecessors, to our great confusion respecting his *precise* position.

The problem of the *Critique of Pure Reason* arose thus. Reason knows objects of experience which are referable to the senses. At the same time, it possesses synthetic principles whereby it reaches out to God, freedom, and immortality, events that have no empirical reference. But, hitherto, it has failed to furnish any satisfactory account of these. This lack must be due to defective method, therefore, it will no longer suffice to assume naively that reason can justify principles of this kind. We must ask, Can it? Is the instrument adequate to the demands made upon it? Accordingly, admitting that reason enjoys such principles, as the existence of science shows, the question of the manner of their possibility emerges. Kant formulates this in his famous inquiry, "How are *a priori* synthetic judgments possible?" Had he taken care to elucidate his terms, no little trouble would have been saved. As they stand, many difficulties appear. In the first place, there is a difficulty connected with the word 'synthetic.' Plainly enough, a synthetic judgment is one in which a predicate, though outside the scope of the given subject, can be joined to it in such a way that knowledge is enlarged. And this holds true for the *a posteriori* no less than for the *a priori*

But Kant takes it for granted that synthetic judgments occurring within an experience founded upon the senses need no justification; while those which belong to the *a priori* sphere do. This arouses our curiosity straightway. We ask, Why? As a consequence, secondly, we find ourselves involved forthwith in the tangled discussion respecting the significance of *a priori* with Kant. The difficulty is an outcome, doubtless, of lingering remnants of dogmatism—the doctrine, namely, that the mind is given as an entity which functions after a way of its own as it constructs experience. Hence, Kant deems it sufficient to state the two great features of the *a priori*—necessity and universality—and to omit closer definition. But, this is to say that, somehow, man has a faculty which enables him to know without reference to empirical events. And we now catch the reason why *a priori* synthetic judgments stand in need of justification, while the *a posteriori* may be taken on their own recognisances. Kant had not broken the bonds of eighteenth-century dualism by any means. In the first case, objects must conform; in the second case, they do so conform as a matter of ascertained fact. Now, not merely the metaphysical judgments about God, freedom, and immortality (which, as history shows, are open to doubt) occur in experience, but the unquestioned synthetic judgments of mathematics and physics. Therefore, the business on hand is to discover why mathematical, physical, and metaphysical judgments are possible. On the scientific plane, objects do conform, how about metaphysics? To say the least, this is an unhappy manner of approach. The objective reference, *assumed* for mathematics and

physics, obscures the real issue, and this confusion is deepened further by the pendant problem of conformity. Of course, Kant's actual question is, How is *any* synthesis possible? A reply to it would involve recognition of the fact that, if conformity there be, it is not between a 'mind' and an 'object,' but between "two works of the mind." All things considered, this method of statement had to await the third *Critique*.

Throughout, then, Kant suffers embarrassment from his persistent reminiscences of the popular dogmatism. The framework and, in large measure, the issue of the *Critique of Pure Reason* are determined by the very doctrine against which it was intended to be a final protest. For, whether we select the First or the Second Edition, a dogmatic reference, 'realistic' in the common-sense acceptation, exerts almost continuous pressure. One can trace it most characteristically in Kant's view, that the mind stands over against an external world, which impinges upon it. Each factor possesses a nature of its own; this furnishes the basis of the division. Moreover, nothing in the essential nature of either, taken by itself, provides the unity. Thus, when this fundamental disjunction is surmounted, we must anticipate alterations in one or both factors. But this result, even if an inseparable accident, continues to be an *accident*. The process of unification oscillates between what mind receives from sense—'matter,' and what sense achieves through mind—'form.' A reciprocal action occurs in which contingency *ought* to come from the external, universality from the internal, factor. Yet, the original abstractions, being unknowable on both

sides, the contingent implications of 'matter' and the universal implications of 'form' present suspicious changes. An unknowable 'form' impressed upon an unknowable 'matter' does not originate knowable experience, obviously enough. For, even granted the necessity of this union, it demands a reference to the union itself. And so we are in no position to affirm that 'matter' is contingent in itself, 'thought' universal. The universality, such as it is, cannot become effective save in relation to sense, and therefore is contingent upon sense—it misses application to 'reality.' We can, and do, know phenomena apparent to us in space and time. We cannot, and never can, know the real sources of our sense data, or of the transitive, non-sensuous 'ideas' that govern our moral, æsthetic, and religious self-consciousness. Hence the negative results of 'criticism.' Sense occludes the 'material' universe, understanding occludes the 'spiritual' universe. Therefore, knowledge leaves a 'reality' *behind* the sensible, a 'reality' *above* the intelligible. The existence of a 'real' world is not denied, as by Hume, but, inevitably, knowledge lacks power to compass it.

Thus, 'criticism' deals at the outset with the give and take between two abstract entities—this formulation of the question remaining itself uncriticised, the basal defect of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. Accordingly, in the *Æsthetic*, Kant proceeds to consider the forms under which the mind is *receptive* of the 'manifold of sense.' In the main he here preserves the standpoint of the *Dissertation*—that is, 'criticism' fails to touch the primary assumption. No question of the existence or nature of objects arises. The investigation bears solely on perceptions of sensuous

particulars which, as a matter of fact, we do perceive to be extended, and to occur in a certain conscious succession. Therefore, space and time are 'forms' of our perception of a material such as, to use Locke's language, man "has no power over, either to make or to destroy."¹ By them we unify this material perceptually. Consequently, in Kant's view, space and time cannot be things that persist out of relation to human perception, as Newton insisted; they cannot be qualities of 'things,' as Locke held; they cannot be incipient, or 'confused,' ideas of the differences between things, as Leibniz taught. In the nature of the case, they can only be perceptual arrangements of sense data. Therefore, an 'exposition' of their synthetic and *a priori* character becomes necessary. Kant accomplishes this (1) by exhibiting that space and time are logically prior to perceptual apprehension, and are therefore *a priori* metaphysically; (2) by showing that *a priori* synthetic judgments of mathematics can be derived only from perceptual space and time, which are therefore *a priori* transcendentally. In other words, space and time are marks which define the pure form of our perception, and also are essential preconditions of all perceptual construction. Kant means by this that they are modes in which the mind functions as it perceives; accordingly, the question of their 'objective reality' never emerges. What he has done is to show that a "singular representation" (*i.e.* a perception which deals with the individual) involves universal and necessary conditions (space and time) which, in turn, are individual themselves. He thus implies negatively, that they are not the product of the

¹ *Essay* (Fraser's edition), vol. i. p. 214.

reflection, comparison, and subsequent abstraction characteristic of conceptual processes—for man never *perceives* the general. Now this is to say that space and time give individual images which cannot be part of experience otherwise than on the level of sensuous perception. Accordingly, they possess no meaning in relation to a world which is not presented as the mechanical interaction of the ‘sensible’ and the ‘intelligible.’ Restricted to phenomena, they exclude reality, and the distinction between these two seems to become absolute. Perception lands knowledge in agnosticism. At this price the synthetic principles of mathematics can be justified.

But knowledge includes more than pure and sensible perception. Physics, with its synthetic judgments, needs justification no less than mathematics. Here Kant uncovers a new wellspring of experience. The understanding contributes the conceptions (cause, and so forth) upon which physics depends. Yet, even so, like the pure perceptions of mathematics, the conceptions apply to sense data, and operate only within the terms of this relation. Consequently, the second task of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, undertaken in the *Analytic*, is to exhibit the conditions of conceptual experience, and to determine the limits within which it holds valid. So, just as Kant had assumed in the *Æsthetic* that individual images are provided apart from the activity of thought, he takes it for granted now that sense supplies definite objects which, in turn, understanding rationalises into groups. These assumptions happen to be tell-tale. They indicate that Kant has not caught the full sweep of his problem. For, space and time are not themselves perceptions, but

merely forms of perception. Therefore, they effect nothing when synthesis of particular objects comes in question. Nevertheless, this very synthesis occurs in mathematics, and so we find, even in space and time, "the combination of the manifold as presented under the form of sensibility into a perceptual presentation," as Kant himself notes. Thus, even here, understanding cannot but be present directly to sensibility. Still, a definite system of connection between particulars remains to be supplied. Images do not suffice in physics, which demands a unity of experience through the instrumentality of the conscious self. The aim of the *Analytic* is to trace this unity in all its details. What are the functions of the understanding in relation to the world of sensibility? The solution of this problem is peculiar to "that part of *Transcendental Logic* which sets forth the pure element in knowledge that belongs to understanding, and the principles without which no object whatever can be thought."

Now, just as in the *Æsthetic* Kant referred forward from perception to an arrangement within experience essentially conceptual,¹ here similarly, he raised two

¹ The curious note—meant to be explanatory!—inserted in Supplement xi. to the Second Edition, where Kant is replying to the criticism on the First Edition, that he was a follower of Berkeley, intimates as much. The note runs thus (Meiklejohn's translation, p. 42):—"The predicates of the phenomenon can be affixed to the object itself in relation to our sensuous faculty; for example, the red colour or the perfume to the rose. But (illusory) appearance never can be attributed as a predicate to an object, for this very reason, that it attributes to this subject in itself that which belongs to it only in relation to our sensuous faculty, or to the subject in general, *e.g.* the two handles which were formerly ascribed to Saturn. That which is never to be found in the object itself, but always in the relation of the object to

problems. The "pure element in knowledge which belongs to the understanding" relates primarily to the indispensable conceptual means of grouping sense data. "The principles without which no object whatever can be thought" may indicate either the "principles of pure understanding," which always bear a sensuous reference, or the "Ideas of reason" which, just because they go beyond sense, point to the sphere of the supersensible. In this more tenuous region the understanding may be incompetent, and, therefore, the Analytic does not deal with it, although Kant more than hints at it. For, as in the *Æsthetic*, his positive conclusions depend upon a distinct negative restriction of knowledge. This, however, follows from unexamined assumptions taken for granted at the outset, and may be overset in the course of the inquiry. That is, we may find that conceptual elements involve the supersensible so called, just as perceptual elements supposed to be 'pure' involved conceptual activity.

The most familiar—and the least questioned—intimation of work-a-day common sense is, that a *substantial* world of things, related according to a

the subject, and which, moreover, is inseparable from our representation of the object, we denominate phenomenon. Thus the predicates of space and time are rightly attributed to objects of the senses as such, and in this there is no illusion. On the contrary, if I ascribe redness to the rose as a thing in itself, or to Saturn his handles, or extension to all external objects, considered as things in themselves, without regarding the determinate relation of these objects to the subject, and without limiting my judgment to that relation,—then, and then only, arises illusion." Space is not a predicate of things in themselves; it is not a predicate of appearances. Of what, then, is it a predicate? Kant presupposes some experiential unity, or his very mode of statement would render *any* statement impossible. His agnosticism, if consistent, would be speechless.

causality of its own, stands over against us. The "eternal hills" mock our brief generations. Viewed in this way, the 'outer' realm appears to proceed independent of our consciousness. The same doctrine lies concealed in the usual presuppositions of that "organised common sense" which we call 'science.' Yet with this difference: science attempts to elicit relations between objects, and to group the permanent (universal and necessary) features of these relations so firmly as to place us in a position to predict the course of nature. Now, according to the Analytic, these irreflective notions invert the true situation. To be sure, nature reaches us in sense-affections, themselves parts of nature. But, the order and stability that transform the welter of impressions into a 'universe' are insinuated into sense by the mind. The "primary function" of the understanding "is not to make the presentation of objects clear, but to render it possible." Accordingly, unless the mind brought its categories to sense, physical science, and indeed the most fragmentary experience, would be impossible. Thus mind legislates for nature, not because nature so prescribes, but because human nature could not know aught otherwise. As a result, then, Kant's description of the *procedure* of thought in science amounts to this. Sensation furnishes a mass of contingent material, indistinguishable in itself—lacking all marks of rational order or meaning. The mind furnishes certain indispensable forms which transmute this material into rational sequences. In so far as science is able to affirm a coherent whole, or coherence among any parts of a whole, these unifications must be attributed to the mind. But mental forms cannot

operate in a psychological vacuum; to be effective components of experience, they must be impressed upon the raw material brought to them by sense. Consequently, when this matter fails, knowledge fails also. Thus, the Transcendental Deduction shows that the categories are applied to the manifold of sense, and that the result is knowledge of the kind that we do elaborate in physical science. On the other hand, it establishes negatively that, when the 'objective' reference due to sense is absent, we *cannot know* anything. Therefore, given the validity of the Kantian Analysis, and the consequent Deduction, two inferences follow. In the first place, knowledge itself holds only of phenomena—of 'objects' as they appear to us, never of 'objects' as they are in 'their own' nature. In the second place, when sense reference disappears, as in the fundamental postulates of religion and morals, we are precluded from reliance upon knowledge. The constitution of experience is such that, in these ranges, knowledge possesses no competence. In the issue, then, the conceptions of a 'real' object, and of any supersensible event, set limits to the realm where sense belongs. But, as we can reach knowledge only in this realm, they also set limits to knowledge itself. In mathematical and physical science, the universality and necessity of conceptual constructions receive justification—they are in experience. But, even so, we must stress the conditions under which they apply. Science deals, not with the nature of things, but with our impressions of this nature. Through the gulf between the Sensible and the Intelligible universes Kant drops into agnosticism.

The strength and the weakness of the position

here, although hidden in part from Kant, were made manifest by subsequent thinkers, and may be stated summarily now. The *Critique of Pure Reason* compassed an epoch-making advance when it showed that, sense notwithstanding, the mind unifies experience by the operation of synthetic principles peculiar to itself. The central problem no longer relates to non-human entities, but to man himself. Still, one question remained to discuss: What is the scope of the experience thus unified? And this has proved the battleground of modern thought.

On the other hand, Kant could not escape historical traditions incident to dualistic habits of approach to the problem. The 'manifold of sense' and the empty mental 'forms' happen to be pure fictions, themselves of mental origin. They haunt the sphere of the Unknowable, because they never were, never can be, events in any possible human experience. Accordingly, the question of their unification, like that of Rousseau's 'social contract,' is one of those inquiries that ought not to be set afoot. You may state it in words, but it remains a mere verbalism, because it relates to nothing that man is able to contemplate. In short, if you raise it, you proceed under the misapprehension characteristic of an artificial problem. For, you repeat in subtler forms the familiar query of the wide-eyed child, Who made God?

Unappreciative of the inner trend of his procedure, Kant himself gives what is tantamount to an acknowledgment of this. His categories prove inadequate to the unification of experience, not because of their mental nature, but on account of their contact with the 'foreign' element of sense. The contingent char-

acter of knowledge followed inevitably from his notion of external juxtaposition. His *Principles of the Pure Understanding*, where the seamless garment of thought is not rent in twain, serve to reveal the true position. Here he presents the inexpugnable unity of mind and sense; here the tortuous processes of the Schematism, invented to bridge the great chasm which he had himself fixed, become superfluous. For, if the categories be separated from the sense-manifold, both factors vanish; 'sense' and 'conception' are seen to be abstract effects of intellection. Sense is either a transcript of experience from a certain limited standpoint, or it is nothing; and the same holds of mental 'forms.' Accordingly, both accounts presuppose a unity that cannot be undone. Thus, as in the *Æsthetic*, purporting to deal exclusively with pure perception, conceptual synthesis is postulated, so in the *Analytic*, purporting to deal with the conjunction between abstract 'sense' and abstract 'forms' of the mind, the prior unity of both conditions the bare possibility of the procedure alleged. In other words, the categories, as Kant presents them, fail, not because limited to the phenomenal, but because he omits to push his 'criticism' far enough. Other categories pervade human experience, and, if analysis would win success, it must elicit them also. In the course of this more fundamental process it may turn out that the categories formative of a standpoint superior to that of 'sense' or of mental 'forms' bear no such relation to a sense-manifold as the *Transcendental Deduction* and the *Schematism* picture. Indeed, the inner logic of the *Principles of the Pure Understanding* already proves no less. Meanwhile, however, Kant's

exhibition of the sense-category conjunction during the course of experience, being what it is, the agnostic inference bears so much apparent relevance as to seem inevitable. Nay, it involves the further consequences elaborated in the last part of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the Transcendental Dialectic.

At the close of the Transcendental Analytic, then, Kant had reached the following conclusions:— (1) Ordinary common-sense consciousness contains certain *a priori* principles which serve to sustain its rational or systematic nature. This becomes more explicit in the mathematical and physical sciences, for they seek and reach universal, synthetic principles that hold necessarily no matter how widely the incidental phenomena may vary. (2) The aim of a 'critical' philosophy is to supply an exhaustive account of these *a priori* principles, and to show how they transmute the crass material furnished them by sense. (3) Accordingly, seeing that mathematical science is possible, because it exists, when we ask, How is it possible? we are able to say: Space and time are *a priori* forms of pure perception—they are internal, not external, events, and the presentations peculiar to mathematical science occur within their framework. (4) Seeing that physical science is possible, because it exists, when we ask, How is it possible? we are able to say: The mind is endowed with twelve pure conceptions and, thanks to the differentiations wrought by them upon the manifold of sense, the judgments that characterise physical science are originated and sustained. (5) At the same time, these mental forms cannot operate after their kind except in presence of the sense-material. Without it they

would be 'empty.' Therefore pure knowledge must be confined to phenomena, it never applies to real existences. In other words, Kant explains knowledge by a *theory* of knowledge, and this, in its turn, confronts integral elements which, taken independently, are unthinkable. For, wanting the 'empty' forms of the mind, the perceptual factor is 'blind.' (6) As a result of these conditions, rational processes fail to compass the whole of experience. Man possesses moral and religious life, he has Ideas of Reason concerning the soul, the universe, and God. But, because these revert to no basis in sense, they are termed *noumena*. By an inevitable tendency, the human mind tries to grasp them, and they, being supersensible, elude its categories as inevitably. Hence, space, time, and the categories find no office to perform. Consequently, so far as reason goes, our analysis compels us to adopt an agnostic attitude towards the 'objects' of traditional Metaphysics. We cannot inquire, How is Metaphysics possible? We must rather ask, Is Metaphysics possible? The paradoxical issue of the *Critique of Pure Reason* consists in the fact that man is thrust back powerless in face of his own most characteristic expressions and needs. These must be justified otherwise, and on another plane, if at all.

Nevertheless, despite the cumulative force of the argument, one is compelled to take note that Kant's procedure, whatever its letter, is instinct also with a certain spirit. The apposition between the unity of knowledge and the explanation of it by reference to its factors, which cannot be parts of knowledge, forces Kant to significant admissions, whose full im-

port he realised but obscurely. For the unity of knowledge itself conditions any feasible analysis of it. Thus, time and again, Kant departs from his theoretical ideal, of two elements interacting to produce knowledge, for the simple reason that each of them must be an object of knowledge, and this is out of the question on his premisses. An undifferentiated perceptual manifold and the pure conceptions really constitute points of view within an experience which they presuppose. It is no wise surprising, then, that Kant wobbles often in the course of his exposition. This has been noted above, and space confines us to brief supplementary illustration. For example, in the Transcendental Deduction, the categories produce the universal syntheses characteristic of physical science. On the contrary, particular syntheses are the work of imagination,—the ‘figural’ or ‘specious’ synthesis results in cases. That is to say, the unity of experience, in an irreflective form, no doubt, conditions the possibility of the reflective construction. Kant simply asserts this, without reference to the difficulty raised. In the same way, the manifold of sense would not be in accord with the categories unless endowed with some kind of stable order. “The synthesis of reproduction in imagination . . . presupposes that phenomena themselves are subject actually to such a rule, and that in the manifold of their representations there is a concomitance or sequence, according to a fixed rule.” But this implies that the unity of experience is itself immanent in the *theory* of its alleged production. The determinations of knowledge refer to what already exists, they are not consequences of the interaction of two unknow-

ables. I cannot convert 'awareness' of something which is not an object of knowledge into 'awareness' of an object of knowledge. Or, to put it otherwise, if the Transcendental Deduction really prove all that Kant supposes, the Schematism of the categories becomes superfluous; and this is to say that the original separation between sense and the forms of conception, while it may hold for a *theory* of knowledge, cannot be predicated of knowledge itself. Once more, in his discussion of the Analogies of Experience, Kant nowhere explains how it happens that our presentations face two ways; on the one hand, they relate to the knowing subject, on the other, to the known object. Cause, for instance, cannot well be a relation of presentations—only this and nothing more; yet Kant is bound to explain it thus. As a matter of fact he comes to the problem furnished with a unity which he hardly recognises. For, as he says, "we must therefore derive the subjective sequence of perceptions from the objective sequence of phenomena." And this implies that knowledge of sequence is 'explained' only in so far as this very sequence has been posited. Or, pointedly, thought presupposes thought. The process "does not carry us back to anything beyond reason. It is a history of which reason is the beginning and the end."¹

The resultant impression is not obscure. Kant struggles within the purview of an intellectual perspective which he tries to transcend in principle all the while. One or two instances must suffice here to enforce the conclusion that his 'revolution' boded more than he himself suspected. The category of

¹ T. H. Green, *Prolegomena to Ethics*, 1st ed. p. 231.

Quantity, when schematised in Time, appears in the threefold guise of Unity, Plurality, and Totality. But the three do not sit loose to one another as it were. On the contrary, Kant holds that the third is the second viewed as the first. And a similar internal relation links the members of the other category-classes. A principle of internal unity is asserted here. What are we to say of it? Kant proffers no reply. And yet, were the categories treated from a strictly 'critical' standpoint, this principle would offer precisely *the* central problem. The same situation reappears even more explicitly when Kant comes to consider the Ideas of Reason. He regards the soul, the universe, and God as integral to a single system. First, man attempts to round out his knowledge of self by winning to a 'soul' that preserves independence of all phenomenal changes, that creates its own objects; next, he tries to obtain a similar reality for the objects of knowledge, and strives to arrive at a completed universe: finally, he would achieve a union of both in an all-inclusive being, God. We ask, and again in vain, What is the immanent principle of these relations? As before, the 'critical' problem, in the essential Kantian sense, pivots here, and yet the father of Criticism passes by on the other side.

Despite these concessions in principle, the Kant of the *Critique of Pure Reason* succumbs, all things considered, to influences emanating from the dominant Rationalism of his age. This was the concession wrung from him, little as he knew it, by his time. Having taken it for granted that mental conceptions are impinged upon by 'something else,' non-mental in nature, he never quite escaped the associations insepar-

able from mechanism. The limits, rather than the essential constitution, of knowledge become his foremost problem. Accordingly, the 'critical' standpoint remains 'dogmatic' with him, in so far as he mistakes the dualistic *theory* of knowledge for an incontrovertible fact, forgetful that it is no more than one possible result of reflection upon the prior unity. As a consequence, he was unable to conceive the reconstitution of the broken unity save in terms of an event that amounted to a miracle. He inferred, therefore, that knowledge cannot satisfy man. Ideas of Reason waft human beings to another plane. And yet these Ideas, so far from being 'objects' of experience, or real existences, serve only as reminders that the mental life is limited, incapable of completion. In the Transcendental Dialectic Kant proposes to show why. Human nature demands "the perfect whole" which the unconditioned unity of self, and the 'closed system' of the universe, and the immanent relation of all possible objects of experience in a totality of existence, alike imply. In short, it insists upon a Metaphysic. If the constitution of knowledge be as the *Æsthetic* and *Analytic* show, can it assuage this need? Meanwhile, as we have seen, Kant's reply is bound to be in the negative.

We have noticed that, in the pre-critical stage, Kant became dissatisfied with the metaphysical philosophy of his contemporaries and forerunners. The *Æsthetic* and *Analytic* embody his dissection of experience, as he understands this term, for the express purpose of determining at last the status of Metaphysics. The final portion, directed specifically to this subject, is therefore of great importance. Starting from the con-

ventional subject-matter of current Ontology, Kant's question is this: Can our beliefs in God, freedom, and immortality be defended? Can reason justify us in our demand for 'objects' that would guarantee these convictions? As the course of the argument to this point has shown, the reply must be in the negative, and yet this very denial implies a significant affirmation. While it is true that space, time, and the categories possess no validity beyond the limits of the sensible, it is also true that the experience formulated by them suggests, and this inevitably, ideas of supersensible, or transcendent, 'objects.' Indeed, knowledge recognises its own limitations just by these rumours of things unseen. Kant calls the transcendent ideas noumena, and a noumenon is a conception of reason to which nothing positive (*i.e.* belonging to the sensible world) corresponds. Experience as known is not a complete experience. Morals and religion are facts in human life, but the 'objects' required by them are not phenomena connected with sensibility, and the fundamental error of Metaphysics in the past flows from its habitual tendency to deal with them as if they were empirical objects. But this procedure has been so persistent that it must be rooted in an unavoidable tendency of the human mind. Kant names this natural fallacy "transcendental illusion." He means by this that man tries constantly to determine unconditioned reality by use of conceptions which are applicable only to phenomena conditioned by sense. The aim of the Transcendental Dialectic is to lay bare the origin and the manner of this illusion.

Here he deals, not with illusions of the imagination relative to events in an empirical world, not with mere

heedless neglect of the rules governing logical inference, but with a defect inherent in our mental constitution, one so persistent that, even after ample warning, men find difficulty in avoiding it, while complete escape seems almost impossible. For, seeing that we cannot determine 'objects' at all except by pure conceptions, it is inevitable that we should fall back upon these conceptions to envisage ideas which never can be objectified in an experience such as ours. That is to say, empirical objects (phenomena) always comprise a factor dictated to the mind as it were, one over which it exercises no power; whereas, the principles operative in the moral and religious consciousness involve 'objects' that are quite independent of any similar conditioning material. Further, reason itself demands precisely such 'objects' for the completion of experience. The position implies the assumption that Pure Reason can pass from the conditioned to the unconditioned. Kant insists that it is able to do so *problematically*: he asks, Can it do so *really*? It can originate the idea of an unconditioned subject; it can originate the idea of an ultimate ground for the relations of phenomena in the empirical world; it can originate the idea of a totality of being wherein both the 'spiritual' and the 'material' series share membership. But, can it achieve a real soul, a real universe, a real God? According to Kant, theoretical knowledge must find itself baulked here; on the other hand, Practical Reason, the governor of the moral life, may be able to justify the demands which Pure Reason can only prefer helplessly. In any case, contemporary Metaphysic fails, because its 'objects' have no existence as such.

Thus, the Transcendental Dialectic exhibits the

nature of the three illusions into which Pure Reason falls when it attempts to grasp the soul, the universe, and God by means of its categories.

I. *The Soul*.—Reason passes dialectically from the unity of self-consciousness in experience to an unconditioned subject. In so doing it commits, and unavoidably, the fallacy of paralogism; that is, it *must* break a rule of deductive inference. In its effort to transcend the intelligible as it is in relation to the sensible, rational dialectic proceeds as follows:—(1) “That which can be thought only as subject must exist as subject, and is therefore substance. (2) A thinking being from its very nature can be thought only as subject. (3) Therefore, a thinking being can exist only as subject, that is, as substance.” “Subject,” as used in the first proposition, has two implications: it may mean either “a pure thinking subject” or an “independent” existence. In the second proposition it means the former only. Therefore, the conclusion, which refers to the latter, does not follow, because the middle term, on which it depends, has not been defined. As a consequence, the phenomenal self is confused with the transcendental self and, seeing that the former is determined in relation to sense, it can be compassed by the categories, while the latter, being independent, lies wholly beyond their scope.

II. *The Universe*.—Reason passes dialectically from the phenomenal world, where every possible object is dependent upon others, to a universe which, as a complete totality, excludes these conditions. In so doing it wrecks itself upon antinomies; that is, it becomes prisoned in a choice between two alternatives that exclude one another, and yet appear to be equally

true. Four such alternatives arise, one connected with each of the category-classes. Thus (a) "The world has a beginning in time, and is enclosed within the limits of space." On the contrary, "The world has no beginning in time and no limits in space, but is infinite as regards both time and space." (b) "Every composite substance in the world is made up of simple parts, and nothing whatever exists but the simple or that which is composed out of the simple." On the contrary, "No composite thing in the world is made up of simple parts, nor does anything simple exist anywhere in the world." (c) "Causality in conformity with laws of nature is not the only causality from which all the phenomena of the world can be derived. To explain these phenomena it is necessary to suppose that there is also a free causality." On the contrary, "There is no freedom, but all that comes to be in the world takes place entirely in accordance with laws of nature." (d) "There exists an absolutely necessary being, which belongs to the world, either as a part or as the cause of it." On the contrary, "There nowhere exists an absolutely necessary being, either in the world, or outside of the world, as its cause." In all cases our experience admits the possible truth of both the incompatible propositions. For, from the point of view of the phenomenal, we must recognise contingency, while, from that of the Ideas of Reason, we insist upon the removal of this very contingency. We argue that, "if the conditioned be given, the whole series of conditions is given. But objects of sense are given as conditioned. Therefore, the whole series of conditions of objects of sense is given." Here, as in the paralogism, the argument pivots upon

an ambiguous term. In the antecedent "conditioned" refers to a pure conception; in the minor premise, to a phenomenal object. Accordingly, the conclusion is vicious. The Antinomies tell us simply that our empirical experience is conditioned, and that, as a result, we try to escape the implied limitations. They "regulate" experience in the sense that they compel recognition of its contingent character. So far as (a) and (b) are concerned, this "regulation" intimates that neither term of the antinomy holds with respect to the phenomenal world of our knowledge; for, the Ideas of Reason possess no meaning in relation to the experience that includes a sensible world. So far as (c) and (d) are concerned, the two exclusive propositions may both be true—the one for the realm contemplated by the moral and religious consciousness, the other for phenomenal experience. For example, the notion of a "free cause," while inapplicable to the world of nature, may hold in the sphere of morals. At all events, nothing in the world of nature forbids or traverses such a conclusion. And the same applies to the idea of "an absolutely necessary Being."

III. *God*.—Reason passes dialectically from the limited self of experience to an ideal individual reality whose essence is complete self-determination. That is, it demands a being which includes all reality within itself, and, therefore, is not distributive, like the self of experience, but collective. It cannot be one finite among others, but must be that upon which every possible finite depends. In proof whereof the argument proceeds thus: (1) 'Seeing that conditioned existence always implies something which is its condition, Reason cannot rest satisfied with anything

short of an unconditioned or necessary Being. Seeing, then, that there is such a necessary Being, what is its character? The reply is that it is that which is the condition of all other reality and, which, being itself unconditioned, contains all reality in itself. It is the *ens realissimum*. Therefore we get a supreme Being which contains all reality within itself, and is thus the source of all other beings.' But, even overlooking the assumptions, that we *can* infer from the contingent to the necessary, and that a being containing all reality is a *necessary* being, the reasoning advances nothing to show that the necessary being is infinite. And a finite being would not conform to the Idea of God. Further, Kant proceeds to a detailed examination of the three traditional 'proofs' of the being of God, and shows that all are inadequate. The ontological proof, or argument from idea to existence, is typical of "transcendental illusion"; the cosmological proof, or argument from a First Cause, is in like case, but is mired even more deeply; while the physico-theological proof, or argument from design, derives its strength from the ontological, which it presupposes, and therefore it fails. So a Supreme Being cannot be proved by Reason. It rests an ideal basal to the moral and religious consciousness. All that Reason can accomplish is to assure us that the ideal is not self-contradictory.

In sum and substance, then, the *Critique of Pure Reason* signalises the dissolution of the previous intellectual order. Accordingly, consonant with its critical intent, its most striking conclusions are negative. In Kant's own view, it cleared the way for, and was preparatory to, the investigation of the moral

consciousness, whose chief peculiarity is that it finds 'object' and problem within itself, not in a foreign or dictated matter.

"The polemic of scepticism is properly directed against the dogmatist, who erects a system of philosophy without having examined the fundamental objective principles on which it is based, for the purpose of evidencing the futility of his designs, and thus bringing him to a knowledge of his own powers. . . . But this cannot help us to any decision regarding the expectations which reason cherishes of better success in future endeavours; the investigations of scepticism cannot, therefore, settle the dispute regarding the rights and powers of human reason. . . . The whole interest of reason, speculative as well as practical, is centred in the three following questions:—

1. What can I know?
2. What ought I to do?
3. What may I hope?

"The first question is purely speculative. We have, as I flatter myself, exhausted all the replies of which it is susceptible, and have at last found the reply with which reason must contain itself, and with which it ought to be content, *so long as it pays no regard to the practical.*"¹

Now we are to be led away from the experience that depends upon the Sensible world, and are to be introduced—to experience still, but in another guise. Perhaps losses will be made good. For, as Kant himself declares, "the conception of freedom constitutes

¹ Meiklejohn, *Critique of Pure Reason*, pp. 464, 488. The italics are mine.

the coping-stone of the whole edifice of a system of pure reason even in its speculative use." In the life of action man himself becomes his own object. Thus he escapes the illusion that clings to the empirical. Reason, baulked of its ideal in the world, sets out to realise it for itself, and thereby ceases to maintain a purely external, or mechanical, relation to anything else.

CHAPTER II

THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY AND THE FUNCTION OF THE MORAL LIFE

KANT'S WRITINGS, ETC.

1784. "Idea of a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Standpoint." (English trans., in *Kant's Essays and Treatises*, by A. F. M. Willich, 2 vols., London, 1798.)
- 1784-89. Herder's *Ideas towards a Philosophy of History of Mankind*.
1785. Kant's review of the above. In the *Jenaische Litteraturzeitung*. (Herder repaid this with interest in his *Metakritik*, 1799.)
1785. "Upon the Injustice of Publishers' Piracies." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)
1785. "The Typical Form of the Concept of a Race of Men." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*.
1785. "Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals." (English trans., in *Kant's Metaphysics of Ethics*, by J. W. Semple, 4th ed., Edinburgh, 1886; and in *Kant's Theory of Ethics*, by T. K. Abbott, 4th ed., London, 1889, and, separately, 1895.)
1785. "The Presumptive Beginning of Human History." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)
1788. "Critique of Practical Reason." (English trans., by Abbott, as above.)

1789. The French Revolution. (One of the "three great tendencies of the Age," according to F. Schlegel.)
1790. "On Sentimentalism and its Remedy."
1793. "On the Common Saying: A Thing may be Good in Theory, but does not hold in Practice." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above: and in *Kant's Principles of Politics*, by W. Hastie, Edinburgh, 1891.)
1795. "On Everlasting Peace." (English trans., by Hastie, as above.)
1797. "Metaphysical Principles of Law." Actually published late in 1796. (English trans., in *The Philosophy of Law, An Exposition of the Fundamental Principles of Jurisprudence as the Science of Right*, by Immanuel Kant, by W. Hastie, Edinburgh, 1887.)
1797. "Metaphysical Principles of the Doctrine of Virtue." (English trans., by Semple, and (partial) by Abbott, as above.)
1797. "On an Alleged Right to Lie from Altruistic Motives." (English trans., by Abbott, as above; and by A. E. Kroeger, in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. vii., No. 2, pp. 14 f., 1873.)
1798. "Anthropology from a Pragmatic Standpoint." (English trans., Sects. 1-43, by A. E. Kroeger, in *The Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, vol. ix. pp. 16-27, 239-45, 406-16; vol. x. 319-23; vol. xi. 310-17, 353-63; vol. xiii. 281-89; vol. xiv. 154-69; vol. xv. 62-66; 1875-81.)

The doctrine of the necessary relation between the intellectual and the practical life in a Critical Philosophy—the latter supplementing and completing the former—had been contemplated by Kant at least fifteen years before he published the earliest of his major ethical treatises.¹ In the ninth paragraph of the *Dissertation* (1770), he calls attention to the "twofold purpose of intellectual concepts." They have a nega-

¹ *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals* (1785).

tive, or "refutative," use when they isolate the sensuous from noumena, and thus prevent science from overstepping its proper limits. They have a "dogmatic" use when, passing over into the ontological sphere, they set forth "the common measure of all other things considered as realities, namely, *noumenal perfection*." The function of the moral life becomes evident accordingly. God and moral perfection constitute the two poles, theoretical and practical.

"Moral Philosophy, then, inasmuch as supplying the first *principles of judgment*, is not cognised except by pure intellect, and itself belongs to pure philosophy; and Epicurus reducing its criteria to deduction from the sense of pleasure or pain is rightly reprehended, together with some moderns following him a certain distance from afar, as Shaftesbury and his adherents. In any class of things having a variable quantity the *maximum* is the common measure and principle of cognition. Now the *maximum of perfection* is called *ideal*, by Plato, Idea—for instance, his Idea of a Republic—and is the principle of all that is contained under the general notion of any perfection, inasmuch as the lesser grades are not thought determinable but by limiting the maximum. But God, the Ideal of perfection, and hence the principle of cognition, is also, as existing really, the principle of the creation of all perfection."

The function of the moral life, then, is to exhibit the kind of law that governs the Intelligible world when withdrawn from the Sensible world. Here we escape the bonds of sensuous nature, and are enabled to foreshadow the universe as it would be for a

rational being who had "shuffled off this mortal coil." After long apparent eclipse, Kant's Pietism comes to its own once more and, thanks to its recrudescence, he contemns prudential morality, and the ethics of feeling, as his references to Epicurus, Shaftesbury, and his adherents (Hutcheson and Hume) indicate. He approaches the subject in the temper, not of a 'man of the world,' not of a publicist who deems morality a valuable adjunct of governmental arrangements, but rather as a pious soul, convinced that, on this plane, the issues of life and death are assembled. Consequently, Kant's ethical works betray the constant interplay of two tendencies. On the one hand, the habits contracted during the dire travail with the *Critique of Pure Reason* had bitten so deeply into his mind that he was never able to free himself from the bonds of formalism. On the other hand, his profound transitive convictions regarding "the heavenly voice of reason" in man's spiritual being almost persuaded him. They led him beyond his critical hesitation till he trembled on the very verge of a vitalising objective idealism. The *facts* of the moral life proved too much for the scruples due to the *abstractions* of the critical regress. The analogy between the Pure and the Practical Reason, at which Kant clutched so eagerly, reproduces itself in a similar parallelism between his letter and his spirit.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* effected a revolution whose end is not yet, because it vindicated the principle that self-consciousness unifies experience according to the operation of immanent synthetic conceptions. But the experience thus unified proves

a truncated affair, because it excludes the great realities central to morality and religion. The Intelligible world cannot find room for them in knowledge, because necessitated by the intrusion of a foreign element whose contingent nature it has no power to overpass. Man *knows* all things through *sense*. On the contrary, however, Kant says, "he knows *himself* not only thus, but also through pure apperception, and in acts and inner determinations which he *cannot reckon among the objects of sense*." That is, while sensuous experience is relative to man, he passes beyond its limitations when he *becomes his own object* in the moral realm. Now, if Kant be right in this view, there is no call for a *critique* of the Practical Reason. Practical Reason, in the very nature of the case, is amenable to no criticism but its own, for nothing external sets bounds to it. But, as has been said, the critical regress had grown habitual with Kant. Accordingly, forgetful of the *spirit* which he attributes to the Practical Reason, he gives his principal ethical work a *form* not unlike that of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. We may therefore begin with an attempt to trace the *Critique of Practical Reason* in outline, always remembering the analogy from the *Critique of Pure Reason*. This will clear the way for a brief review of Kant's ethical results.

The *Critique of Pure Reason* starts with the presupposition that mathematical and physical science exist and are legitimate; this taken for granted, it proceeds to inquire what *a priori* elements must be involved in knowledge to render these sciences possible. Similarly, in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Kant begins by assuming that there is an indefeasible

"moral imperative," valid universally for rational beings, and proceeds to uncover the further truths which may be deduced from this dogmatic proposition. The one investigation posits knowledge, the other morality, and both go on to an analysis of the *a priori* truths indispensable to each of these assumptions. The moral imperative, then, ranks as an ultimate fact not open to doubt. "A necessity is laid upon us," there is a law above us with which we are unable to reason *pro* or *con*. Thus the problem arises, Given the existence of such a law as a generalisation from experience, what truths can be inferred from it?

Kant infers first, that Reason possesses reality as a self-determining principle. In the *Critique of Pure Reason* it had achieved place only as a faculty so constituted as to prefer certain demands that could not be satisfied. Here it becomes a faculty that sways the will, and is able therefore to fulfil any demands that it may make. Will is not determined by any *external* motive, for no kind of hypothetical consideration supplies the categorical force of the moral imperative. The law applies, not only to me, but to all men. Were it merely an inner feeling that prompted my will, it could determine *me* alone, for feeling has no universality. But the moral imperative informs all men of the universal obligation, and is not limited to pointing my particular duty at a special juncture. Therefore, the moral imperative can be enacted neither by an external motive, nor by an inner sense—neither by something irrational without us, nor by something irrational within us. It emanates from Reason itself. If it were traceable to an external motive, then another imperative would be necessary to direct us to adopt

this motive; and if it were prompted by inner feeling, then it would guide nobody but the person who felt, and him only at the moment of his feeling. Accordingly, seeing that Reason alone suffices to lay down the moral imperative, it is vindicated as an active and self-determining principle, it remains no more a mere regulative, or limiting, faculty, unable to rise to its own demands. The law of the Intelligible world, which is to moral life as causality is to the Sensible world, inheres in Reason, and cannot be found elsewhere. But the unconditional "ought" thus imposed by Reason demands the conception of the freedom of the will. A rational "ought" implies "can." It is absurd that we ought to act as we are quite unable to act. The existence of the categorical imperative therefore guarantees the self-determination of man in the sphere of the moral consciousness.

If so, How does man comport himself, what qualities does he display in relation to the moral law, or, what is enjoined by the categorical imperative? Here a difficulty seems to arise immediately. Particular actions belong to the Sensible, not to the Intelligible, world. Accordingly, it is impossible that Reason should of itself point to any particular things as the law; it fails to tell what specific acts should be done, what left undone. That is, reason determines the *form*, not the *matter*, of the active will. Now the qualities of rational form are universality and necessity. Therefore Reason enforces its imperative in the form that we ought to will what every one must will. Or, stating the rule in words, it lays down the maxim, "Act so that you can will the law of your action to become a necessary law for all." In effect, then,

Reason informs you that you must universalise your maxim,—you must commit no act of such a nature that you cannot will a corresponding act for every man. For example, it may be true that you ought to seek your own greatest pleasure; if so, it must be possible for you to will that other folk should *all* seek their greatest pleasure too. It is to be remembered that we are confronted here, not by *physical*, but by *moral*, necessity and universality. Or, in Kantian language, the law is a law of Freedom, not of Nature. You face an “ought” which impels, not a “must” which compels. And the crux becomes evident.

Seeing that it is imposed by Reason, the law of Freedom is a law of the Intelligible world. But the world where it is to find application happens to be the world of the Sensible, where the necessity of the law of Nature holds sway. Now, in Nature, the facts correspond to the law. On the contrary, the facts of Nature are far from corresponding with the moral “ought.” How, then, is the law of Freedom to find application in particular cases? The problem seems to leave us in a *cul de sac*. For the moral law itself, being a bare universal, can offer no information respecting particular acts, while the phenomena of the sensuous world, lacking conformity with the moral law, as they do, are equally devoid of guidance. Fortunately, in the course of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, we have encountered an analogous difficulty. There, as Kant showed, the pure *a priori* forms of the categories stand over against the *a posteriori*, or empirical, manifold of sense. Each factor originates in a realm of its own, and the barrier to unification seems impassable. But a link was found. The pure

perceptions of space and time were discovered to be *a priori*, like the categories, and perceptual, like the manifold of sense. In particular, time had the *form* of the categories, and the categories were schematised in its form; yet it also belonged to the Sensible world. In the same fashion, we must now seek a means of mediation between the *form* of the moral law, and the *matter* of particular acts. Can we discover anything in our experience that will subserve this function? The solution is not far to seek. We have abundant evidence that Nature is subject to law. This law, as such, has the same *form* as the law of Freedom—it is the form to which the matter of sense lies in subjection. On the other hand, in so far as it applies to phenomena, it belongs, not to the Intelligible, but to the Sensible, world. Accordingly, just as the categories were schematised in time, so the law of Freedom must be ‘schematised’ in relation to the law of Nature. We must express the law of Freedom *as if* it were a law of Nature. Convert the “ought” into “must” and you will be in a position to test whether your maxim can be applied legitimately in particular cases, or not. Suppose that all men, not only ought to do, but actually do, what the maxim enjoins, and you will learn readily whether this condition be practicable. As a matter of fact, you will discover that a wrong maxim contradicts itself invariably. For instance, if every one stole, no one could steal, and it is thus apparent that theft, since it cannot be universalised, must be immoral. And the same would hold of lying.

Setting aside any question of agreement or disagreement with Kant’s argument, there is no difficulty in

detection of its extreme formalism. The critical habit evinces strong grip throughout. And the contention suffers not a little in consequence. Kant, in short, achieves a principle of consistency, not of truth. It is clear enough, doubtless, that if every man stole, there would be no theft. But, what is to prevent somebody from declaring, 'There *ought to be* no property, hence I have a right to annex anything I please'? There would be no contradiction in this. The fact is, Kant did not realise the full terms of the problem. When it is shown that property is essential to the existence of society, then, and then only, can it be proven that theft is wrong. If you say, 'I am going to take something that belongs to me as much as to you, then we are unable to show, by the principle of bare self-consistency, that a wrong is in contemplation. The moral imperative of self-consistency, like the logical law of non-contradiction in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, is negative, no more.

Naturally enough, the spirit of Kant's teaching bursts his letter, and he tries to extract something more satisfactory from the formal universality of the Practical Reason. He goes on to point out that a categorical imperative implies the existence of an absolute end, and that the only things capable of being regarded as absolute ends are *persons*. Accordingly, with this in mind, he derives the rule that persons must always be treated as ends and never as simple means. But the success of this maxim depends upon a clear understanding of the true nature of persons. Apart from this information, any action, for all we know, might suffice to the realisation of the rule. At this juncture, he does not identify person with

character, and so gain a concrete principle. He proceeds to express his moral imperative in yet a third way. In the first place, he had said, "Act so that you can will the law of your action to be made a universal law of Nature." Next, he said, "Act so as to treat humanity, whether in your own person or in that of others, always as an end, and never merely as a means." Now he declares, "Act in conformity with the idea of the will of every rational being as a universally legislative will." Here we see why the second maxim holds. Persons are to be treated as ends, not as means, because they are more than thralls of the law—they are its originators.

Now the will that is universally legislative is the absolutely "good will." What did Kant mean by this? He seems to assert that *the* good and the *will* are identical. If so, the end sought might be good in itself. The statement is partial, and liable to misinterpretation. To allege that "there is nothing good but the good will," is not specific enough. For the good will, viewed merely as will, must be regarded as an abstraction. It would be much nearer the mark to assert, that 'there is nothing good but the good character.' For the good will is good only as an expression of the good character, and this because the end of which it wills the realisation springs from the character as its expression. The good character constitutes at once the source whence the good will issues, and the goal that the good will proposes to itself. Kant's doctrine, if taken abstractly, and without this concrete reference, is apt to lead to a cessation of interest in particular goods, perhaps to a certain moral priggishness, as practice often proves.

Thus, when the spirit of Kant's doctrine has been disengaged from the letter, we may say that the proposition, "there is nothing good but the good will," really means, 'there is nothing good but the good character,' and that the maxim, "treat all persons as ends," implies that the end is always the realisation of character. Regarded in this way, Kantian ethics may be liberated from that 'respect for the law' as the only motive to right action which ensued upon the dualism instituted by the Critical Philosophy between will and the object willed. For, when we recognise the end of the good will to be identical with that whence the good will springs, namely, character, we are able to see that devotion to this end, and not lifeless awe of a bare rule, furnishes the motive to goodness. Kant's anxiety to conserve the independence of the moral subject forced the conclusion that every motive not derived from the good will itself must be evil. Accordingly, he failed to leave room for the ethical *fact*, that morality is at once internal and external—character whence it issues from within being also that which it energises to realise without. One can hardly doubt that in the finest examples of human excellence this has been the case. Love, the fulfilling of the law, made Jesus and all saints. Enthusiasm, not passionless respect, moulded their careers, an enthusiasm which, while a subjective emotion, found the food convenient for it in and through society. Moral inspiration is derived, not from an abstract reason, but from the immanent meaning of the family and the State. For, reason is more than *mine*, it is also the fountain of human development. Thus, even if we derive our motives

from something that is not simply *within*, they still flow from our truer self—from the universal life wherein we are partakers.

Approaching the matter in this way, we are able to note both the merits and defects of Kant's position. His merit—the revolution he created—is that he derived the moral law from reason itself as embodied in will or character, and not from any sensuous or non-human, possibly anti-human, source. His defect is that, with the Stoics, he separates reason from passion, and thus his principle of reason cannot supply any definite duties or positive inspirations. In the *Critique of Practical Reason*, as in the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he was beholden to the antithesis that characterised the thought of his age.

This is apparent, not only in his treatment of the general principle of the Practical Reason thus far, but also in his discussion of the demands which it prefers. For, as in the theoretical life, so in the practical, reason is compelled to make demands from the nature of the case. The Pure Reason fell into paralogisms and antinomies whence it could not extricate itself. Guided by this analogy, Kant finds that an antinomy of the Practical Reason arises also. The moral consciousness demands a *summum bonum*; that is to say, since all moral activity represents an aim, the Reason that rules it demands that the aim shall be represented as attainable. But man lives a double life, in the Intelligible and Sensible worlds. Therefore his moral aim presents a twofold aspect. On the internal side it embodies virtue, on the sensuous side, it calls for perfected happiness. Moral progress is a progress towards these, and becomes meaningless unless both

can be attained, and this perfectly. Now, on appeal to experience, do we find that, as a matter of fact, virtue and happiness go together? Kant declares, as he must, that they do not. Hence, like the Pure Reason, the Practical Reason prefers a demand that can never reach satisfaction. The moral antinomy pivots upon this situation. But, seeing that we are dealing with the realm of freedom now, a solution may be found. The old opposition between the Intelligible and Sensible worlds returns indeed, but, this time, for judgment. Within the phenomenal world of sense, virtue and happiness never correspond, so much is sure. But men, as rational beings, are citizens of an internal (noumenal) world, a suprasensuous sphere where the conflict between virtue and happiness has no existence. Here these two coincide. And not only this, Moral Reason guarantees their perfection or completion—in its noumenal life, the immortality of the soul, and the existence of God find indubitable place. For, on the one hand, man can advance to virtue only through an infinite progress, consequently he must be immortal. On the other hand, the supreme good requires perfect happiness, and this is the condition of a Being in the universe for whom everything happens according to his wish and will. But this condition cannot be realised except when all nature agrees with his wishes, a situation that never emerges. As active beings, we are not causes of nature, and the moral law offers no ground for a unity of virtue with happiness. Nevertheless, we ought, or are, to endeavour to promote the supreme good. Accordingly, it must fall within the bounds of possibility. The necessary union of the two moments is therefore postulated, and this implies the

existence of a cause of nature, in distinction from nature, that constitutes the ground of the unity. In other words, a Being must exist who is the common cause of the natural (sensible) and the moral (intelligible) worlds; a Being, moreover, who knows our noumenal life, and who distributes happiness to us according to this life. And such a Being is God.

In the issue, then, freedom of the independent self, immortality, implying a completed universe, and God, the self-sufficing Being, which were excluded from the domain of the Pure Reason, are demonstrated for us by the Practical Reason. In the noumenal realm freedom is given by the categorical imperative, whence we gain the assurance, "thou can'st" because "thou ought'st"; for only a *free* being can be *subject* to an *absolute* law that is not a law of compulsion. Once more, the necessity for moral perfection involves immortality as its condition. Finally, the need for completed happiness carries with it an indefeasible reference to Deity.

It can hardly fail to occur, even to the uninitiated, that Kant's moral philosophy, especially in its derivation of immortality and God from the ethical consciousness, leaves a sense of dissatisfaction. We feel an aching void, as it were, for his position seems weak, if not artificial. The truth is that, in his critical regress upon the Practical Reason, he was concerned too exclusively for man's independence of nature, and so strove to vindicate a theory which, whatever its implicit merits, facts tended to traverse. As a result, moral personality proves to be neither "a purely natural aptitude nor a permanent effect produced by habitual action, but *the absolute unity of the inner principle that regulates*

the changes of life." True, the faith of moral reason wings its way here, nevertheless it often appears to beat the void. The world is too little with it, because, as a spectator of the 'ought to be,' it evinces utter unconcern for what is. So much so, indeed, that one might term Kant's chief ethical works a preliminary investigation directed to a *limiting* survey of the field, and, on this basis, might proceed to allege further that the practical problem never received due attention. On the other hand, in the essays on "The Races of Mankind" and the "Concept of a Race of Men," in the outlines of a philosophy of history, and in the "Anthropology," Kant descends from these cold heights to traffic with empirical facts. Still, he never unifies the theoretical and the natural. But, notwithstanding, the principle that inspires him exerts such sway that he virtually breaks the bonds of Enlightenment thought.

By a paradox, his anxiety to render the Practical consistent with the Pure Reason makes his moral philosophy far from consistent. For, as the *Critique of Pure Reason* did not dare the venture beyond conceptions within consciousness, so the Practical Reason evinced an analagous timidity. Had it fared forth to seize upon the world and the fulness thereof, intent to transform all life to its own image, it might have imperilled the "absolute unity of the inner principle." (Kant forgot that this "absolute unity" was "out" already, or rather, that it never could have been "in.") And it is difficult to see how the gulf can be bridged save by devices which, as Kant himself proved more fundamentally than any previous thinker, "minister to the vain fancy of the reflective or idly speculative."

For, cleave man from nature with a hatchet, and you cannot restore the broken unity except by the magnificent miracle of a pre-established harmony, with its *Deus ex machina*, or by a series of less imposing miracles wrought by continuous interposition from without, and involving a *progressus ad infinitum*. In other words, the "absolute unity of the inner principle" contemplated by Kant must, on his own view, acquire a significance at odds with his description of it as a purely *formal* unity. As has been said with wit and insight:

"The one-sided subjectivity of Kant's conception of morals prevents the transcendental deduction from being, as in the other case [*i.e.* in the *Pure Reason*], an inquiry into the principles that make possible what is given as real, and Kant is reduced to what we might call an inquiry into *the possibility of a possibility*."¹

Accordingly, in substance, Kant's procedure involves two moments, one negative, the other positive. So long as he remains critical and regressive, the former predominates, and he confines himself mainly to a justification of the internal independence of moral beings, thus hewing the ethical consciousness apart from nature—from all things that originate desire or passion, pleasure or pain. On the contrary, when he attempts a moral system, he inevitably becomes more positive, because he must connect the law with action, and therefore with objects that fall within man's *only sphere* of action. Thus, the schematism of the Pure Reason, which really presupposes the prior unity of subject and object, finds parallel in the expression of the moral

¹ Edward Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, vol. ii, p. 137, note.

law as if it were a law of nature. Here Kant 'envisages,' or 'represents' the ideal world in terms of the natural world, for the simple reason that he has no other recourse. And the very suggestion would be impossible apart from the integration of the two as a prior fact.

His inconsistency roots, of course, in the sceptical trend of his theoretical thought. In a noteworthy passage of the *Prolegomena*, where he is offering a simple outline of the argument of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, he says :

"It is also remarkable that the ideas of reason are, unlike the categories, of no service in enabling our understanding to cope with experience, but are quite superfluous, and may become a positive hindrance to the principles of a rational knowledge of nature."¹

In the moral sphere, where the ideas of reason are all in all, nature "may become a positive hindrance" to the ideals of the ethical life. Yet, on the other hand, in the intellectual life, "we must, according to a right maxim of the philosophy of nature, refrain from all explanations of the design of nature drawn from the will of a Supreme Being; because this would not be natural philosophy, but an acknowledgment that we had come to the end of it";² while, in the moral life, this same "will of a Supreme Being" turns out to be an indispensable hypothesis. The fact is that, while we cannot reconcile Kant's *ipsissima verba* with themselves, the critical *prolegomena* to his ethical theory are overpassed by him in his *Metaphysical Principles of Law* and *Metaphysical Principles of the Doctrine of Virtue*, where he essays a *positive* system of morals.

¹ Sect. 44.

² *Ibid.*

Here, rather than elsewhere, we must seek his 'philosophical revolution' in the ethical realm.

When he asserts that freedom is the *ratio essendi* of the moral law, but that the moral law is the *ratio cognoscendi* of freedom, he enunciates a principle that might well have given him power to transcend his scepticism. For this view embodies an affirmation which, according to the *Critique of Pure Reason*, is impossible, if not absurd. It implies that a manifestation incident naturally to our normal experience is an expression of a supersensible reality. Although it has no sense-reference, it nevertheless involves a concrete subject-object relation, and affords an objective ground for the internal organisation of our spiritual life—the moral law, in this case. The secret of the strength, as of the epoch-making sweep, of Kant's moral philosophy stands unveiled now. Nature and spirit are such—because they are one. Sense and reason, passion and the moral ideal do not fall asunder :

“ And this last
Conceit of limitation stands debarr'd
By very concept of an absolute.”

In the course of his partial sketch of a moral system we can detect the operative presence of this principle, which enables, even compels, Kant to surmount the empirical realism that remains embedded in his thought till the bitter end. In the nature of the case, to quote his own words, “a *want of Reason* springing not from the *subjective* ground of our wishes, but from an *objective* motive of the will, which binds every rational being, and hence authorises him *a priori* to presuppose the existence in nature of the conditions necessary

for its satisfaction," cannot be assuaged by a God who is less than real *because of* his revelation in the moral consciousness, and less than spiritual *because of* his revelation in nature!

When Kant comes to consider the hard facts of society and conduct, he reverts, as usual, to the method of analytic abstraction. The dual life of man provides the starting-point. Every human being is a self-conscious, and therefore independent, subject: but, at the same time, as this being is a 'man in a world of men,' he is also restrained, and therefore a finite object. And the problem follows, How is he to 'fit to the finite his infinity'? If the double aspect of his nature be emphasised, it seems evident that, when he confronts the alien world, his actions are the external consequences of his will; when he remains within the pure internal self, his will acts according to its own motives. The former relation demarcates the sphere of law, the latter that of morals. Kant differentiates the two realms so sharply that a peculiar problem appears to arise in each, and he makes no overt provision for the questions connected with the implied unity of both.

Thus, in the legal aspect of life, the moot point comes to be, How can a man be prevented from invasion of the inalienable personal rights of others and, notwithstanding, be guaranteed personal freedom? This way of stating the case—which seems to render the problem insoluble, because the terms are opposed so abstractly—is mitigated somewhat by the consideration that law reckons not of motive, but looks solely to the external relations of the act. Yet, even so, there may be rights which it is impossible to assert, and

wrongs which it is impossible to punish. As a result, the proper sphere of law must be delimited rigidly. A new abstraction, this time between persons and things, comes to Kant's assistance, and he elaborates upon it at length. Naturally enough, as the separation is analogous to that between reason and passion in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, he arrives at the conclusion that only those laws are justifiable which a man can present as if enacted for all, self included. He deduces several results from this principle, which is put to the greatest strain in his discussion of penal justice, where he reverts once more to the duality of human nature. "I, therefore (as *homo noumenon*), subject myself under a different *persona* (as *homo phenomenon*), along with all other members of the same civil society, to the penal law." It will be noted at once that this affords no vindication of the authority of society. But, apart from society, justice or law possesses no meaning. The very fact of its existence, even in problematic shape, asserts a community between persons wherein each is at once a means and an end to all others. That is to say, Kant's own procedure suffices to show that society cannot be, as he supposed, a mere aggregation of *independent* persons. Personal rights originate in society, and justice, properly considered, constitutes an educative process. From the point of view of concrete moral life as foreshadowed by Kant, men *ought* to abhor, not punishment, but guilt—infraction of the very possibilities of human well-being.

In his treatment of virtue, we find Kant enmeshed in analogous abstractions—duties of perfect and imperfect obligation, duties to self and duties to others,

and so forth ; from canonist he has passed to be casuist. The old antinomy between the independent self or noumenon, and the passional self or phenomenon, sways him still. As a result, we are told that we are conjoined morally with our fellow-men only in the empirical life ; in respect of the pure moral ideal each man must work out his own salvation, must proceed into the infinite alone. Thus, while every man ought to pursue his own *perfection*, he ought also to forward the *happiness* of others—an end on the empirical or lower level ; and while every man ought to press towards his own *spiritual summum bonum*, he ought also to seek the *natural summum bonum* of others—once more an end on the lower level. This “utterly unique discrimination of man from man” would be inconceivable were it not that duties to self are *also* duties to others, and *vice versa*. Otherwise, “happiness,” “perfection,” and all the rest are the merest artifacts. Accordingly, Kant anticipates prophetically an unbroken order of the universe, and a self unalienated from self, both of them organic to “a ground of unity of that which is above sense, which lies at the basis of nature, and that which the conception of freedom practically involves.” Kant expresses himself thus, however, not in any of the moral treatises, but in the third *Critique*, where, more than in the others, the need for such a concrete principle struggles to recognition.

CHAPTER III

THE TELEOLOGICAL ASPECT OF EXPERIENCE AND RELIGION

KANT'S WRITINGS, ETC.

1779. Lessing's *Nathan the Wise*.
1780. Schiller's *Robbers*.
1780. Voss's German version of Homer's *Odyssey*.
1780-81. Herder's *Letters touching the Study of Theology*. (In strong opposition to the spirit of the 'Illumination.')
1786-88. Schiller interested in Kant by Körner.
1788. Wöllner's Edict ends the toleration enjoyed under Frederick the Great.
1789. Schiller's *Die Künstler*. (This poem presages his æsthetic theories.)
1790. "Critique of Judgment." (English trans., in *Kant's Kritik of Judgment*, by J. H. Bernard, London, 1892.)
1791. "On the Failure of all Philosophical Attempts at a Theodicy." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., in *Kant's Essays and Treatises*, by A. F. M. Willich, 2 vols., London, 1798.)
1792. "On the Radical Evil in Human Nature." In the *Berliner Monatsschrift*. (English trans., in *Kant's Theory of Religion*, by J. W. Semple, 2nd ed., London, 1848; and in *Kant's Theory of Ethics*, by T. K. Abbott, 4th ed., London, 1889.)
1792. The Berlin Censor prohibits further articles by Kant.

1792. Schiller's *Neue Thalia*. (Tragedy on Kant's æsthetic principles.)
1793. Schiller's *On Grace and Dignity*.
1793. "Religion within the Limits of Reason Only." (English trans., by Semple, as above; and, of the First Part, by Abbott, as above.)
- 1793-95. Schiller's *Letters on the Æsthetic Education of Mankind*. In the *Horen*.
1794. "On the End of All Things." In the *Berliner Monatschrift*. (English trans., by Willich, as above.)
1794. In a Cabinet Order, Frederick William II. commands Kant to desist from writing upon religious subjects. Kant complies, with a mental reservation.
1795. Schiller's *Das Ideal und das Leben*. (The high-water mark of 'Kantian' poetry.)
- 1795-96. Schiller's *On Naïve and Sentimental Poetry*.
1797. Death of Frederick William II.; accession of Frederick William III.; Wöllner dismissed.
- 1797-1810. A. W. Schlegel's German version of *Shakespeare*.
1798. "The Controversy of the Faculties." (Kant's account of his theological difficulties with the government of Frederick William II.)

Few would suspect Goethe, the "Great Heathen," of affinity for the stern moralism of Kant. Yet he says that Kant "achieved immortality" by delivering "us from the sentimentalism into which we had subsided." His reference is to the temper, rather than to the scientific form, of Kant's ethics, to the moral quality of the man, not to the letter of the system. For, although it may be said that Kant's philosophy culminates in an ethical idealism, because it tends to refer everything to the idea of the good, it is also true that the abstractions reminiscent of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, leave this idea more or less without an objective sphere of influence. We can trace the inevitable recoil from a transitive principle of unity even when

Kant is not engaged in elaboration of a technical treatise. For example, he says:

"The material of happiness is sensible, but the form is intellectual. Now, this is not possible except as freedom under *a priori* laws of agreement with itself, and this is not to make happiness actual, but to render its idea possible. . . . Its real value consists in the fact that it is we who creatively produce it, irrespective of its empirical conditions, which can furnish only particular rules of life, and that it brings with it self-sufficiency. . . . Happiness is not really the greatest sum of enjoyment, but pleasure arising from the consciousness of one's own ability to be contented."¹

Self-sufficiency, being irrespective of circumstances, over and above an indispensable minimum, is subjective, that is to say. The sharp distinction between the Sensible and the Intelligible worlds, necessary to the negations that were to compass the decline and fall of the 'popular' philosophy, reappeared, as we have seen, alike in the form and in the matter of the ethical works. Consequently, the phenomenal universe of nature, and the intelligible universe of freedom, confront one another, so that their ultimate concord in experience becomes obscured. Heine's elaborate joke, to the effect that Kant devised the *Critique of Practical Reason* for the comfort of his pious, if drunken and faithless, valet, Lampe, Aristophanic though it be, therefore contains a scintilla of truth. The distinctions, not the unification, lay on the surface. The negations of the *Pure Reason* saw Kant in earnest, the affirmations of the *Practical Reason* exhibited him in the act of making accommodations!

¹ *Lose Blätter*, vol. i. pp. 9 f. (ed. by R. Reicke).

"After the tragedy comes the farce. Immanuel Kant has hitherto appeared as the grim, inexorable philosopher: he has stormed heaven, put the whole garrison to the sword, the ruler of the world swims senseless in his blood: there is no more any mercy, or fatherly goodness, or future reward for present privations; the immortality of the soul is in its last agonies—death rattles and groans! And old Lampe stands by with his umbrella under his arm as a sorrowing spectator, and the sweat of anguish and tears run down his cheeks. Then Immanuel Kant is moved to pity, and shows himself not only a great philosopher, but a good man. He considers, and half good-naturedly and half ironically says:

"'Old Lampe must have a God, or else the poor man cannot be happy; and people really ought to be happy in this world. Practical common sense declares *that*. Well, *meinetwegen*, for all I care, let practical reason guarantee the existence of a God.'

"And in consequence of this argument, Kant distinguishes between theoretical reason and practical reason, and with the latter, as with a magic wand, revives the corpse of deism, which theoretical reason has slain.

"Did Kant undertake this resurrection out of love to old Lampe or for fear of the police? Or did he really act from conviction? Or did he, after destroying every proof of the existence of a God, really wish to show how dangerous and doubtful it is, if we can know nothing of the existence of God? Therein he managed as wisely as did my Westphalian friend, who, after he had broken and extinguished all the street-lamps in the Grohnderstrasse in Göttingen, delivered unto us,

standing in darkness, a long lecture on the practical necessity of the lamps which he had theoretically smashed, to show us that without them he could see nothing.”¹

Superficial, as always, Heine did not perceive that the tale of his Westphalian roysterer missed the point. For, in Kant’s view, the good “*ought* to be realised, because it *can* be realised.” Nay more, Kant’s central conceptions—of the moral law as subserving the same office in the realm of freedom as natural law subserves in the phenomenal world, of the community of self-conscious beings in a kingdom of ends, of perfection and happiness as the purposive aims of will—imply that, in so far as we take it for the absolute reality, the good is realised. Doubtless, Kant’s *theory* abhors this conclusion. But his sentiments belie his concepts, his wisdom is better than his knowledge; and, at length, he finds himself compelled to face the facts of human nature—to reckon with the teleology which his formal system had forced him to reject. The phenomenal and noumenal, natural law, and moral freedom, in short, the Sensible and the Intelligible worlds, are in opposition when we laminate them with the knife of reason. But, in every case, man himself *is* both. Accordingly, the original union that made the differences possible cannot but return for judgment, and, in a measure, come to its own. This aspect of the problem asserts itself in the third *Critique*.

Despite its formal stiffness, involution, and redundancy, the *Critique of Judgment* marks clearly Kant’s

¹ *The Works of Heinrich Heine*, vol. v. pp. 150 f. (Eng. trans. by C. G. Leland).

return upon his past career, and this in more ways than one. For, it presupposes, not only the principles and conclusions of his major works, especially the earlier *Critiques*, but also the personal and humane side of the man reviewed in a previous chapter.¹ Forgetful of the latter, we are apt to deem it passing strange that the cold analyst of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, or the Stoic, almost ascetic, moralist of the *Critique of Practical Reason*, should have turned æsthetician at last. So, we must bethink us of the brilliant young *Docent*, a familiar in the *beau monde*, a frequenter of my lady's *salon*, a witty and courted conversationalist, a great reader of poetry and travels, a fastidious dresser even. We must recall the flashing swordsmanship of the *Dreams of a Visionary* and the touches of sentiment that play in the *Observations on the Sublime and the Beautiful*, which gave Kant a reputation as a stylist—the German La Bruyère,—and, no doubt, rendered the offer of the chair of Rhetoric and Poetry at Königsberg (1764) less incongruous than it seems to us now. In a word, we must remember that, even after 1784, when he retired into private life comparatively speaking, Kant was ever a man in a world of men; and that, during his earlier days, he could not escape entirely the surge of the forces that culminated in the *Geniezeit*. This was the Kant to whom, in the first bloom of his vigorous maturity, Rousseau appealed; the Kant who, shrewdly observant of men and manners, detected his kinship with *Emile*,—he “will often find himself reflecting on the principles of taste—a study suitable for this stage of his career”; the Kant who read in the French master-

¹ See above, pp. 76 f.

piece,—and did not forget,—that “taste is simply the faculty of judging what pleases or displeases the greater number.” Not a little of the felicity and *finesse* of the *Critique of Judgment* hark back to these happy memories.

But, if the aged, thought-worn philosopher thus reverted to the halcyon days of his youth, it must be borne in mind too that much water had run beneath his bridges during the lapse of a quarter century, and, when he came to treat æsthetic questions, he had to reckon perforce, not primarily with Wolff and Newton and Hume, but with Hutcheson and Home and Burke, with Baumgarten and Moses Mendelssohn, and with the ‘new’ psychology of Sulzer and Tetens. Nay, more than all these, the critical system, born of his intellectual travail, provided a medium so transforming that we recognise little or nothing in the *Critique of Judgment* as a reproduction either of his expansive social self, or of ideas contributed by his predecessors. The methods and forms of the monumental books ornamented everthing that he touched. We may say, therefore, that he had enjoyed long familiarity with the æsthetic aspect of human nature, and that, accordingly, he experienced no sense of awkwardness in the fresh departure. Nevertheless, it is plain that the critical framework supplied a means whereby all sorts of material, acquired in a past now nigh forgotten or suggested by others more recently, could be reduced to manageable unity. In short, Kant’s path to æsthetics was prepared happily. Yet, the third *Critique* does tend to startle us. For why did he feel compelled to follow this line rather than another? He had numerous loose ends to tie up. To answer this

question, we must note a second return upon his former self, this time upon the self that fathered the Critical Philosophy.

Kant had been able to go a mile with the empiricism of Hume, and with the mechanicalism of Newton. Staunched to the evidence, he had accepted the limits imposed upon experience by the physiological organisation; he was thus rid of vague mysticism, the besetting sin of his predecessors. And he had adopted the physical synthesis of celestial mechanics as a useful, apposite, and therefore indispensable, account of the known universe; he was thus rid of lawlessness, the opportunity from of old for pernicious irrationalism. But, at the same time, he had striven to conserve the constitutive power of the human mind as a necessary accompaniment or condition of these constructions. Still, to accomplish this end, he had been compelled to admit a dualism within experience, and, as a result, rational knowledge was vindicated in form rather than in substance. Similarly, in the moral life, freedom had been guarded from intrusion of the determinism of natural law by sharp division between the ideal and the empirical spheres. Hence Heine's joke. The 'things which cannot be shaken,' whose vindication concerned Kant so deeply, might be viewed merely as appendices to the hard facts of 'this present evil world,' not as of the essence of the matter. In any case, each aspect of experience seemed to circle apart from its fellow, neither intersecting the other.

Now, these fast divisions issue from an epistemological analysis. That is to say, when experience is submitted to dissection, the contrast between the incidental factors takes its place definitively, and the

possibility of mediation vanishes. Nevertheless, no analysis would be imperative, much less practicable, did these inimical elements fail to co-operate in a common unity. Accordingly, somehow or other, man himself must offer a basis of integration, where both are at once subordinate and transcended. The 'schematisms' of the "Pure" and the "Practical Reason" intimate no less. The foundation of the form of knowledge, and that of the matter, may be the same. Or, to put it otherwise, distinctions are superfluous, if not unjustifiable, except in the same universe. So, even when they have been pursued to the bitter end, the problem of their mutual plane remains to be confronted. View human experience from the side of reason, and the surd of sense becomes inexpugnable. View it from the side of will, and the same must be admitted of desire or passion. But, view it from the side of feeling, and you may light upon a union of the opposites that roots in the nature of the case. Here it might be found that the Ideas of Reason subserve no bare regulative function in relation to the matter of sense, but that empirical objects may be transformed to ideal ends by being brought into the rational unity of the Ideas. Thus, the unity would continue a formal point no longer; on the contrary, it would manifest itself amid the empirical differences; a reason without would answer to the reason within, because, in æsthetic feeling, man 'senses' the adaptation of things to his self-consciousness. In so far as man *looks out*, he finds that his understanding unifies his experience according to the conception of necessary connection. In so far as he *looks in*, he finds that self-conscious presentation of

will unifies his experience according to the conception of the ideal self as its own end. Consequently, if he contemplate himself as a rational being, his unitary selfhood is opposed by *its own* recognition of a 'matter' over which it has no power. And, if he contemplate himself as a moral being, his unitary selfhood is opposed by *its own* recognition of desires that cannot be moralised. But, these two aspects, taken together, appear to have pre-empted the whole range of possible experience. What further recourse have we, then?

At this point Kant adopted the psychological analysis first proposed, in opposition to Wolff, by Sulzer, the most eminent philosophical aesthetician of his day, who presented his views on "the feeling of what is agreeable" to the Berlin Academy as early as 1751. Moses Mendelssohn diffused similar doctrines for a generation thereafter (1755-85). At length, they were systematised by the Kiel professor, J. N. Tetens, in his influential work, *Philosophical Essays on Human Nature and its Development* (1776), which Kant is known to have studied closely. This 'new' psychology raised the 'faculty' of feeling to a level of equal importance with Wolff's 'faculties' of "cognition and appetition," thus providing a third range of experience alongside reason (knowledge) and appetition (will). Nor was Kant unprepared to adapt this to the regular procedure of the Critical Philosophy hitherto. With Wolff and Baumgarten, he had distinguished between a lower and higher 'faculty' of knowledge, thus separating Understanding from Reason (Judgment). So, too, in the moral realm, the lower sense-consciousness strove for gratification

(pleasure), the higher reason reached out strenuously to the moral law. Thus, when the 'faculty' of feeling assumed prominence, it was possible and legitimate to emphasise a parallel difference within it. On the one hand, arising from the lower sensational side, we have pleasantness and unpleasantness. On the other, arising from the higher side of imagination, we have beauty and ugliness. Accordingly, preserving the critical framework, Kant finds, not only a new plane of experience where he may seek the unity of reason and sense, of freedom and necessity, and the rest, but also a scheme conformable, externally at least, to that made familiar in the previous *Critiques*.

The aptitude to feel, then, presents human experience in a new light. In knowledge of empirical events thought moves at ease among its own images of things, but these are, as it were, items of consciousness, never objective facts. In moral activity man yearns towards an ideal state, but this cannot prevail over the physical world, and therefore must continue a "pattern laid up in the heavens." In feeling, on the other hand, man realises that the distinction between self-consciousness and nature is not absolute, for, in the beautiful, nature exhibits a tendency to *be* what our Ideas of Reason would have her *become*. Artistic insight not only traces the beautiful in nature, but bestows a local habitation.

"Not from a vain or shallow thought
His awful Jove young Phidias brought;
Never from lips of cunning fell
The thrilling Delphic oracle;
Out from the heart of Nature rolled
The burdens of the Bible old;

The litanies of nature came,
Like the volcano's tongue of flame,
Up from the burning core below—
The canticles of love and woe :
The hand that rounded Peter's dome,
And groined the aisles of Christian Rome,
Wrought in a sad sincerity ;
Himself from God he could not free ;
He builded better than he knew ;—
The conscious stone to beauty grew."

While, therefore, as the former *Critiques* had shown, it is impossible to *know* design in nature, or to energeise the moral law into the mechanical universe, man's feeling for the beautiful places him in a position to experience the adaptation of sense to understanding, of natural law to ethical value. In short, the purpose of the subjective consciousness is greeted by a kindred purpose traceable in the objective scene. Accordingly, the gulf between man and nature ceases to yawn impassable. The original unity betrays its secret presence to the artistic 'faculty.' But, this holds for feeling only. As a consequence, the *necessary* laws that characterise knowledge, and the *imperative* obligation that marks the Idea of Freedom, find no place here. Feeling cannot but be subjective, and, to this extent, the diremption that dominates the other *Critiques* preserves its formal authority intact.

"Although our concept of a subjective purposiveness of nature in its forms according to empirical laws is not a concept of the Object, but only a principle of the Judgment for furnishing itself with concepts amid the immense variety of nature (and thus being able to ascertain its own position), yet we thus ascribe to nature as it were a regard to our cognitive faculty

according to the analogy of purpose. Thus we can regard *natural beauty* as the *presentation* of the concept of the formal (merely subjective) purposiveness, and *natural purposes* as the presentation of a real (objective) purposiveness. The former of these we judge of by Taste (æsthetical, by the medium of the feeling of pleasure), the latter by Understanding and Reason (logical, according to concepts)."¹

We are bound to recognise, then, that, *e.g.*, a qualitative judgment about the beautiful does not hold of relations between objects, but only of the object as it induces our pleasure or pain. Nevertheless, such judgments possess a universal validity, due to the harmony between our 'faculties' which the contemplation of the beautiful evokes. In other words, by a perfectly *natural* movement of recognition, we attribute a purpose to the beautiful object, one that it was *designed* to subserve. But this consciously projected end is neither the cause, nor any factor in the cause, of the object. An inevitable function of our experience, the end, nevertheless, implies no more than a "subjective adaptation." Accordingly, science, with its universal and necessary laws, cannot be extracted from feeling, because this 'faculty' operates solely with particular examples. Or, otherwise, beauty never rises to perfection, even if it attach to this, for, perfection demands the victory of design in the objective world.

"It remains that the necessity which is thought of in connection with a determination of taste, is that which can only be called *exemplary*, *i.e.* the necessity of the agreement of *all* with a judgment which is

¹ *Critique of Judgment*, p. 35 (Bernard's trans.).

regarded as the example of a universal rule, which rule, however, we cannot state."

When man experiences the beautiful or the sublime he is lifted above selfish interests, because the operation of natural law becomes the occasion of his ability to recognise an infinite power within himself. He rises to that "*free* agreement with *law* which is characteristic of the imagination."

"The stars come nightly to the sky,
The tidal wave unto the sea;
Nor time, nor space, nor deep, nor high,
Can keep my own away from me."

This is particularly true of the "dynamically sublime" where, delivered from the oppressive immensities of nature, men "are lifted above the nature within, and therefore also above the nature without," and endowed with courage to measure themselves "against the apparent almightiness of nature." Here man serves himself something tremendous, whereof genius is the great exemplification. For the peculiar privilege of artistic genius is to produce in particular examples "that in our state of mind in apprehending a special idea, which is beyond all definite names, and to make it universally communicable."

"Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither—
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore."

When artistic insight or sympathy floods our souls

with light and warms them with its glow, we are moved profoundly by the feeling that nature throbs in unison with us. Nevertheless, we must remember that, after all, it is feeling—the feeling of a “super-sensible substratum” in the object which comes very close to our inmost being. Thus, after a fashion, ‘’twas only a dream at the best.’ We remain just in the condition that we attribute to the Pescadero pebbles:—

“ The pebbles lie ’neath the sunny sky
 Quiet for evermore ;
 In *dreams* of everlasting peace
 They sleep upon the shore.

But ugly, and rough, and jagged still
 Are they left by the passing years ;
 For they miss the beat of the angry storms,
 And the surf that drips in tears.

The hard turmoil of the pitiless sea
 Turns the pebble to beauteous gem.
 They who escape the agony
 Miss also the diadem.”

For, art is own sister to dream when it comes to objective validity. Symbols it can give, facts never. Nay, its symbolism may furnish us our nearest similitude of veritable freedom, as it may lead us most nigh the way through peace to light. No more ! At last we are able to exclaim only,

“ On my *heart*
 Deeply hath sunk the lesson thou has given
 And shall not soon depart.”

Kant, having travelled his mile with Hume and

Newton, could not go twain with the objective idealist. Yet he had refused to go twain with his British masters. And the *Critique of Judgment* reveals his hesitation, albeit unconsciously. As his thought stood, a final decision was impossible. The demand for it rang out, but no plangent answer could be flung back. Let us consider this very briefly.

The activity of the æsthetic 'faculty' is such that it cannot but exert pressure in the direction of an organic interpretation of experience. Despite this, however, the structure of the *Critique of Judgment* suffices to show that Kant clung to his customary mechanical method of approach and representation. Although unified in knowledge, reason and sense are really at war, because sense is referred to a source that lies beyond the reach of consciousness. Hence, too, nature and freedom stay at strife, for, the latter, being subjective, cannot compass the former, even if, somehow, the modes of nature do influence the rational, moral, and æsthetic 'faculties.' Now, this is to say that Kant had never liberated himself from vestigial subjective idealism. No matter how he may have flouted it, physico-theology haunted the borders of his kingdom. True, when confronted with the problem of unity, he falls back upon a 'feeling' self, with its 'faculty' of æsthetic judgment. We feel pleasure in a beautiful object, and this disinterestedly, that is, free from the thraldom of desire or passion. But Kant fails to realise that this is impossible, unless the 'feeling' self be more complex than his formalism permits him to allow. For the beautiful object, even admitting that is no more than a single particular, plays the rôle of a universal, in which the opposition

between sense and understanding has been transmuted into a harmony between sense and reason. The two coalesce, because adapted to each other. External law gives place to immanent design. But this implies the presence of thought, seeing that the implications of a universal-individual become explicit only in manifestations of *the* principle of self-consciousness. The whole mediates the parts, the parts mediate the whole. The object could not be what it is save that its integral factors are permeated by a unity greater than the sum of their parts, a unity referable only to itself accordingly. And this demands a *will*, to use Kantian language. In short, the problem of natural teleology arises.

The idea of design in nature is required to effect a mediation between the *nexus effectivus* (physical or mechanical connection) and the *nexus finalis* (teleological connection). A union of sense and reason, of necessity and freedom, provides the sole possible explanation of æsthetic 'faculty.' But Kant's previous formalism inevitably reduces any such reference to the level of illusion. Moreover, the temper of his age led him to oppose efficient and final causes, as if they belonged to two exclusive orders. So much so that, were his doctrine pushed to its ultimate conclusions, the rational experience of which he conceives would go to pieces. It would be impossible, out of such confused material as the empirical flux ("so infinitely various and not to be measured by our faculty of comprehension") to make a connected experience.¹ The fact happened to be that Kant was in no position to grasp the full significance of organism. In particular, he failed

¹ Cf. *Critique of Judgment*, Introduction, sect. 5.

to see that even the mechanical account of organic life presupposes a very different interpretation. For, with him, the fact of organism counted as no more than another incident in experience; its possible or probable cause could not be pierced. Thus, while he was forced to allow that the presence of nature and man in one universe, and the peculiar self-dependence of organism, are both events that transcend mechanical categories, he could perceive no normal ground for a teleological explanation of them. *That* they are we know, *how* they are is a meaningless question. So the single clue to the situation slipped Kant; he saw it, indeed, but only to extrude it immediately from the sphere of human possibility. Nor could he have done otherwise, so long as he conceived nature to be given externally.

A means of uniting man with nature thus remained an imperative need, albeit unsatisfied. The demand originates in the peculiar constitution of human understanding, and this 'faculty,' in turn, just on account of its constitution, can but revert to "the idea of a possible understanding other than human."¹ Willy-nilly, we are thrust back upon the old recourse of dogmatism.

"All natural research tends towards the form of a system of ends, and in its highest development would be a physico-theology. . . . The teleology of nature is thus made to rest on a transcendental theology, which takes the ideal of supreme ontological perfection as a principle of systematic unity, a principle which connects all things according to universal and necessary laws, since they all have their origin in the absolute necessity of a single primal being."

¹ Cf. *Critique of Judgment*, Introduction, sect. 75.

As a result, then, Kant leads us right up to the real issue, but abandons the final assault, because it seems impracticable to him. More profoundly than any of his modern predecessors, he realised that man is a riddle in need of a solution. He punctuated the terms of this problem with great precision. But, being enmeshed so completely in their opposition, he could not reach the vantage ground whence it would appear forthwith that the only solution man can find is—man himself.

Remembering Kant's intense seriousness with morality, and his flashes of insight when he deals with the æsthetic consciousness, one might anticipate that he would fare forth triumphantly in the kindred field of religion. At least, teleology might be expected to come by its own in the region where the challenge is most direct. But, again, and for the usual reasons, disappointment ensues. From one point of view the small treatise, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Only*, is the most puzzling among Kant's works. For, in his effort to accommodate the Critical Philosophy to religion, to Christianity in particular, Kant swings from side to side, although the main principles of the system predominate. The earlier *Critiques*, if they spell *exathanasia* to Deism, yet preserve this standpoint in essentials. As we read in the *Critique of Pure Reason*:

"Thus the transcendental and the only definite concept which purely speculative reason gives us of God is in the strictest sense *deistic*; that is, reason does not even supply us with the objective validity of such a concept, but only with the idea of something on which the highest and necessary unity of all empirical reality is founded."¹

¹ Max Müller's trans., 2nd ed., p. 542.

And, more emphatically, the *Critique of Practical Reason* circles round a moral Deism. On the whole, the less inadequate conception of Deity implied in the *Critique of Judgment*, where God appears as the ground of the design inseparable from a *universe*, recedes. But, on the other hand, the conclusion of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, where God comes to be a positive clog upon rational thought, is not upheld unreservedly. Kant's peculiar notion of the relation between religion and morality causes him rather to revert to the *Critique of Practical Reason*; in addition, his utterly unhistorical approach to religion enables him to escape the full stress of the problem which, once perceived, would have compelled him to draw the conclusions latent in his moral theory. For, while the intellect has a logical right to insist that the God whom it cannot think is therefore non-existent, the moral consciousness has equal right to insist that the God whom it is bound to envisage must therefore exist. Absorbed in his prior anxieties, Kant never emerges into clear light here. He continues to deny the objective validity of consciousness, because, at all hazards, he must preserve pure *a priori* principles inviolate. He continues to emphasise the subjectivity of moral freedom, because he must guard its activity from the inroads of desire. Now, in its very essence, religion—Christianity especially—denies precisely these separations. Accordingly, the accommodations instituted by Kant are most significant alike as criticisms of his own standpoint, and as hints of the real direction implicit in his thought.

Kant's religious philosophy pivots upon his doctrine of the relation between morality and religion, and upon

his indignant recoil from the flabby, often cynical, morals of his age. Regarding the latter, he is opposed out and out to the shallow morality of manners or 'good form,' which strains at the gnat and swallows the camel. For this would convert religion into a conventional round of external performances, and defraud vital thought of its just prerogatives.

"In this way, the people become accustomed to hypocrisy, their honesty and fidelity are destroyed, and they grow cunning in avoiding the true performance even of their political duties."

With regard to the former, because morality involves the sole unconditional obligation in human experience, Kant's task is to discover how far religion can be adapted to a theory wherein man is a purely self-determining subject, saved or lost in his *noumenal* being, never in his phenomenal activities. This moralism leads him to start from the 'radical evil' (original sin) of human nature. Here we have a "corruption of the heart," not a corruption *in the universe*. It issues neither from animal passion, which, in the nature of the case, embodies no moral reference of its own, being innocent, nor from the moral consciousness, which cannot be perverted, but from a transvaluation of values as between the two. Consequently, but one explanation of religion is available. We are bound to view it as a symbolic representation of the process whereby the tendency to invert desire and ideal is overcome. Practically, belief in Christ amounts to recognition of our own rational ideal within; He typifies natural religion. So, too, the Church prefigures schematically that "one far-off divine event," a moral republic, a "great Family under a common though invisible moral Father, acting

through His Son who knows His will, and who at the same time is bound to all the other members of the Family by ties of blood."

In like manner, the dogmas of the creeds are pictorial accounts of an internal, and ethical, experience. All these, then, *approximate* to the true religion of reason and, if taken according to this, their spirit, subserve a useful purpose. But they may be perverted very easily; the letter is quick to kill. Consequently, among other things, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Only* contains a protest, palpitating with moral indignation, against the declension of organised religion from the pure ideal. Conventional or ecclesiastical piety, especially if used as a convenient means to 'make the best of both worlds,' was never subjected to more scathing rebuke. Kant's personal experience of persecution, of insolent authoritative attempts to enforce smug conformity, expresses itself here. And he asserts to the contrary, that veritable religion roots in complete devotion to an individual and inward moral end.

But, despite its force and intensity, Kant's exposition betrays the presence of deistic rationalism everywhere. One may note particularly his blindness to the catholicity of Christianity; his disregard of history; and his truncated account of the *ultimate* implications of the religious consciousness. Obsessed by subjective individualism, Kant fell away from the great conception of his *Ideal of a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Standpoint*, that "it is only in a society in which there is the greatest freedom and therefore a thorough antagonism of all the members, and at the same time the most exact determination

and secure maintenance of the limit of this freedom in each, so that it may consist with equal freedom in all the rest, that the highest end of nature in man, *i.e.* the full development of all his natural capacities, can be attained."

He could not realise that the Church, as catholic, is not "empirically composed," but exists as the organic, progressive manifestation of this very society, because it is the community wherein man's intense personality is mediated objectively and raised to the highest power, thanks to the recognition of the actual presence of a living God in and to humanity. In like manner, the logic of rationalism could not absorb the historical process of religion. Religion interests Kant only in so far as ecclesiastical requirements have come to replace moral devotion. Hence, for example, Judaism and Christianity stand in no vital connection, because, till Christianity appeared, there could not be a universal Church to enforce external services. Palestine may have been the scene of a civil hierocracy; and, for the rest, non-Christian 'religions' are so much superstition, they revert to magic. Moreover, as concerns Christianity itself, "to say that a belief in historical facts is a duty, and necessary to salvation, is superstition. For faith in a mere historical statement is dead by its very nature."

Such conclusions seem very curious to a generation which, like ours, has ploughed so long with the historical method. For Kant they were inevitable, because he could not conceive revelation as anything except an inbreak from a supernatural, and therefore irrational, source. Thus mediation came to be synonymous with hocus-pocus. And such a conception

implies violation of moral freedom by foreign authority. Finally, the presentation of the ultimate elements in religion suffers not a little from an analogous misconception. Religion is no more than an appendage to morality. And morality, being an imperative desire for a *universal* good, cannot enter upon any dealings with *particular* impulses. That is, these two are held to coexist in man, and are treated as if their presence to a single personality could at once coexist *and* leave the nature of each untouched. Grant this, and the very problem of religion is, not merely missed, but rather evaporated. It disappears in an opposition that has obscured the unity whence the warring factors sprang.

Nevertheless, Kant suggests a less hopeless solution when he refers to a higher, supersensuous power in man himself, "an impulsion towards good actuated by Deity." But this experience cannot occur apart from a relative disillusion concerning objects which, accordingly, derive their valuation from their relation to this larger self. And the moment this becomes manifest, we pass from illusion to truth by means of our relations with objects that *are* capable of maintaining and reinforcing the profounder consciousness—namely, to our fellow-men, and to God. In this unity Kant's free self, of the *Practical Reason*, loses its barren independence, to find itself, not simply the mirror, but the veritable vehicle, of the universal. This made clear, it becomes possible to distinguish the permanent from the transitory elements in religion, to unveil the genius of Christianity, and to detect in the Church a community of perfectionists, mediated concretely through Christ the Comforter, "even the

spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father." In a word, Kant's philosophy of religion portends an energetic idealism, one that heals the diremption of human consciousness, not by severance of the participant factors, but by transmutation of them through the activity of that human sense for the Eternal which suffuses all objects, and "is reflected back to itself as the morning sun, its light broken up into its colours, from a thousand dewdrops." Thus, in religion, as elsewhere, Kant presaged, and in large measure motivated, the immense displacement borne up and thought through by the nineteenth century for the sake of the twentieth.

CHAPTER IV

FORWARD FROM KANT

1. KANT'S PRINCIPAL EDITED REMAINS

- 1800. *Logic*. Edited by Jäsche.
- 1802. *Physical Geography*. Edited by Rink.
- 1803. *Pedagogy*. Edited by Rink.
- 1804. *On the Prize Question of the Berlin Academy, What Real Progress has Metaphysics made in Germany since the Times of Leibniz and Wolff*. Edited by Rink.
- 1817. *Lectures on the Philosophical Theory of Religion*. Edited by Pölitz.
- 1821. *Lectures on Metaphysics*. Edited by Pölitz. (Important because Kant did not work out his metaphysics systematically in his major writings.)
- 1878. Benno Erdmann's edition of the *Prolegomena to Every Future Metaphysic*. (With very important historical introduction.)
- 1878. Benno Erdmann's edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. (Based on the Second Edition, and containing a 'philological' discussion of the relation between this and the First Edition.)
- 1882-84. *Reflections on the Critical Philosophy*. Edited by Benno Erdmann. (On *Anthropology*, 1882; on the *Critique of Pure Reason*, 1884: an important collection of Kant's notes, throwing light upon the course of his thought.)
- 1889. Adickes' edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. (The editor attempts to trace the circumstances in which the various parts originated.)

1889-95. *Loose Leaves from Kant's Remains*, 2 vols. Edited by Reicke.

2. THE POST-KANTIAN PHILOSOPHICAL MOVEMENT¹

(Pivotal works, etc., denoted by an asterisk)

- 1790. Maimon's *Essay on the Transcendental Philosophy, with an Appendix on Symbolic Knowledge*. (Emphasises the critical element in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.)
- 1792. Fichte's *Essay towards a Critique of All Revelation*. G. E. Schulze's *Ænesidemus*. (Emphasises the sceptical element in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.)
- 1793-96. Beck's *Expository Abridgment of the Critical Writings of Professor Kant*.
- 1794. Tiedemann's *Theaetetus*. (Opposes Kant from a realistic standpoint.) Fichte's **Foundation of the Science of Knowledge*. (One of the "three great tendencies of the age," according to F. Schlegel.)
- 1794. Kant *emeritus*.
- 1795-96. Goethe's **Wilhelm Meister's Lehrjahre*. (One of the "three great tendencies of the age," according to F. Schlegel.)
- 1796. Beck's *Only Possible Standpoint from which the Critical Philosophy must be Judged*. (Emphasises the idealistic element in the *Critique of Pure Reason*.) Schelling's *Philosophical Letters upon Dogmatism and Criticism*.
- 1797. Maimon's *Critical Investigations into the Human Mind and the Higher Faculty of Knowledge and Volition*. Schelling's *Ideas towards a Philosophy of Nature*. Tieck's *Puss-in-Boots*. (Ridiculing the "Illumination.") Wackenroder's (in slight part Tieck's) *Herzensergießungen eines kunstliebenden Klosterbruders*. (A 'golden book' of the Romantic spirit.)

¹ This list indicates only the "chief streams of tendency" involving Kant. Fuller references to Kant literature, and to literature in other languages than German, French, and English, may be found in Ueberweg's *Grundriss d. Geschichte d. Philosophie*, vol. iii. pp. 277 f. (10th ed., edited by Max Heinze); in Vaihinger's *Commentar zu Kant's Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, vol. i. p. 18; and in Rabus' *Die neuesten Bestrebungen auf dem Gebiete der Logik bei den Deutschen und die logische Frage*, pp. 75 f.

1798. Fichte's **System of the Science of Ethics*. Schelling's *On the World-Soul*.
1799. Herder's *Understanding and Experience, Reason and Speech: a Metacriticism of the "Critique of Pure Reason."* (An embittered attack upon his old master.) F. Schlegel's *Lucinde*. (A typical 'document' for Romanticism.) Schleiermacher's **Discourses on Religion*.
1800. Schelling's **System of Transcendental Idealism*. (The philosopher of Romanticism.) Fichte's *The Exclusive Commercial State*. (The first word in modern collectivist Socialism.) Schleiermacher's *Monologe*.
1801. Signs of the Eclipse of the Critical Philosophy, by the rising Idealism, begin to multiply rapidly.
1802. F. von Hardenberg's ('Novalis') *The Disciples at Saïs*, and *Heinrich von Ofterdingen*. (Typical 'documents' for Romanticism; the latter is often viewed as *the* novel of the Romantic movement.)
1803. Fries' *Reinhold, Fichte, and Schelling*. (The slogan "Back to Kant" is raised for the first time in this work.)
1804. Death of Kant. (Sunday, 12th February, at 11 a.m.) Borowski's *Account of the Life and Character of Immanuel Kant* (revised by Kant). Jachmann's *Kant Pictured in Letters to a Friend*; (for the years 1784-94 chiefly). Wasianski's *Immanuel Kant in the Last Years of His Life*. ♥
1806. Arndt's *Spirit of the Time*. (Important for the condition of culture in Germany during the Napoleonic domination.)
1807. Hegel's **Phenomenology of Spirit*. (Marks his break with Schelling, and assertion of independence.)
1808. Goethe's **Faust*, First Part.
- 1812-16. Hegel's **Science of Logic*. (The greatest work in pure philosophy of the nineteenth century.)
1814. Death of Fichte.
1817. Hegel's *Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences*. (An outline of his system for the use of students.)
1818. Hegel called to Berlin, where he became the PHILOSOPHICAL DICTATOR of Germany.

1819. Schopenhauer's **The World as Will and Phenomenon*. (Imbued with bitter hatred of Hegel.)
1821. Hegel's **Outlines of the Philosophy of Right*. (Contains his ethical teaching.) Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Wanderjahre*.
1822. Beneke's *New Basis for Metaphysics*. (Opposed strongly by Hegel.)
- 1824-25. Herbart's *Psychology as a Science newly founded on Experience, Metaphysics, and Mathematics*. (Herbart was Kant's successor at Königsberg.)
1829. Herbart's *Universal Metaphysics, together with the Elements of the Philosophical Theory of Nature*.
1831. Sudden death of Hegel when at the height of his power.
1832. Death of Goethe. Beneke's *Kant and the Philosophical Problems of our Age*. Fortlage's *The Gaps in the Hegelian System*. (The slogan "Back to Kant" is raised for the second time in this work.)
1833. Goethe's **Faust*, Second Part. Beneke's *Textbook of Psychology as a Natural Science*. (The beginning of empirical research in psychology.)
1835. Strauss' **Life of Jesus*. (DISRUPTION and DECLINE of the HEGELIAN SCHOOL in Germany.) Heine's *De l'Allmagne*.
1836. Immermann's *Die Epigonen*. (Last word of Goethean Romanticism.) Heine's *The Romantic School*. (A hilarious burial-service.)
- 1838-39. Hartenstein's Edition of Kant's Works.
- 1838-42. Rosenkranz's Edition of Kant's Works. (The second part of vol. xi. contains Schubert's *Life of Kant*, the first satisfactory account ; vol. xii. contains Rosenkranz's *History of the Kantian Philosophy*.)

3. THE 'CLIMATE OF OPINION' SHIFTS SLOWLY

1847. Helmholtz's *On the Conservation of Energy*. (One culmination of the startling advances in the natural sciences.)
1852. Materialism and scientific Positivism begin to sway Germany.

1855. Büchner's *Force and Matter*. (The classic of callow Materialism.)
- 1856-79. Lotze's *MEDIATING SYSTEM*.
1860. Death of Schopenhauer just at the moment when his Pessimism had begun to exert influence. Kuno Fischer's *Kant's Life and the Principles of His Teaching*.
1865. Liebmann's *Kant und die Epigonen*. (The slogan "Back to Kant" is raised for the *third* time in this work—on this occasion effectively.) Dühring's **Natural Dialectic*.
1866. Lange's **History of Materialism*. (Published late in 1865 really ; beginning of the Neo-Kantian movement, which was to dominate Germany for a generation.)
1869. Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious*. (The popular classic of Pessimism.)
1872. Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy*. (Reaction against philological feudalism.)
1873. Heyse's *Children of the World*. (Gives a good idea of tendencies in German culture at the outset of the Neo-Kantian movement; illustrates the influences of Pessimism and scientific Positivism.)

4. THE GERMAN NEO-KANTIAN MOVEMENT, AND KANT 'PHILOLOGY'

1870. Zöllner's *On the Nature of Comets*. (Insists upon Kant's eminence as a contributor to natural science.) Arnoldt's *Kant's Transcendental Ideality of Space and Time*. (Interposes in the Kuno Fischer-Trendelenburg dispute about the meaning of *a priori* with Kant.)
1870. Meyer's *Kant's Psychology*.
- 1870-74. A. Ritschl's **The Christian Doctrine of Justification and Reconciliation*. (Marks the formation of a powerful school of Theology which bases its philosophical theory upon one interpretation of Kant, thus widening greatly the circle of the philosopher's influence.)
1871. Cohen's *Kant's Theory of Experience*.
1873. Hölder's *Presentation of the Kantian Theory of Knowledge*.
1875. Paulsen's *Attempt at a History of the Kantian Theory of Knowledge*.

1876. Laas' *The Analogies of Experience*. Thiele's *Kant's Intellectual Outlook*. Riehl's **Philosophical Criticism* (vol. i.). Vaihinger's *Hartmann, Dühring, and Lange*. (Very significant for the history of the early development of Neo-Kantianism.)
1877. Dietrich's *Kant and Newton*.
1878. Dietrich's *Kant and Rousseau*. Dühring's *Logic and Theory of Science*. (Polemic upon Kant's doctrine of the Thing-in-itself.) Schuppe's *Noetical Logic*.
1879. Volkelt's *Analysis of the Fundamental Principles of Kant's Theory of Knowledge*. (Illustrates Kant's extraordinary complexity.)
1881. Vaihinger's **Commentary on Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason"* (vol. i.) (The classical illustration of the ramifications of Kantian scholarship.) E. Pfeiderer's *Kantian Criticism and English Philosophy*. Kaftan's *The Nature of the Christian Religion*. (Giving philosophy of the Ritschlian theology.)
1882. Arnoldt's *Kant's Youth and the First Five Years of His Docentship Exhibited in Outline*.
1883. Lasswitz's *Kant's Doctrine of the Ideality of Space and Time*.
1884. Stern's *On the Relations of Garve to Kant*. (Early criticism of the *Critique of Pure Reason*.)
- 1888-90. Avenarius' *Critique of Pure Experience*.
1888. Du Prel's *Lectures on Psychology*. (Deals with Kant's mysticism.)
1894. On the proposal of Zeller and Dilthey, the Royal Prussian Academy determines to issue a COMPLETE AND DEFINITE EDITION OF EVERYTHING KANT EVER WROTE. (Now in progress ; when complete will lead to renewed studies in Kant 'philology'.)
1895. Adickes' *Kant-Studies*.
1896. Vaihinger founds *Kant-Studien* (a journal devoted exclusively to Kantian studies, containing indispensable articles.) Kronenberg's *Kant: His Life and His Works*.
1898. Paulsen's *Immanuel Kant: His Life and Doctrine*. (The best German introduction to the general subject of

Kantian philosophy.) Kuno Fischer's *History of Modern Philosophy*, 4th ed. (Contains the fullest and most vivid account of Kant in any of the standard histories.) Arnoldt's *Contributions to the Material for the History of Kant's Life and Consistency as an Author, with Reference to His Religious Teaching and His Conflict with the Prussian Government*.

(NOTE.—For later works and their contribution, see the successive numbers of *Kant-Studien*.)

5. KANT'S INFLUENCE IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING COUNTRIES ¹

1852. Origins of Mill-Hamilton-Spencer empirico-agnosticism.

1859. Darwin's **Origin of Species*. (Seeming at first sight favourable to empiricism, but raising problems which empiricism cannot solve.)

1865. **Stirling's Secret of Hegel*. (Marks the entrance of scientific study of Kant into Britain.) Hodgson's *Time and Space*.

1867. Foundation of **The Journal of Speculative Philosophy* at St. Louis, Missouri, U.S.A. (Marks the entrance of scientific study of Kant into the United States.)

1874. Wallace's *The Logic of Hegel*.

1876. Bradley's *Ethical Studies*.

1877. Caird's *A Critical Account of the Philosophy of Kant*.

1879. Adamson's Shaw Fellowship Lectures, *On the Philosophy of Kant*.

1881. Watson's *Kant and His English Critics*. Stirling's *Textbook to Kant*. Morris's *Kant's "Critique of Pure Reason."*

1882. Wallace's *Kant*. Seth's *From Kant to Hegel*. Stuckenberg's *The Life of Immanuel Kant*. (The fullest English biography.) A. Seth's *The Development from Kant to Hegel*.

1883. Bradley's *Principles of Logic*. Green's **Prolegomena to Ethics*. Caird's *Hegel. Essays in Philosophical Criticism* (edited by A. Seth and Haldane).

¹ The English translations of Kant's works are prefixed to previous chapters.

- 1885. Royce's *The Religious Aspect of Philosophy*.
- 1886. Green's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant*. (Works, vol. ii.) Porter's *Kant's Ethics*.
- 1887. Dewey's *Psychology*.
- 1888. Bosanquet's *Logic*. Murray's *Solomon Maimon*.
- 1889. Caird's **The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*.
- 1891. Dewey's *Outlines of a Critical Theory of Ethics*.
- 1892. Royce's *The Spirit of Modern Philosophy*.
- 1893. Bradley's **Appearance and Reality*. Wallace's *Prolegomena to the Logic of Hegel*.
- 1894. Wallace's *Hegel's Philosophy of Mind*.
- 1901. Howison's *The Limits of Evolution*.
- 1903. Adamson's *The Development of Modern Philosophy*.
- 1905. Sidgwick's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Kant*.
- 1908. Watson's *The Philosophy of Kant Explained*.
- 1909. Prichard's *Kant's Theory of Knowledge*.
- 1910. Hibben's *The Philosophy of the Enlightenment*.

6. KANT AND FRENCH THOUGHT

- 1801. Viller's *Philosophy of Kant*. Kinker's *Attempt at a Succinct Exposition of the "Critique of Pure Reason."* (Translated into French from Dutch. This work was the occasion of De Tracy's Memoir on *The Metaphysic of Kant*, which gave the unfavourable French official estimate. It is to be found in vol. iv. of the *Mémoires de l'Institut national*.)
- 1820. Cousin's *Lessons on the Philosophy of Kant*. (Published 1842.)
- 1830-42. Comte's **Course of Positive Philosophy*. (The classic of Positivism.)
- 1844. Saintes' *History of the Life and the Philosophy of Kant*.
- 1846-49. Willm's *History of German Philosophy from Kant to Hegel*.
- 1854-64. Renouvier's **Essays in General Criticism*. (Signalising the "Return to Kant" in France, especially to his ethical doctrines.)
- 1864. Tissot's translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason*. (For French translations of Kant, see Meyer in Fichte's *Zeitschrift*, vol. xxix., and Ruysen's *Kant*, as below.)

1867. Ravaisson's **Philosophy in France in the Nineteenth Century*. (In the *Recueil de rapports sur les progrès des lettres et des sciences en France*.)
1869. Saisset's *The Scepticism of Ænesidemus, Pascal, and Kant*.
1872. Sarchi's *Examination of the Doctrine of Kant*.
1875. Nolen's *The Criticism of Kant and the Metaphysic of Leibniz*.
1876. Desdoutis' *Kant's Philosophy after the Three Critiques*.
Bridel's *Kant's Philosophy of Religion*.
1883. Ott's *Critique of Idealism and Criticism*. Fouillée's
Critique of Contemporary Ethical Systems.
1885. Adam's *Essay on the Æsthetic Judgment*.
1887. Vallet's *Kantianism and Positivism*.
1888. Picavet's translation of the *Critique of Practical Reason*.
(Contains an introduction on the Philosophy of Kant in France from 1773 to 1814.)
1890. Lévy-Briühl's *Germany since Leibniz*.
1893. Farges' *The Idea of the Continuity of Space and Time : a Refutation of Kantianism, Dynamism, and Realism*.
1893. Aiguiléra's *The Idea of Law in Germany from Kant to the Present Time*.
1894. Mauxion's *The Metaphysic of Herbart and the Criticism of Kant*.
1895. Duproix's *Kant and Fichte and the Problem of Education*..
Piat's *The Idea*. (Contains a criticism of Kant in Book II.).
1896. Boutroux's *The Philosophy of Kant*. (In the *Revue des Cours et Conférences*.) Milhaud's **Essay on the Conditions and Limits of Logical Certitude*. Michel's *The Idea of the State*. (School of Renouvier.)
1897. Basch's *Critical Essay on the Æsthetics of Kant*.
Boutroux's **Kant* (in his *Historical and Philosophical Studies*. A. Sabatier's *Outline of a Philosophy of Religion according to Psychology and History*. (Approaches the school of A. Ritschl.)
1900. Goujon's *The French Kantians*. (In the *Revue des Sciences Ecclésiastiques*.) Ruyssen's *Kant*. (In *Les Grandes Philosophes Series*.)

1901. Goujon's *Kant and the Kantians: a Critical Study according to the Principles of the Thomistic Metaphysics*.
1902. H. Poincaré's **Science and Hypothesis*.
1904. Cresson's *The Moral Teaching of Kant*. Souriaut's *Rational Beauty*.
1905. Delbos' **The Practical Teaching of Kant*. Fouillée's *The Moralism of Kant and Contemporary Amoralism*.
1906. Renouvier's *Criticism of the Doctrine of Kant*. Duhem's **Physical Theory, its Object and its Structure*.
1907. Evellin's **The Pure Reason and the Antinomies*. Le Roy's *Dogmatism and Criticism*. Perrin's *The Theory of Physics*.
1908. Boutroux's *Philosophy in France since 1867*. (In the *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale*. Supplementary to Ravaisson's *Report of 1867*.)

7. An important Kantian movement grew up in *Italy*, dating from Mantovani's translation of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1822); the most complete contribution is Cantoni's *Emanuel Kant* (1879-84), a work which occupies in Italian philosophy relatively the same position of eminence as E. Caird's in the English world.

When one recalls that within twenty years of the publication of the *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) no less than two thousand five hundred books and articles upon the Critical Philosophy had appeared in German alone, and this at a time when the printer was far less busy than now, he might well presume the success of the new thought to have been immediate and immense. As a matter of fact, thanks no doubt to Kant's professorial method,—he excluded the *Critique* from his lectures for a decade,—and to the isolation of Königsberg, the critical idea percolated slowly at first. In 1784 we find but twenty-nine publications; five years after the First Edition, which had received little notice, less than one hundred and fifty; while the flood of ink

began to run only in 1788, when the *Prolegomena*, the *Idea of a Universal History*, the *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysic of Morals*, and the Second Edition of the *Critique* had stimulated attention. Indeed, in 1783 Kant attributed the silence to intrigue by Herder, and Herder believed, for his part, that the acerbity of Kant's review of his *Ideas towards a Philosophy of History of Mankind* (1785) was occasioned by disappointment. Hartnoch, the publisher, feared that, as a commercial venture, the First Edition was so much waste paper.

Accordingly, it may be affirmed that, for some fifteen years after the *Critique of Pure Reason*, the Kantian philosophy forged its way gradually to the centre of the intellectual stage, absorbing more and more both adherents and opponents, till it became the paramount issue by 1794, when Fichte appeared on the scene to persuade the world that his master was only a "three-quarters man." During this stage two factors did much to shape the course of events. On the one hand, there can be no question that the scope, and particularly the *thrust*, of Kant's principles escaped many; as a result, misconceptions abounded. On the other hand 'local,' that is, purely German, eddies occurred. For, although the Critical Philosophy undermined traditional ideas, men clung to them, and attacked Kant as commonplace opinion dictated.

1. Thus, the famous review of the First Edition of the *Critique of Pure Reason* in the *Göttingen Anzeigen* (1781), written by Garve, blue-pencilled and altered largely by Feder, mistook Kant for a follower of Berkeley, thereby incensing him not a little, and giving motive to the *Prolegomena* and to the Second

Edition. Feder, like Garve, a representative of the popular 'illumination' philosophy, was then in the zenith of his fame, and it is significant that, as he says in his *Autobiography*, he suffered "amputation of his celebrity as a teacher and author," was forsaken by students, and finally boycotted out of his Göttingen chair (1797), because he opposed, or failed to comprehend, Kant. This may serve as an indication of the tremendous ferment that ensued upon the "All-destroyer," and it may be added that Feder's reputation never recovered from the rejoinder in the *Prolegomena*. Support rallied to Kant early and, in 1784, Joh. Schulze (or Schultz) issued his *Explanation of the Critique of Pure Reason*, which extended his master's reputation notably. It was a conventional enough performance, and a comparison of it with the *Examination of the Critique of Pure Reason* (1799) hints much. The later work evinces more independence and grasp; in addition, it is filled with polemics upon Kant's enemies, thus showing how the new philosophy had penetrated its supporters, and also elicited opposition. The turning-point arrived in 1786-87, with Reinhold's *Letters on the Kantian Philosophy*. The poet Schiller excepted, Reinhold was the most successful agent in the dissemination of Kantianism. A number of disciples made themselves heard about this time, like Schütz and Hufeland (1785), K. C. E. Schmidt and Abicht (1786), Fülleborn (1791) and Jacob (1792); while the praise bestowed upon Fichte's maiden effort—the *Critique of All Revelation*—witnessed to the existence of a distinct Kantian school (1792). This work, published anonymously, was so tinctured with the Kantian spirit that it could be

attributed to nobody but the Königsberg sage, and it received enthusiastic acclaim in certain quarters consequently. This phase, alike *pro* and *con* Kant, evoked the review of Eberstein, in the second volume of his *History of the Progress of Philosophy in Germany* (1799), which may be taken as a tolerable summing up.

2. The opposition represented several schools, hence its weakness on the whole. There were reversions to Leibniz, to the 'illumination' of Wolff, to scepticism in the sense of Hume, or in the interest of a 'faith' philosophy; too much vulgar abuse there was, and, as might have been expected, a large exhibit of the *odium theologicum*; there was Kantian and anti-Kantian fiction; there was caricature bred of solemn pretension, and caricature naked and unashamed; till, at length, in the persons of the later Reinhold and of Fichte, to say nothing of the Romantics, a fresh development took its departure, and Kant began to be regarded as of 'historical' importance merely. Among earlier opponents we find Ulrich and Tiedemann (1785), Jacobi (1787), and later, his disciple Neeb (1795); Eberhard and his Berlin Academy group (from 1786); Flatt (1788), the egregious Stattler (1788) and, afterwards, his rival in scurrility, Schlosser (1796). Then foemen more worthy of Kant's steel struck in: Maimon (1790), G. E. Schulze (1792), Platner (1795), Reinhard (1797), and Herder, with his *Kalligone* (1800). Herder's epithet, "the Influenza of the North-east," was mild. During this stage, Nicolai (1796) and his friends—Schwab most notorious, perhaps—match their predecessor Stattler in vulgarity and incompetence. With a few obvious exceptions, these are of 'local' interest, as I have said.

But the 'philosophical revolution' had burst in real earnest. Through good report and ill, Kant climbed steadily to pre-eminence. His influence, first over Schiller, and then over W. von Humboldt, brought him into contact with wide circles; and a phalanx of teachers rendered his philosophy *the* great power within the universities. The following merit mention: Beck (1793), perhaps the most important exponent of the general system; Bouterwek (1793), commentator on the *Critiques of Pure and of Practical Reason*; Heydenreich (1793), on the problem of freedom; Mellin (1794), on Kant's terminology; Hoffbauer (1795) and Tieftrunk (1796), on the philosophy of right; Krug (1793), Reimer (1796), and Stäudlin (1798), on the philosophy of religion; Pölitz (1795), on the philosophy of history; Pörschke (1794), on æsthetics; and Albanus (1797), on moral education. The *odium theologicum* displayed its cloven hoof in Zwanziger and Pelka (1794), disagreeably; in Seiler (1796), with exceptional absence of the *odium*; in Wöckl (1796), with vulgar brutality; in Vogel (1801), with many inconsequences; in Miotti (1798), with gross misrepresentation; in Zallinger (1799), with stupid invective; and in Sulzer (1801), with mere blackguardism. On the other hand, M. Reuss (1797) tried to make Kant known favourably to his Roman Catholic brethren, while the *Circular to the Salzburg Preachers* (1797), forbidding the practical philosophy in the pulpit, like the charges against Holdermann, the Heidelberg chaplain, testified to the spread of the Critical Philosophy among the Roman clergy. Finally, Wilhelmina von Wobeser's *Elisa*, a novel with a moral purpose, which ran through six editions by 1800, reduced Kantianism to the level

of tedious *Weltweisheit*; the *Journey to the Brocken* (1801), poured clumsy ridicule upon Kant and Fichte; K. F. C. Schmidt's *Diomedes* (1802) exhibited Kant as the deliverer from the immoralities of eudæmonism; and Jung's ("Stilling's") *Das Heimweh* (1794-96), a hypermystical romance, made the Critical Philosophy the universal panacea for all forms of unbelief. It remained only for caricature—grave and unconscious, or gay and witty—to go one better. Schönberger's (1795) solemn, but astounding, technical jargon—one of several such performances, Falk's satirical *Taschenbuch* (1797), for which Mackensen (1799) supplies unwitting justification, Thorild's (1799) wild phantasms, and the Aristophanic jesting of the *Satyrical-Theological Calendar for 1800*, serve to exhibit the Critical Philosophy in the last stages of popular inanition. Of more import were the protests of Jean Paul Richter (1797), who, imbued with the young fervour of Romanticism, lampoons "the breed of critical owls, who drain the oil dry from the church lamps," and spin "electrical cobwebs." Similar significance attached to F. Schlegel's gradual defection from the Kantian æsthetics towards a variant of Fichteanism—Kant being guilty of "half-and-halfness" in the eyes of the Romantic leader.

Such, then, were the eddies of German opinion that swayed the fortunes of Kantianism till the flood of rising Idealism swept off everything on its broad bosom, leaving scarce a rack behind. The 'philosophical revolution' had done its work thoroughly.

Some six years ere Kant's death the sporadic disturbances excited by him in Germany had given way to a general displacement, German in origin and first development, but destined to mark an epoch

in modern thought. (1) The remarkable outburst of Idealism in the illustrious trio, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, who prospered in the favourable atmosphere of Romanticism, and were supported in a manner by a fourth genius, Schleiermacher, eclipsed our philosopher, yet, nevertheless, served to draw the logical consequences organic to his central doctrine. This school dominated Germany till 1840, passed over into English literature (Coleridge, Carlyle, Browning), into the culture of New England (Emerson and New England 'transcendentalism'), and then deflected Anglo-Saxon thought (Stirling, the Cairds, Green, Wallace, Harris). (2) By 1850, however, the splendid achievements of natural science made themselves felt and, coupled with political events in Germany, produced a reaction against constructive philosophy which, paradoxically enough, culminated in the crude metaphysics of Materialism. This anti-philosophical wave was followed by the rapid, if tardy, recognition of Schopenhauer, who declared himself a Kantian; by the popular spread of Pessimism, which "hypnotised young Germany"; and by the mediating system of Lotze, a kind of higher 'faith' philosophy, itself an impossibility without Kant's criticism of Leibniz. (3) Then another curious change came over the spirit of the dream. Britain and the United States went to school with German Idealism, while Germany went "back to Kant," interpreted now in the sober tenor of British Empiricism. This twofold manifestation, in parallel yet opposite directions, both alike presupposing Kant, governed the nineteenth century in its decline, and was accompanied, in France, by the appearance of a "philosophy of contingency," embody-

contribution? In the answer we catch the reason for Idealism forthwith, and see that, though the day be far spent, his Criticism retains vital, and not merely historical, significance.

Upon analysis, human experience is found to root in the "static and permanent ego of pure apperception." The knowing self constitutes the condition of any such experience as is possible to a human being. That is, Kant opposes the synthetic power of the self-conscious subject to Hume's sensationalism; the "Copernican revolution" centres here. The senses can of themselves do nothing, and the thinker is never the passive recipient of a 'manifold' that breaks in upon him from an external region. But, in addition, apperception cannot occur in a vacuum. Although it implies a unity, this unity abides only among the differences of its own integration. An objectless self, and a selfless object, are alike unthinkable by us. Yet, despite this fundamental relation, Kant never evolved the full implications inseparable from it. He began with the act of perception and, true to the temper of his age, always considered the subject and object *as if* they were two facts independent of one another, and yoke-fellows *after* perceptual activity. A synthesis must unify two or more *given* factors, it cannot but consist in a 'composition' of elements which it does not compose. Ay, there's the rub! For, if this be the sole view possible, then the problem of philosophy never rises to its tensest. And why? Common sense, or unanalysed daily experience, proffers the raw materials ready for the synthesis. No other source avails to *give* the requisite 'simples.' So long as this doctrine maintains itself,—and Kant never stood

footloose from it,—one is precluded from showing that the subject-object synthesis holds universally, and without any necessary reference to its illustration in the consciousness of this or that individual. Moreover, on the other side, one cannot appreciate the universality of the individual whose experience typifies itself in this synthesis.

Now, the peculiarity of Kant's conclusion may be put thus: He reduces one of the *given* elements—the object—

“Unto pale-gibbering ghostliness.”

But he still clings to the subject as an independent entity. For, if self-consciousness be no more than a *quality* of my veritable self, as Kant says, then this self escapes me, and I am cast back, yammering vainly, on the bars of the Cartesian *res cogitans*—the *thing* that's thinking; whereas I know the *thinking* only. Here Kant resuscitates precisely one of those “ghost stories,” the subjects of such quizzical chaff in the *Dreams of a Visionary*. In short, he cannot escape the presuppositions of the ‘popular’ philosophy, which he had covered with derision nevertheless. This ensues upon his passion for analysis, heaping separation upon separation in a very riot of critical refinement. Accordingly, although he put the case in so many words, he could not admit unreservedly, that the self knows the categories through itself, not itself through the categories. He could not see once for all, that the ideal universe and *the* universe are co-extensive, because inseparable save in words. At the same time, his passion for the pure unity of the moral life lifted him above these laminations, and disclosed a subjective

sphere where the self had become all in all. As a consequence, Fichte appeared, to educe his account of the quintessential truth in Kantianism—the autonomy of the self.

Fichte was by no means dubious about his own relation to Kant.¹ Kant had rent the intellectual from the ethical aspect of experience, and set the two in opposition to one another. An experience blurred by the interference of sense cannot deflect the moral life, while, on the contrary, the moral life *ought* to affect the former, because it should be able to build its aims into the world disclosed by the sense-manifold. Ideally, at all events, Nature should be so constituted as to be capable of moralisation. But, this granted, we admit, or even demand, a principle of union between the inimical realms. Or, at least, we contemplate a third ‘something’ that heals the division. It is true, as Kant records,² that this mediatorial power eludes our natural resources, Understanding and Reason. Nevertheless, the unity guaranteed by it remains an indispensable need. Now, according to Fichte, this argument lands us in an Irish-bull universe—a universe with three *ultimates*, that is, a multiverse. The theoretical experience, invaded by a sensation that it has no power to exclude, is a law unto itself. The moral experience, creative of its own end without interference by sense, is a law unto itself. Likewise, a ground, making the unity of these two possible, is a law unto itself. So, an *impasse* eventuates. The unifying principle lies beyond the bounds of ‘practical politics’

¹ Cf., e.g., *J. H. Fichte's nachgelassene Werke* (ed. by I. H. Fichte), vol. ii. pp. 103 f.

² Cf. Introduction to the *Critique of Judgment*.

for an experience such as is accessible to man. Three absolutes, and *the* Absolute, are wholly incompatible. Thus, Fichte's problem stands forth perfectly clear. How can the theoretical (intellectual) and the moral (practical) factors of experience be traced to a single unity? Or, to quote his own terms, "What relation is there between our notions and their objects?"

He replies substantially, that the activity of the self (I) forms the ground of *all* possible experience. The 'I' has existence for itself, and is unique in this respect—it *is* subject and object at once. It affirms itself and, by consequence, sets up the object over against itself. It predicates states of itself; it differentiates objects as limiting itself; and it recognises itself as thus limited, in its own states and by objects, in the light of an Infinite Ego which, as such, knows no similar limitations. In a word, Fichte strikes the keynote of Idealism, by referring all reality to Kant's "permanent ego of apperception." Experience becomes inexplicable except as we deduce everything from this *free* activity. Any other view terminates, and necessarily, in Fatalism (mechanical determination). A strenuous ethical personality, Fichte elaborated his doctrine in the spirit of Kant's conception of moral freedom, displayed in the *Critique of Practical Reason*. The moral consciousness thrives upon strife, the practical expression of its own nature, and so, in its striving, it conditions itself, is not enslaved, and cannot be enslaved, by aught else. The principle of its being, the very breath of its nostrils,—that it must realise itself,—bears all-sufficient witness to its derivation from the Absolute, no matter how present struggle may serve to obscure, or even traverse, the fact.

But despite his splendid blaze of fervour, Fichte retains Kantian drawbacks in two ways. On the one hand, his doctrine of the transcendent 'collision,' the famous *Anstoss* (adapted to far other views by Hartmann), which issues in the trammelled ego of the work-a-day world and in the separate objects of nature, points to a Being beyond and before human affairs, to an 'over' plane whither our consciousness can never soar. Here we are confronted once more by a variant of Kant's noumenon—a subjective 'somewhat' that is "proper Being." Fichte's passion satisfied itself in moral action, he thus came to leave the intellectual side of his philosophy at loose ends. Just as Kant was driven back upon a physico-theology, Fichte ran perilously near a theosophy. On the other hand, he fails to give the natural world its fair due. Nature exists, no doubt, but too exclusively as a foil for the energy of ethical personality. Like the querulous Scot of story, its main office is to "mak' some objake-shions"—to furnish a mission for moral activity, which overcomes them. Fichte grasped the idealistic principle much more firmly than Kant, and enforced it with incomparably greater daring, with devotion almost savage at times. But remnants of the Kantian rigidity still hampered him. With many another good man, he would take the kingdom of heaven by storm, forgetting his base on earth. Hence the appearance of Schelling, to educe his account of the quintessential truth in Kantianism—the spiritual meaning of Nature.

At the outset of his career, Schelling was Fichte's disciple, as the title of his early work, *The I as Principle of Philosophy* (1795), shows; and his *Philo-*

sophical Letters on Dogmatism and Criticism offer an admirable commentary on Fichte, especially on the noumenal "Absolute Ego." But his books on the *Philosophy of Nature* (1797-99) indicated that he could not rest content with the subjective tendencies of his predecessor, and the break had become irremediable in the *Transcendental Idealism*. Just as Fichte found inspiration in the *Critique of Practical Reason*, Schelling reverted to the *Critique of Judgment*. Like other idealists, he finds his principle in pure self-consciousness and, to this extent, seizes upon Kant's "permanent ego of pure apperception." But this reached him through a Fichtean medium. He therefore asks, How do subject and object come to be independent of each other? He discovers the clue to his reply, not in a division within consciousness, but in the conception of organism, suggested by Kant in the *Critique of Judgment*. As Fichte had taught, the subject is a free, or self-producing, intelligence. But Nature, in its organic aspect, is also free and self-producing. Hence it bears in itself the same ideal principle that characterises the ego. Thus the opposed factors seem to cease from warring, and turn out to be functions of a larger whole. "The I can itself become conscious of the original harmony between subject and object." Yet, in order to attain this result, Schelling is compelled to place Nature and Intelligence on a common plane. The moment he makes this move, the problem of their identity emerges and, obviously enough, the identity in which their union achieves realisation cannot be anything except the universe itself. Mind is one "potence" of this identity, Nature another. Each exhibits itself as a phase of the Abso-

lute, which remains secluded—a “reason absolutely one and self-equal.”

Certain survivals from the Kantian analysis are in plain evidence at this point. Intelligence and Nature have been treated as two independent existences, and the question of their ‘composition’ into a unity has supervened. Inevitably, the consequence takes the form of a see-saw. Now, the unity, which is a reality in itself, comes to manifestation in Mind and Nature: anon, it is estopped from all manifestation, and falls to be classed with the Kantian noumenon. But this position could not maintain itself, and Schelling falls at last into a deeper gulf of negation. For, needless to say, nothing can possess any reality apart from the hidden Power which he contemplates. So we end with the Fichtean conclusion—turned inside out, and an ‘objective’ Absolute gapes to engorge all thoughts, all things. Theosophy dethrones philosophy; a mystic glamour suffuses the hard world of experience, so that systematic research rests from its labours, and men may ‘build castles in Spain.’ In the issue, Schelling really leaves Intelligence and Nature, not circling apart as with Kant, but each bent upon absorbing the other. Now, this amounts to no more than a restatement of his first problem—How do subject and object come to be independent of each other? And the statement abides—a statement; for his latest philosophy proffers nothing save the ironical solution of Pantheism. Hence Hegel appeared, to educe his account of the quintessential truth in Kantianism—the process of self-consciousness formulates the implications of any Absolute practicable for human experience.

Just because his system is articulated so closely, any

direct statement about Hegel demands full exposition. Accordingly, we are at a disadvantage here, for, perforce, we must omit explanation. This understood, it may be said at the outset that, in one sense, as compared with Fichte and Schelling, Hegel sat looser to Kant. This partly because he had a far more powerful and exact mind than his colleagues, but more especially because, thanks to his slower and less forced mental development, a long history lay behind him when he published his memorable first book, the *Phänomenologie des Geistes*. He had steeped himself in Plato and Aristotle; he had penetrated to the vital spirit of Christianity; he had studied the early phase of European thought in the Cartesian school, and had reckoned with its outstanding genius, Spinoza; he had evolved tentatively some of his own primary positions, and put them to a test in teaching; in short, after a fashion, he was a modern Aristotle in his wide knowledge of everything that could be known then. Moreover, he had laboured upon Kant, had divined the inwardness of the Fichtean conception of philosophical system, had taken the measure of Schelling's strength and limitations by first-hand personal intercourse. Thus, his debt to Kant formed only a part of his thorough and hard-won equipment. While, thanks to the intervention of Fichte and Schelling, he saw the Critical Philosophy more or less in historical perspective, an attitude emphasised, no doubt, by his intimate contact with the historical views of his Romantic friends. Nevertheless, he reverted to Kant, like Fichte and Schelling, but alive to the fact that the Kantian problem must be thought through *de novo*. Consequently, he struck at the root of the matter

forthwith and, brushing aside "the permanent ego of pure apperception," which Kant, Fichte, and Schelling had rendered transcendent, he proceeded to consider the Deduction of the Categories. He was within experience here, and not agog about a 'somewhat' beyond experience. For, it must be remembered continually that, as Dr. Mackintosh says so admirably, in the Hegel monograph of this Series, "Hegel's philosophy less than any other stands aloof from reality or aspires to be a construction *in vacuo*." ¹

In the categories, then, thought *is*; it ceases to masquerade as a Kantian noumenon, as a Fichtean ideal, or as an aspect of Schelling's neutral identity, and becomes "an absolute totality returning upon its starting-point, in which one thing leads to all, and all things to one." Or, as contrasted with Kant, Hegel insists that thought cannot be explained by a *theory* of thought; its activity, manifested in the organic whole of the categories, explains itself. It is absurd to ask whether the categories come from within or from without. These very terms are already judgments in our thought. We have seen above ² that Unity, Plurality, and Totality do not fly apart from one another with Kant. For him, the third is the second viewed as the first. And the same holds of the soul, the universe, and God—they are, because integral to a single system. But Kant never faces the question, What is the immanent principle of these relations? Now, starting from the Deduction of the Categories, this is exactly Hegel's problem. His system supplies the solution in detail, and his posthumous historical works exhibit its illustration in the ramifications of

¹ *Hegel and Hegelianism*, p. 1.

² See above, p. 199.

human life. Defective or not, in view of the unprecedented accumulations of empirical knowledge these last hundred years, the Hegelian system remains the most astonishing and least unsuccessful evaluation of experience ever accomplished. In short, given the Kantian problem, Hegel went about its resolution in the right manner.

According to Hegel, the whole nature of self-consciousness is man's whole nature. If, then, we are to comprehend *our* selves, *our* universe, and *our* ideal purposes, but one recourse avails. We must master the characteristic process of self-consciousness as revealed in all its essential ways. This done, we have made common cause with the Absolute for us, in so far as any Absolute can be realised—for the Absolute is Idea. That is, the eternally real lives in our lives, we live in its life. All unity is unity in *our* differences, all differences are differences in *our* unity. Thus, to quote Dr. Mackintosh once more:

"Hegel opens a door of escape from the ordinary and fruitless alternation of dogmatism with scepticism, when he proposes to test and graduate knowledge within the area of knowledge itself, by the exercise of one of the highest and most arduous processes of knowledge . . . the living process by which a mere germ of knowledge becomes transformed into a fully articulated organism."¹

Consequently, as idealists contend, Hegel abides because he elicited the full truth latent in Kant, and dispelled the reasons for Kant's halting application of his own principle. His dismissal of the equivocal conception of "intelligible contingency," the besetting

¹ *Hegel and Hegelianism*, p. 227.

sin of later Neo-Kantianism, enables him to descry the universal sweep of the categories, to see that without them "was not anything made that was made." With masterly thoroughness, Hegel set forth that "Man *finds* his true ideas: his making of them is the finding. . . . Thus the history of mankind presents itself . . . as the gradual unveiling of a purpose which is universal and therefore omnipresent, —a purpose which overcomes the discrete distinctions of time even while maintaining them, and, like the Snake of the Ancients, is coiled around the changing order of the world of reality, and has neither beginning nor end."¹

2. Despite his paramount importance as an originating force, Kant came to be regarded as the representative of an "overpassed standpoint" in the brilliant epoch of Romanticism and of Hegel's philosophical dictatorship (1800–40). But an under-current of opposition to the flood of Idealism always flowed steadily, thanks to the several affiliations of Fries, Schopenhauer, Herbart, and Beneke with the Critical Philosophy. Yet, the second period now under review—Kant still in abeyance—arose rather from the seminal doctrines of the idealist masters than from the systems of their opponents, although the discipleship of De Wette and Schleiden to Fries, of Waitz and Steinthal to Herbart, may be counted exceptions to this general statement. Schelling and Hegel had sown their seed so widely and successfully that a Cadmean harvest was likely. In any case, it is evident now that the nineteenth century will take its place as an era of increase of information rather than

¹ *Idealism as a Practical Creed*, Henry Jones, pp. 22, 23, 24.

of the unification of knowledge. To be sure, Schelling and Hegel, the unifiers *par excellence*, had successors in Schopenhauer, Comte, Lotze, Spencer, and Hartmann. Nevertheless, accumulation proceeded so rapidly that the task of synthesis lay beyond the power even of these representative men. And, from the philosophical standpoint, this issue followed necessarily upon the influence of the idealist leaders. The immense extension of modern science ran along three main lines. First, we had the study of man himself in his achievements,—language, society, law, religion, and the like,—pursued in the group of investigations to which history is basal. Second, we had the study of organisms, pursued in the group of investigations to which physiology is basal. Third, we had the study of physical nature, pursued in the group of investigations to which physics is basal, where mathematics is employed as a potent instrument. Now, with respect to the first, Hegel may be said to have done his work too thoroughly, in so far as his speculative school paved the way for a general outburst of the historical disciplines. And, with respect to the second and third, Schelling may be said to have done his work too thoroughly, in so far as his pantheistic vitalism paved the way for unforeseen ramifications in biology, chemistry, and allied topics. Of course, other causes co-operated and, by 1845, the scene had changed almost completely.

In 1795, F. A. Wolf's Homeric criticism presaged the new historico-philological movement. By 1815 Savigny was laying the foundations of the science of jurisprudence. Then followed, to name but a few of many, Boeckh (1817), Ranke (1824), K. O. Müller (1825), De Wette and Niebuhr (1827), Vatke and

Strauss (1835), J. H. Wilkinson (1837), Wilke (1839), F. C. Baur and Feuerbach (1841) Bruno Bauer (1842), Grimm (1844), F. Delitzsch (1846), Lassen (1847), Benfey (1849), Waitz (1849-59), Layard (1850), Scholten (1853), Steinthal (1855), and Bastian (1860), who revolutionised the outlook upon the development of culture, and the methods necessary to mastery and interpretation of history. A revolution overtook all regions that Hegel had illuminated by the brilliant flashes of his genius. Laborious research was substituted for discipleship to a system. But, even so, as Hegel himself said, "discord which appears at first to be a lamentable breach and dissolution of the unity of a party, is really the crowning proof of its success." F. C. Baur, and the rest, having gone out to seek their father's asses, found a kingdom.

As Hegel's historical panlogism sent men forth to explore all corners of civilisation, so, similarly, Schelling's philosophy of nature disappeared before the advance of natural science, achieved in no small part by his scholars.¹ Dalton (1810), Gauss (1812), Cuvier (1816), Mitscherlich (1819), Cauchy (1821), Quetelet (1823), Abel (1826), Wöhler (1828), Jacobi (1829), Liebig (1830), Lyell (1832), Weber (1836), Schleiden (1838), Schwann (1839), Joh. Müller (1840), Chambers (1844), R. Mayer (1845), Virchow and Helmholtz (1847), and Pasteur (1850), put a fresh aspect upon mathematics, physics, chemistry, physiology, and psychology. Moreover, their conjoint labours, coupled with the anti-supernaturalism of the

¹ Schelling's services in this matter have been almost forgotten. I have called attention to them in the *Popular Science Monthly*, vol. lxxiii. pp. 75 f. (July, 1908).

rising historical school, tended implicitly towards a view of man and the universe opposed directly to anything savouring of Idealism. For Mayer, "in the course of the vital process there is a transformation only, never a creation, of force; for force, like matter, is never created." For Schwann, "the phenomena attending the formation of cells may be arranged in two natural groups: first those which relate to the combination of the molecules to form a cell. . . . Secondly, those which result from chemical changes, either in the component particles of the cell itself or in the surrounding cytotblastema." An admirable summary of the characteristic trend is given by E. Du Bois-Reymond, who, writing of Joh. Müller, says:

"The modern physiological school . . . has drawn the conclusions for which Müller furnished the premisses. It has been aided essentially in this by three achievements. . . . I mean, first of all, Schleiden and Schwann's discovery, that bodies both of animals and plants are composed of structures which develop independently, though according to a common principle. This conception . . . pointed from afar *to the possibility of an explanation of these processes by means of the general properties of matter*. I refer, secondly, to the more intimate knowledge of the action of the nerves and muscles . . . investigations which . . . gradually substituted for the miracles of the 'vital forces' a *molecular mechanism*, complicated, indeed, . . . but *intelligible, nevertheless, as a mechanism*. The third achievement to which I refer is the revival among us, by Helmholtz and Mayer, of the doctrine of the conservation of force. This cleared up the conception of *force in general*, and in particular *supplied*

the key to a knowledge of the *change of matter* in plants and animals.”¹

The total result manifested itself in many mordant comments upon ‘romanticism’ in history, and in an opposition, sometimes even violent or crusading, to ‘vitalistic’ theories of nature. Notwithstanding the hue and cry after R. Chambers’ *Vestiges of the Natural History of Creation*, when the boggy of Materialism was trotted out in Britain, the foregoing lists make it evident that scientific leadership had passed from England and France to Germany. Hence, the anti-philosophical philosophy of the mid-century came to birth in the *German* controversy over Materialism. As a sequel, the need for fundamental philosophical criticism, and a “return to Kant,” began to be felt there.

Materialism, which became the scandal of the hour, thanks to the bitter debate of the German Men of Science Association at the 1854 meeting, burst forth in 1852 with Rudolf Wagner’s *Physiological Letters*, and left as its ‘bible’ Büchner’s *Force and Matter* (1855).² The central doctrines of Moleschott and Carl Vogt, two chief actors in the drama, are essentially a restatement of the pronouncement by Cabanis, the French ideologue, some fifty years before.

“In order to arrive at a correct idea of those operations from which thought arises, we must consider the brain as a particular organ, destined specially to produce it in the same way as the stomach and the intestines are there to perform digestion, the liver to filter

¹ *Reden*, vol. ii. pp. 219 f. The italics are mine.

² Cf. Lange’s *History of Materialism*, vol. ii. pp. 153–294 (Eng. trans.), where Lange gives his view of Kant’s relation to the movements.

the bile, the parotid, maxillary, and sublingual glands to prepare the salivary juice.”¹

Stoffwechsel, or the unbroken transformation of matter that maintains organisms in life, and *Kreislauf des Lebens*, or the exchange of matter between living beings, constitute ultimate conceptions beyond which it is not necessary, even were it possible, to go. Natural Law extrudes all reference to Purpose or End. Thought is an instance of motion in space, as Czolbe taught at first. Apart entirely from flagrant disregard of epistemological, not to mention metaphysical, difficulties, this “prophecy of things brutal and infernal,” as Carlyle phrased it, breaks down before psychological commonplaces. The patent facts of individuality, of psychical discontinuity, and of the spiritual commerce indicated by such a term as the ‘social mind,’ turn this rough and ready theory into a farce as an ‘explanation’ of human experience. Lotze, himself a trained physiologist, perceived this immediately, and pointed out that mental states and physical properties are incommensurable processes. Each series may run parallel to the other, but the two never intersect. His mediating theory, perhaps the best embodiment of nineteenth-century hesitation, and dependent upon Leibniz seen through the Kantian idealistic succession, was an attempt to find due place for both aspects in a larger whole. Materialism, then, however fitted to out-Herod Herod as a ‘popular’ philosophy, never secured the suffrages of exact thinkers. In consequence, Kant, the typical exact thinker, was destined to come by his own once more.

3. “No phosphorus, no thought.” So ran the

¹ *Œuvres*, vol. iii. p. 159.

epigram that precipitated the materialistic war. Like other epigrams, it needs interpretation. We must know the circle of ideas habitual to its creator, Moleschott. Now, we find the materialists protesting against the allegation that their theory should be put in quarantine, because it leads to a demoralising view of practical life. They explain, that their principles are purely theoretical, and that they cannot afford to forgo noble purposes any more than other men. Still, however this may be, it is evident that Materialism ends in a naturalistic, or anti-psychical, explanation of human existence. This aspect of the movement both repelled and attracted the Neo-Kantians. For the 'return to Kant' oscillates between two poles. On the one hand, and in reply to Materialism, it unfolds a form of subjective idealism. On the other hand, the positivist implications of scientific method affect it profoundly. The question therefore arises, How could these positions be extracted from Kant?

As we attempt a reply, we must remember that all the constructive systems of philosophy produced by the nineteenth century were sketched ere Neo-Kantianism took shape, even Hartmann's *Philosophy of the Unconscious* was completed by 1867, and Lotze's *Microcosmus*, like Spencer's *Synthetic Philosophy*, date nearly a decade earlier. Accordingly, we would do later Kantianism an injustice, and mislead ourselves were we to regard it as an organised system. On the contrary, it is rather a mood,—an attitude towards philosophy, particularly towards the relative importance and urgency of the several philosophical problems. In the spirit of the *Critique of Pure Reason*, it concentrates upon the epistemological delimitation of the reach of

knowledge and, on the whole, postpones other inquiries. In effect, it asks, 'Can we *conceive* that self-consciousness is merely one case of motion in space?' The answer lies, of course, in Kant's distinction between the Sensible and the Intelligible worlds. Take the *ipsissima verba* of the first *Critique*, hold that the Dialectic ends Metaphysics for ever, disregard the constructive tendencies of the later works, seeing in them only afterthoughts or weaknesses of genius in its sere and yellow, and you can undermine Materialism—at a price. The Intelligible world supplies the bare form of experience; no more, because the contents come from the Sensible world; and, given these independent factors, knowledge ensues upon their junction. Therefore we know only as we draw upon a source foreign to knowledge—the senses, and thus, we are separated hopelessly from reality. Accordingly, Empiricism has ample justification, but Materialism loses its basis, for 'matter' cannot but be a phenomenon 'in' mind. Further, seeing that real Being eludes the intellect, and that a thing-in-itself underlies appearances, man is able at his good pleasure to fill out this vacuous meridian with the splendid aspirations and fond hopes that body forth his moral, artistic, and religious nature. He need not curb the wild horses of Illusion. He is free here, on condition that he remember his frailty—all these be 'mere ideas,' 'airy nothings.' Kant's rigid limitation of reason cuts the root of Materialism in this way, and a double result ensues, greatly to the advantage of 'modern' thought. In the first place, the whole region of subjective ideals is salved for the 'spiritual' life. In the second place, a complete divorce between knowledge and religion enables 'positive' research to go on its broad *a*

posteriori road heedless of 'destructive' consequences. Protected by the darkness of his own inner mystery, the believer can exclaim, "Let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung." Partial issues guarantee that he can make special terms with Destiny.

The substantive outcome, then, is the tendency called Critical Idealism. It may be described as follows, paraphrasing the arguments of its supporters:—The physical organisation, being an appearance to our consciousness, must be regarded as at one and the same time psychical. The Materialists harboured the innocent notion, that 'matter' really exists 'out there.' But Kant's criticism had made this doctrine untenable before the event. 'Matter' can be no more than a mode of mental representation of a portion of experience. There is nothing 'real' about it. Nay, Kant himself did not pursue his principles to the bitter end. For, his premisses imply that the Understanding, a psychological organisation, must be, no less than the physical organisation, a phenomenon, in the last result a subjective 'work of the mind.' Therefore the tacit opposition between appearances to the mind and the thing-in-itself, retained by him, leaves an open door to every species of romantic *Phantasie*. Men are tempted to mistake their own internal impulses for objective facts. In effect, then, a doctrine of an *absolute* limit is erected by a *relativist* philosophy. And the oscillation of, say, Lange's thought, between a chill Positivism and a humane Platonism, suffices to show that he had not plumbed his position to the bottom. Accordingly, later Neo-Kantians went farther, with the result that the positivist element gained the upper hand, in some cases completely. For instance,

so far as its criticism goes, philosophy finds that a theory of truth is impossible, and the ghost of Hume may well crack a sardonic grin. Again, so far as its construction goes, it finds that all practicable conclusions are so much poetry, and the assembled saints of theosophy may well smile approval. Objective references must be assessed at their face value—as subjective ideals. “The philosopher’s harmonious image of the world is a sheer illusion; and, for philosophers of the school of Lange, it is a *conscious illusion*.”¹ At this point Kant’s ethical idealism returns for judgment, and, strangely enough, the positivist transcription abates its validity scarce a whit. For these illusions possess immense value to guide and elevate practical life! Materialism has indeed received the *coup de grâce*. But at this price:

“We do not know whether things-in-themselves exist. All we know is, that the consistent application of the laws of thought conducts us to the conception of an entirely problematical something, which we assume to be the cause of phenomena as soon as we recognise the fact that our world can be only a world of ideas or representations.”

Here we have the sole authentic interpretation of Kant’s critical achievement.

Is it so? For example, can relevant ground be discovered in the Kantian text to prove the conclusion that the Intelligible world is not “transcendental knowledge, but merely the ultimate issue of the use of the understanding in the judgment of what is given”? It may be quite true that, after the manner of Kant himself, the Neo-Kantian movement stands in close

¹ Cf. *Hartmann, Dühring, und Lange*, H. Vaihinger, pp. 191 f.

relation alike to Empiricism and Dogmatism; it may be quite true that, after the manner of Kant himself, it opposes both. More especially, it may be quite true that, as Kant ended a period of naïve Dogmatism, so Neo-Kantianism ended a period of naïve Empiricism. Notwithstanding, the question still remains urgent, Is this *all* we have to learn from the Critical Philosophy? The problem gave rise to endless discussion after 1870, and led to a minute study of Kant's writings, as of every scrap of information bearing upon his philosophical development. It may be said that this is without parallel in scientific accuracy for any thinker, and without parallel in volume save, perhaps, for the Aristotle of mediævalism. Thus Neo-Kantianism passed over into Kant 'philology.' The distaste for original thinking that marked the last third of the nineteenth century, and the supremacy of the historical method, led many to acquiesce gladly in the substitution of careful scholarship for seminal ideas. The value of laborious inquiry cannot be minimised, but the difference should have frank recognition. Kant himself knew it well.

"A philosophy which is 'learnèd' would cease to be a philosophy, and would be merely historical knowledge, not philosophy. . . . The greatest bar to philosophy is man's tendency to look at things from the narrow standpoint of his specialty."

So there may be ground for the protest, 'something too much of Kant.' The impetus to originative thought may flag after a generation of intense activity. Thus it was with the last century. But, doubtless, all this will lead to another orientation towards Kant, when his philosophical *revolution* will be so complete as to

have become absorbed by a further *evolution*. In any case, the latest revival of the Critical Philosophy accomplished one definite service. It has forced many to ask, How stand we to-day?

Kant appeared at a psychological moment, and rose to the occasion, mediating the old into the new. Thus he detected those warring elements within the intellectual, moral, æsthetic, and religious life which, thanks largely to his remorseless insistence, disturb the present generation, spurring it to find the centre of Immensity. Hence the cogency and the futility of the cry 'Back to Kant.' In so far as he gained a 'peak in Darien,' we must needs emulate his example, and may retrace his titanic struggle to great profit. But we cannot return to him. What a gulf events have set between us! What clamant need, therefore, that a genius, born of our troublous day, should 'speak to the children of Israel that they go forward'! No! his own message rings out, Forward from Kant. "Imagine a finite thing that extends into the Infinite, and you have man." This is the glad-grievous proclamation of the Critical Philosophy, now integral to our inmost culture. Or, as Novalis put it, even more effectively: "We seek the plan of creation in the external universe, we ourselves are this plan. . . . The mighty mystery has been solved. Man lifted the veil from the goddess of Sais and beheld—himself."

As an immediate sequel, he confronted existence in radiant hope, and compassed the most memorable effort since the spacious days of Pericles to conquer the secret of his own being. New mastery over the subtlest of his creations—synthetic ideas, ethical

norms, artistic effects, social relations, religious beliefs—was won on every hand. Then, justified of his magic weapon, consecutive thought, he betook himself to ransack the very crannies of nature. Amassing empirical facts with unprecedented success, he soon suspected, and at length became convinced, that he too had a 'place in Nature.' His bruited 'uniqueness' dropped from him. The fruit of the fabled tree set the children's teeth on edge. As always, his poets voiced the pang he felt; listen to Hauptmann, a 'modern' of the moderns:—

“Ich bin ein Mensch. Kannst du dies fassen, Kind:
Fremd und daheim dort unten—so hier oben
Fremd und daheim—kannst du das fassen?”

Nor was this all. The traffic with Nature proved no bootless trade, it had its rewards. Forces there were, ready to harness, could men but learn their laws. And so, forgetting the star, we hitched our waggons to waterfalls. The peasant could now wash, and travel, and read, beyond the fancy of any olden king. The mechanic could follow the strenuous life beyond the dream of any feudal baron. More significant still, the things of the mind had ceased to be the private concern of a cloistered few, or the vaunted privilege of a 'literary' class. In short, the people was afoot, demanding that, throughout the entire social structure, no less than at its apex, this 'infinite' thing, called man, should be so circumstanced as to see of the travail of his soul and be satisfied.

The moral requires no pointing. The prophet who would discern for the children of to-morrow must stand with feet firm planted on the soil of nature, must lay

his heart to the great heart of the folk. Then, and then only, dare he do as he will with his head. Of a truth, it *is* Forward from Kant! For, it were worse than useless to reaffirm or rehearse old positions. Yet the Kantian sphinx did utter the question of questions: How comes it that man, a humble pigmy in the universe, is, notwithstanding, the sole key to the gigantic order which envelops him? As we know now, this order penetrates whither Kant never so much as suspected, its riches even we can guess but faintly. Hence the contemporary necessity. Man must penetrate to new depths within himself, he must bring forth compensating riches from the boundless regions of personality. But, how? Kant's tireless reflection, devoted without stint to ideal ends, exemplifies the means; none better. We must be born again, as he was, but in the fulness of *our* time.

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