



Kant and His Position in Philosophy Ernest Belfort Bax

Before entering upon our biography of Kant, it may be instructive to take a rapid survey of the condition of Königsberg and German society in the early part of the 18th century. Prussia was at this time under the iron rule of Frederick William I. of tall-hussar notoriety. Since the independence of the country had been established, the trade and importance of Königsberg had advanced with rapid strides. Every spring brought a stream of vessels from England, Holland, Russia, Poland, and other countries. The Baltic town was also the centre of such intellectual life and activity as then existed in Prussia. On more than one occasion it had even offered strenuous resistance to the ordinances of the autocratic monarch himself. In this way a strongly-cemented municipal feeling had been formed which affected all classes of citizens. Various causes had contributed to swell the number of the inhabitants of Königsberg. The fact that the elevation of Prussia to a kingdom had been formally proclaimed from there had given it a certain patriotic importance of its own. But what probably more than anything else helped the rapid increase of the city's population, was its having been neutral territory during a long war. The university (founded in 1553) especially benefited by this circumstance. Students flocked in from various sides, from Poland and the Baltic districts on the one hand, and from Pomerania, Silesia, and East Prussia generally, on the other. Several important municipal schools were, moreover, opened about this time.

The state of general culture in Germany during the first half of the century was very much what the close of the preceding century had left it. The era of modern German literature had not commenced. The seventh-magnitude poets and dramatists whose names are preserved in the pages of Goethe's *Dichtung und Wahrheit* were the oracles of public taste; an array of equally obscure philosophasters dominated the universities, while philosophy, together with all the more solid branches of Literature, was conducted in Latin, according to true mediæval fashion. Some few jurists and philologists alone, belonging to this period, attained to a more than ephemeral reputation. Germany had not as yet recovered from the blighting results of the Thirty Years' War, which effectually destroyed the germs of the awakening culture of the Reformation period. But in spite of this unpromising state of affairs, signs of an imminent revival were not wanting. The brilliant and cosmopolitan genius of Leibnitz had prepared the way for the first essentially German philosopher, Christian Wolff. Wolff, besides being the first thinker to write in German, has the credit of having staunchly, and at times to his own cost, adhered to his master's resistance to the claims of authority, as such, and this fact may be set against the intrinsic worthlessness of his philosophy. The most interesting point in connection with Wolff, is, however, his having been the forerunner of Kant. In general literature, towards the middle of the century, a similar revival is noticeable, the glow of dawn before the rising of the sun of Goethe and his congeners. The time [xiii] will perhaps be best appreciated in its intellectual aspect when we recall the fact that the popular essayist Thomasius, the precursor of the later *Aufklärung* writers, died as late as 1728, and that he was a main instrument in exploding the belief in witchcraft among the educated classes, and in abolishing the laws directed against it, as well as a determined, and, to a large extent, successful opponent of the practice of judicial

torture.

But the most important influence at this period dominant in North Germany, was not so much embodied in literature as in the social life of the people. We refer to the “Pietism” which then reigned, to a greater or less extent, in well-nigh every German home, and which formed such a marked feature in the early life of the subject of the present biographical sketch.

Such were the social conditions of Germany when the worthy saddler, Johann Georg Cant, was carrying on his handicraft in the *Sadlergasse* of Königsberg, learning to labour and to wait for those better days which, alas! he was never destined to see reward his labour. Johann Georg, in fact, though an upright and excellent man, appears to have been more esteemed by his fellow townsmen for his personal character than his saddle-making abilities. In spite of rigid economy, he never compassed more than very “moderate” circumstances, even according to the standard of the German *Kleinbürger*—and he not the *Kleinbürger* of to-day, but of the 18th century—while at times, it seems, he had a difficulty in making the proverbial two ends meet. Though originally of Scotch extraction, the Cant family had been settled for some generations in the Baltic province, at the time of which we speak. It was on November 13th, 1715, that Johann Georg Cant was united, in the cathedral church of the city, to Anna Regina Reuter, if we may judge by the name, a genuine daughter of the Baltic shores. As is not unusual with persons in the position of the elder Cant, a large family was the issue of this marriage, eleven children in all, four sons and seven daughters. Of these six died in infancy.

Immanuel, the fourth child and third but eldest surviving son, was born on April 22nd, 1724. His only brother, Johann Heinrich Cant, the youngest child, and eleven years his junior, after passing many years as private tutor in various aristocratic families, ultimately obtained the rectorate of Mitau and afterwards of Rahden, two country districts, the latter of which he held till his death a few years before that of his elder brother. Of the three sisters, Regina Dorothea, Maria Elisabeth, and Catherina Barbara, the eldest died unmarried, while the two younger developed into excellent housewives and mothers of families of the true German *Bürgerin* type, the youngest of all outliving Immanuel. Kant, throughout his life, acted as the benefactor of his relations and their children, who inherited the bulk of his property.

Frau Cant died when her son Immanuel was thirteen years old. It is related that her death was caused by a circumstance aptly illustrating her goodness of heart. A female friend to whom she was much attached, having been deserted by her betrothed, was attacked by a fever induced by mental excitement. Frau Cant, who zealously watched by her bedside, on one occasion endeavoured vainly to induce her to take her medicine, which she refused, even when the spoon containing it was pressed to her lips. As a last resource, her friend, thinking to overcome her repugnance by example, swallowed the mixture herself. No sooner had she done this than she was seized with a nervous horror, intensified by the fancy that she saw on the patient’s body symptoms of spotted typhus. She at once gave herself up for lost, fell ill of a similar fever the same day, and in a few days after [xv] expired. Kant, who was devotedly attached to his mother, could never speak of her, even in his later years, without betraying the deepest emotion.

Pietism reigned supreme in the house in the *Sadlergasse*, and Kant’s mother was especially addicted to it. Kant spoke of her as possessed of an inward peace and cheerfulness, capable of being disturbed by no outward circumstances. He was fond of relating how, in a trade dispute, in which his father was engaged, and had suffered considerable loss, she would speak with the greatest consideration of the opponent party, and express the most implicit trust in Providence. In later life the impression of his mother seems to have been more vivid than of his father. He would tell how he used to accompany her in long country walks, of her zeal in directing his attention to the various phenomena of Nature, and in offering such explanations as lay within her reach, with their invariable epilogue on the wisdom and goodness of the Creator. It

would appear as though Immanuel had been her favourite child. Besides receiving his general instruction in an institution famed for the pietism of its management, and diligently attending the church in connection with it, he had to be present at the prayer meetings of Professor Schultz, his mother's chief spiritual adviser, who pressed these devotional exercises with emphasis on the attention of the "spiritually minded" among his congregation. These meetings led to a more intimate connection with Schultz, which resulted in bringing about the first epoch in the young Immanuel's career. Schultz had been always well disposed towards the Kants, supporting them in various ways; such as sending them firewood in the winter carriage paid, etc. He was also a frequent guest at their house. In this way various occasions for observing the rising abilities of the elder son presented themselves, and in consequence he earnestly advised his being allowed to [xvi] devote himself to studious pursuits. This was readily agreed to, his mother joyfully anticipating the realisation of her long cherished wish that he should enter the church. She, however, died under the circumstances narrated, before he had completed his school education.

The irony of fate is certainly in few cases more strikingly manifested than in Kant's. Nurtured in the strictest sect of the orthodox creed of his day, trained doubtless at great sacrifices on the part of his parents that he might become an adequate exponent of that creed, he was yet destined to prove the most tremendous disintegrating force of modern times, springing intellectual mines, causing old creeds and formulas to fall in (so to speak) of their own weight. In Kant, philosophy and science became definitely emancipated from theology. A parallel involuntarily suggests itself between the respective attitudes towards religious beliefs of Kant and his elder contemporary, Voltaire, the one the subject, and the other the friend, of Frederick the Great. In the first we have the type of 19th century, in the second of 18th century thought. Both were alike in the immense range of their culture and interests; both were alike in the revolutionary character of their work. But, besides the difference which, of necessity, distinguishes the mere man of letters from the philosopher in his mode of thought and treatment, they differ as representing two diverse phases of the great intellectual movement of modern times. The attitude of 18th century thought towards current beliefs, where it was not one of ironical servility, was one of direct and uncompromising hostility; in fact, paradoxical as it may sound, we not unfrequently see the two attitudes combined as in the famous 15th and 16th chapters of Gibbon. What is now known as the historical point of view is, of course, conspicuous by its absence. In no writer is this more noticeable than in the author of the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*. In Kant, on the contrary, may be discerned the germs of the historical method which *explains* rather than *attacks* dogmas, and of the extra-theological (in contradistinction to anti-theological) attitude of modern science, which, wherever possible, ignores points of direct conflict by disregarding dogma as altogether outside its sphere. This later mode of thought, there can be no doubt, had its origin in Kant's distinction of the speculative and practical reason, although adopted by many who would repudiate this distinction. The world of philosophy and science has more and more tended in the 19th century to exclude all direct theological considerations, whether apologetic or polemical, from its pale. There can, we think, be little doubt that the habit of thought inaugurated by the Königsberg thinker, in spite of its reverent attitude towards, at least, the fundamental conceptions of theology, has been an incomparably more potent factor in current disintegration, at least outside the Latin countries, than the direct onslaughts of Voltaire and the French thinkers of the 18th century. The tendency at present is, indeed, to exaggerate the historical method, or at least to draw from it conclusions scarcely warranted. The sense of historic continuity, and of evolution, leads many thinkers to ignore the significance of epoch-making events and sudden changes, or of voluntarily-directed action in human affairs.

But to return to our young schoolboy, as yet in ignorance of the destiny the fates had in store for him, and anticipating, in all probability, as the farthest goal of his studies no more than the

Pfarrerthum of some country town or village. Kant was never largely communicative on the subject of his boyhood, but the couple of stories preserved may as well be reproduced. On one occasion, when on his way to school, he was allured by some young friends he met, into taking part in a game. This necessitated his laying down his books on the road. The game ended, he rushed off to make up for lost time and arrived at school just in time to see the class commence, when, to his consternation, the fact of his being without books suddenly dawned upon him. With the greatest composure he nevertheless confessed to the delinquency, and submitted to the inevitable punishment. Another time he was crossing a brook on the trunk of a tree which had been thrown or had fallen over it. He had only advanced a few steps when it showed alarming symptoms of rolling under his feet. Nothing daunted, our Immanuel fixed his eyes on a point on the opposite side, and, without moving them, dashed straight at it, by this means reaching *terra firma* in safety.

At Michaelmas 1740, in his seventeenth year, Kant entered the university of his native town as a student in theology, a faculty which appears soon to have been relinquished. The immediate occasion of this, was that another student had been preferred to a scholarship in the *Domschule* for which Kant had been a candidate. But we may suppose that, even at this early period of his career, the foregoing was not the only reason. It may be mentioned that Kant preached once or twice during his theological terms in a neighbouring country church in accordance with the custom at that time prevalent in Prussia for younger students to try their powers on country congregations. Philosophy and mathematics were now chosen as his subjects from among the university faculties. The chief and indeed only permanent bias Kant received from his school period was a fondness for the Latin classics, which he studied so thoroughly that, years after, he could recite long passages from memory. It is possible that he might have selected philology as his faculty instead of those actually chosen, but for the fact of its being badly represented in the university at the time. The choice made proved decisive for his whole life. Professor Martin Knutzen, who occupied the chairs of philosophy and mathematics, was a man to stimulate and encourage any latent abilities in the students who attended his lectures, and was, naturally, not long in discerning such in Kant. Kant accordingly obtained every possible assistance in his studies from this academical worthy, who allowed him free access to his own well-stocked library, and introduced him to the works of Newton. Poor Knutzen only lived to see the first result of his praiseworthy endeavours to encourage rising genius, in the shape of Kant's maiden essay entitled, 'Reflections on the just Estimation of living Forces.' In addition to those of Knutzen, Kant attended the lectures of Professor Johann Gottfried Teske on natural science. These two men appear to have been the only teachers in the university whom Kant regarded as having had any material influence in moulding his intellectual character. He spoke of both of them with gratitude and reverence, throughout his whole subsequent life, but made little or no mention of any one else among the professors, although he heard, for some time, Schultz on theology, and Johann Behm on classical literature. Towards the close of his university period, Kant was necessarily confronted with the problem of selecting a *carrière*. After some hesitation, he decided for the academic profession. Even before the completion of his own studies, he found himself compelled to give lessons at a very inadequate remuneration in classics, mathematics, and physical science. Later, he applied for the humble post of under-tutor in one of the schools attached to the university, which, though a position of sheer drudgery, would have at least secured for him the use of the university library. Fortunately for his future, which must have been seriously compromised by a step entailing the surrender of well-nigh all private study, the vacancy was filled up, probably through influence, by a candidate not likely to feel the loss of it. Just at this time Kant's father died (March 24th, 1746), a circumstance which threw him completely on his own resources. With a heavy heart he found himself compelled to leave

Königsberg, and seek a position as private tutor, finishing his preparation for the university post he hoped ultimately to fill, in his leisure time.

The first family into which he entered in his new capacity was that of a country pastor named Andersch. Thence he removed to the family of a landed proprietor, Von Hulsen of Arensdorf, near Mohrunen, subsequently ennobled by Frederick William III., where he remained for some time, giving great satisfaction and permanently attaching himself to his pupils. One of them subsequently resided with him as boarder, after he had become finally settled in Königsberg. Was it owing to Kant's influence and instruction in their early life, that the young Von Hulsens were the first among the Prussian feudal lords to voluntarily emancipate their peasants, ensuring them the right to the produce of the land on which they lived and worked?

Kant's third and last place as tutor was in the family of Count Kayserling of Rautenburg, who however resided most of the year in Königsberg. His wife, the countess, is described as a woman of high culture, and one of the leaders of aristocratic society in the city and its neighbourhood. Kant thus found himself suddenly thrown into the most influential circles of his native town, his genius rapidly placing him in the foremost rank. It was during this time that Kant acquired the high polish of manner and distinguished bearing, for which he was afterwards remarkable among *Gelehrten*. It is not unlikely, also, to have been about this period that he saw fit to change the initial letter of his name from C to K, a step, it is said, he was led to adopt owing to the perversity of many persons in pronouncing it Tsant. Kant remained nine years in his tutorial capacity, before, owing to the support of a relative named Richter, he was enabled to take his degree in philosophy. One of his examination-essays, *de Igne*, was rewarded by the acknowledgment of his former teacher Teske, that he himself had learnt much from it. Kant received his doctorate on April 17th, 1755, in the presence of a large number of distinguished persons connected with the town and university. During the same term he defended in public debate the principles of his test-essay *Principiorum primorum cognitionis metaphysicæ*, the necessary preliminary to the post of lecturer, or Privat-docent. With the winter term of 1755 he commenced lecturing on mathematics and physics, continuing to do so, for ten years, contemporaneously with his philosophical lectures. The latter were based in principle on Wolff, Baumeister, and Baumgarten, though text-books were chiefly used to furnish an order for the exposition of his own thought. Criticism was, of course, at this stage undreamt of, but the originality of the great thinker moulded with its unmistakable impress even the dogmatic metaphysics of his pre-critical days. His fascinating delivery combined with his rich and varied erudition to procure him a large audience. In the dry and cumbrous language of the 'Critique' and many other of the later works, it is difficult to detect the humorous and versatile lecturer, full of illustrations drawn from every conceivable source, his own experience of life, no less than from history and science, who charmed the students of Königsberg university, before his fame had reached the outside world. The success of the lectures was so great that constant demands were made for additional courses not contained in the original syllabus.

The first great work of Kant's appeared almost at the commencement of this period of his academical activity. Kant had just received his license as Privat-docent when he published his 'General Natural History and Theory of the Heavens,' one of the most remarkable astronomical works of the century, and which even now may be read with profit. A few months afterwards, the memorable earthquake of Lisbon afforded him the opportunity of exhibiting his research in questions of physical geography. In April 1756, it became necessary for him to undertake another public disputation, as by an ordinance of Frederick the Great three disputations on a printed theme were requisite before a Privat-docent could enter a professorship. To this end he wrote his treatise *De Monadologia physica*. On the successful issue of the ordeal, Kant applied for the post of extraordinary professor of mathematics and metaphysics, for some little time

vacant by the death of his old teacher Martin Knutzen. But the government, busy with war-preparations, and anxious to reduce expenditure, decided to leave the post still unoccupied. Two years subsequently the ordinary professorship in the same departments became vacant, and Kant again applied for the position. The Prussian government had in the meantime (it was during the Seven Years' War) handed over the province to the Russians, and the Russian governor-general, Nikolaus von Korff, was chief of both the military and civil executive. Kant had as a competitor a Dr. Buck, who was influential in high places, and in spite of his own good recommendations failed to secure the appointment. Continuing his life as Privat-docent, he extended the range of his departments to "philosophy of religion," anthropology, and physical geography, besides giving special lectures on other subjects. Among Kant's pupils at this time, was Herder who attended the whole of the courses delivered between the years 1762 and 1764. Kant allowed Herder to attend free of cost, a not insignificant act of generosity when one considers that Kant himself was in circumstances far from "easy" at the time; and we can scarcely absolve the author of the 'Ideen zur Geschichte der Menschheit' from the charge of ingratitude, for having allowed an adverse criticism of his book to be the cause of the bitterness he subsequently displayed. There can be no doubt, that, great as Herder's own genius may have been, he owed an immense debt to Kant. A friend of the former relates how careful he was, in noting down every sentence that fell from the philosopher's lips. Once when Kant had discoursed with a more than usual brilliancy—a brilliancy amounting almost to poetic enthusiasm—Herder was so deeply impressed, that on his return home he embodied the substance of the lecture in verse, and the next day handed the manuscript to Kant before the commencement of the class. The latter was so struck with the masterly poetic presentation of his ideas, that he read the poem through to his audience, before his lecture, with a power and emphasis that well rewarded the author for his pains. Herder, in spite of his subsequent quarrel, was constrained, years after, in his 'Letters on the Improvement of Humanity' (No. 79) to admit the impressiveness and charm of Kant's personality, and his rare combination of humour and eloquence with depth of thought. "The same vigorous intelligence," writes Herder, "with which he tested Leibnitz, Wolff, Baumgarten, Crusius, or Hume and followed out the natural laws established by Newton, Kepler, and other physicists, he brought to bear on Rousseau's 'Emile' and 'Héloïse' &c."

Another noteworthy acquaintance of Kant's at this time (though the relation between them was not that of master and pupil), was Johann Georg Hamann, the well-known classic and humourist. The characters and paths of the two men were too divergent to admit of anything like a close and lasting friendship. The equable temperament and thoroughness in work of the one, consorted ill with the fitfulness and superficiality of the other. Whether owing to this circumstance or not, it is remarkable that Kant nowhere makes any reference to Hamann, so that, the rooted antipathy of our philosopher to letter-writing preventing any considerable correspondence between them, no evidence (excepting the few letters preserved) remains of their intimacy, if such it was, beyond the testimony of the not too reliable Hamann himself.

But at once the most important and most interesting of all Kant's friendships remains to be told. I give the story of its origin and nature in the words of Jachmann (pp. 77–82). "The nearest and most intimate friend that Kant had in his life, was the English merchant Green, who died twenty years ago, a man whose peculiar value, and whose important influence on our sage, may be learnt from the description of their friendship. A singular accident, that seemed likely to create a deadly hatred between the two men on their first acquaintance, gave occasion to the closest ties." "At the time of the Anglo-North American war,* Kant was walking one afternoon in the Danish Garden. He stopped on finding some acquaintances, who were standing in a retired part, talking with some other persons unknown to him. The conversation, in which all

present took part, soon turned upon current events. Kant was warmly advocating the American as being the righteous cause, and expressing himself with some bitterness against the English, when suddenly one of the company, springing forward, presented himself before Kant, saying that he was an Englishman, declaring himself and his whole nation outraged by the expressions used, and demanding, at the same time, satisfaction in accordance with the *code d'honneur*: Kant would not allow his equanimity for a moment to be disturbed by the man's vehemence, but continued his remarks, expounding the principles on which he based his political views, and the standpoint from which every man, as citizen of the world, irrespective of his patriotism, ought to judge similar events. This was done with such an irresistible eloquence, that Green—for such was the name of the Englishman—filled with astonishment, offered his hand in a friendly manner, acknowledged the nobleness of Kant's ideas, apologised for his warmth, and after accompanying him in the evening to his house, invited him to a friendly visit. The now deceased merchant Motherby, a partner of Green, was an eye-witness of the occurrence, and has often assured me that Kant seemed to himself and all present, as though inspired by a Divine power, which enchained their hearts for ever to him. Kant and Green thenceforth concluded an intimate friendship, based on knowledge and mutual esteem, a friendship that daily became firmer and closer, and the rupture of which, owing to the early death of Green, occasioned our sage a wound, mitigated indeed by his greatness of soul, but never wholly healed. Kant found in Green a man of wide knowledge, and of so large an understanding, that he himself assured me he never wrote a single sentence in his 'Critique of the Pure Reason,' which he had not previously read to Green, and allowed to be criticised by his unbiassed judgment, unpledged as it was to any system. Green was in character a rare man, distinguished by strict integrity and real generosity, but full of the most strange idiosyncrasies; a truly whimsical man, whose days were passed according to a set of inflexible and fanciful rules. I will only give one instance of this. Kant had promised Green one evening to accompany him on the following morning at eight o'clock in a drive. Green, who, as was usual on such occasions, was pacing the room with his watch in his hand a quarter of an hour before the time appointed, at ten minutes put on his hat, at five minutes took his stick, and with the first stroke of the hour opened the carriage door and drove off. He encountered Kant, who was two minutes late, on his way, but did not stop, as this was contrary to the arrangement and his rule. In the society of this gifted, noble-minded, and singular man, Kant found so much nourishment for his intellect and his heart, that he became his constant companion, and for many years they daily spent several hours together. Kant went to him every afternoon, found Green sleeping in an armchair, sat down beside him, put aside his thoughts, and fell asleep also. Then bank director Russmann generally arrived and did likewise, till finally Motherby entered the room at an appointed time, and aroused the company, who entertained each other till seven o'clock with conversation. The little coterie broke up so punctually at seven, that I have often heard the inhabitants of the street say 'It can't be seven yet, for professor Kant has not gone past.' On Saturday, the friends, to whom were added on this occasion the Scotch merchant Hay and some others, assembled to supper, consisting of a frugal cold collation. This friendly intercourse, which fell towards the middle of our sage's career, had incontestably a decided influence on his character. Green's death changed Kant's mode of life so much, that from this time forth, he never again entered an evening gathering, and wholly renounced supper himself. It seemed as though this time, once sacred to his most intimate friendship, he wished to pass in solitude, as a sacrifice to his deceased friend, to the close of his existence." I have given this interesting narrative of Jachmann at length, as it is characteristic in more ways than one of the philosopher's character and habits.

In July 1762 the professorship of poetry had become vacant, but was not filled up for some time, in spite of numerous applications, owing to the pre-occupation of the ministry with other

matters. Meanwhile Kant's works and news of his success as lecturer had reached headquarters, and resulted in the following ministerial rescript dated, Berlin, the 5th of August, 1764, signed by the minister of justice, and addressed to the government of the province of Prussia, to be conveyed to the senate of the university of Königsberg. "A certain magister, by name Immanuel Kant, having become known to us by writings displaying thorough scholarship, it is desired to know whether the said Immanuel Kant possesses the requisite acquirements in German and Latin poetry, together with the necessary gifts for teaching the same, and whether he would be inclined to accept this post. On this point you are to obtain information, and thereupon to report accurately; in the event of the said Immanuel Kant either not possessing the necessary acquirements for the occupation of this post, or being indisposed to its acceptance, you are required to bestir yourselves, to propose, in due form, other sufficiently qualified persons." Kant believed himself to have no special bent for the professorate in question, which would have involved the criticism of all *pièces d'occasion*, as well as the composition of such on academic festivals, so he at once declined it, at the same time "recommending himself" for a more suitable occasion. Another rescript was issued in reply, to the following effect: "We are none the less most graciously determined to promote the magister, Immanuel Kant, to the use and acceptance of the said academy on another opportunity; and graciously command you accordingly, [xxviii] to notify us, in due obedience, on the manner in which this may be most suitably effected."

The following year Kant accepted the librarianship of the public library at a salary of sixty-two thalers (£9 6s.) a year, this meagre pittance being the first fixed stipend he obtained from any source. About the same time, his love for natural science led him to undertake the curatorship of a valuable private museum of natural history, and ethnographical objects. This he found himself compelled very soon to relinquish, as the collection being one among the comparatively few "objects of interest" in the city, his presence in showing it became too much in request amongst sightseers. Kant was now living in the house of a bookseller named Kanter, to whose journals the *Königsbergischer wöchentliche Nachrichten* and the *Gelehrte Zeitung*, he regularly contributed. In the summer of 1768 Kanter opened "new and extensive" premises, including a room apparently serving the purpose of a reading and writing room for his customers, round the walls of which were hung the portraits of prominent contemporary German scholars. Kant was induced to "sit" for his portrait by his host, who was anxious to add the Königsberg celebrity to his collection. The resulting picture, which must have portrayed Kant at the age of forty-four, is now hanging on the walls of Messrs. Gräfe and Munzer's establishment at Königsberg.

Kant's fame was now no longer confined to his native province or country, but was rapidly spreading into other parts of Germany. In 1769 he received the offer of the vacant chair of logic and metaphysics in the university of Erlangen, a post he seems at first to have been inclined to accept, much to the satisfaction of the students of the university. The position was not unremunerative according to the ideas of the time, consisting of 500 florins salary yearly, in addition to a liberal supply of fuel for the winter, with an immediate advance of 150 gulden for travelling expenses. The project seems to have been pending for some months, but was eventually abandoned. The same result attended an offer of the professorate at Jena, made in January 1770. Kant had finally determined not to leave his native town, let the allurements be what they might. The time was drawing near when the post which was the goal of his professional hopes was to become once more accessible. In the March of the same year (1770) the professorship of mathematics, becoming vacant, was offered to Kant. Singularly enough, Kant's former successful rival, Professor Buck, had, immediately on learning the death of its late occupant, himself taken steps toward getting nominated for it, in lieu of the post he

then occupied. The matter was thus easily adjusted. Buck resigned the chair of logic and metaphysics, while Kant relinquished his claims to that of mathematics. The two men were thus mutually installed in the positions of their choice; the ministerial rescript appointing Kant as ordinary professor of logic and metaphysics in the university of Königsberg, bearing the date of March 31st. The salary was 400 thalers (£60), besides lecture fees. Kant did not formally enter upon his duties till August 20th, 1770, when according to precedent he publicly defended his treatise *De mundo sensibili*, containing the fundamental theses of the 'Critique.' He chose as his respondent, his friend and pupil Dr. Marcus Herz, who a few days later returned to Berlin. With his assumption of the professorial robes commenced the middle period of Kant's academical and literary life, when his system was elaborated and matured, and his powers were at the height of their activity. Henceforth we have the critical Kant before us.

Kant's entry upon his new functions was almost coincident with the assumption of the entire educational departments of the ministry at Berlin by Baron von Zedlitz, a man of considerable culture and a zealous disciple of the *Aufklärung*, who at once recognised Kant's genius and importance for the university, and remained an influential friend to him until his resignation eighteen years later. Zedlitz was no sooner in office than he issued a rescript proscribing the Crusian philosophy, making a clear sweep of the antiquated text-books previously in use, and generally calculated to put academic bodies "on their mettle." No opportunity was lost of showing ministerial esteem for the occupant of the philosophical chair at Königsberg. In 1778 Professor Meier of Halle dying, Zedlitz immediately offered the appointment (which was of considerably greater pecuniary value than the one at Königsberg) to Kant, and was much surprised at its being declined by him. His anxiety for Kant's worldly prospects was sufficient to induce him to repeat this invitation. "I cannot," he writes, "give up my desire to see you remove to Halle. It is too bad that your way of thinking so exactly coincides with your post. Really, my dear Herr Kant, however praiseworthy this may be in itself, it does not seem to me well that you should so deliberately refuse a better position." This second letter contained every possible argument, even to considerations of climate, but all to no purpose. Kant was inflexible in his resolution to remain true to his native town, by letting it have all the honour and advantages accruing from his genius. That the incident contributed, if anything, to enhance the minister's esteem goes without saying. Departing from his usual practice of not dedicating his works, Kant inscribed the first edition of his 'Critique' to his "protector" Freiherr von Zedlitz. The expression "protector," was in this case no mere form, as Kant found to his cost on the death of the free-thinking Frederick the Great many years later, and consequent resignation of his minister, which not long after followed, for his successor was a man of very different mould; it was under his administration that Kant, as we shall presently see, was first made to feel the existence of a press censorship.

Throughout the tenure of his office of professor, every morning, summer and winter, during the terms, saw Kant at his desk in the lecture-room at seven o'clock punctually, the lecture lasting two hours. His special lectures he was now obliged to give up, owing to the pressure of literary work. But besides those on logic and metaphysics, he had to deliver regular courses on ethics, natural theology, anthropology and physical geography, all of which were attended by literally "overflowing" audiences not alone consisting of students, but composed of men of mature years, from among all classes of the outside public. As time went on, the bulky manuscript originally employed grew smaller and smaller, till at last it dwindled to a piece of note paper, on which were jotted a few memoranda. His delivery is described as much more readily comprehensible, even on subjects in themselves obscure, than the literary style of the later works. Kant, when reproached with the clumsiness and obscurity of the latter, used to excuse himself by the reply, that they were only written for professional thinkers;

that a special terminology had the advantage of brevity, and that, besides this, he liked to flatter the vanity of the reader now and again with obscurities and misunderstandings to give him the opportunity of exercising his wits upon them; it was otherwise in oral discourse, the object of which was to introduce the hearer to the subject. Kant's logic lectures were less designed to expound a completed science than to teach his hearers how to think for themselves. With him formal logic was a means rather than the end it is with many academical exponents of the subject. In his philosophical lectures Kant had the habit of following his main idea into side issues, often at such length and in such detail as to be in danger of losing sight of it altogether. On these occasions, he would suddenly break off from his digression with the words, "In short, gentlemen," and thus regain, as quickly as possible, the main thread of the argument. His naturally weak voice prevented his being heard at the farther end of the room with distinctness, while the slightest noise rendered him completely inaudible. But the respect, almost amounting to reverence, universally surrounding him, secured a breathless silence the moment he appeared at the lecture-desk, before which he was accustomed to sit while speaking. He had a habit, on commencing, of fixing his eye on some individual immediately in front of him, in order to read, by the expression of the face, whether he was being understood. This, sometimes, had unfortunate consequences, as any marked peculiarity in person or in dress, was apt, by involuntarily engrossing his attention, to completely disturb the current of his ideas. Jachmann relates, that on one occasion he entirely lost himself, owing to a missing button on the coat of one of his audience. His eye and thoughts were alike irresistibly drawn to this defect. The same thing occurred if an imperfection in the teeth caught his attention, an unusually open shirt front, or any exceptional "cut" of coat.

As dean of the university, a post he several times occupied, Kant had the reputation of being a strict examiner, but he never demanded more of students than the state of education in the higher schools admitted of. Jachmann amused Kant in after years, by describing the anxiety of himself and his teachers lest he should fail in passing the ordeal, especially as he had been trained in the antiquated Crusian philosophy. But, as Jachmann observes, Kant was too much a philosopher himself, to make any given system of philosophy the basis of examination. The functions involved in the rectorate of the university, which office he filled for the first time in 1786, the year of the death of Frederick II., he exercised "with dignity, without oppressive severity." His views of academic discipline were of the most liberal nature, and he was never harsh on the minor irregularities incidental to student life. He expressed a disbelief in hothouse training, and his conviction of the desirability of considerable latitude being permitted for the individual character to expand itself. In short, he was, throughout his official career, beloved by the students, whom he treated with an almost paternal tenderness and interest.

On an increased grant being made to the university, Kant, of course, received his share in common with the other professors in the shape of an improved stipend. But a special and almost unparalleled favour was shown in his case by an addition of 220 thalers from the central state funds. Kant's correspondence with Marcus Herz attests his prodigious literary fertility during this period. Dr. Herz was a favourite pupil of Kant's, and one of the first public exponents of his system, which he introduced to the Berliners before the 'Critique' itself had appeared. The correspondence between the two men was kept up for many years, and only collapsed finally, owing to the extended medical practice of Herz, absorbing time and energies previously devoted to philosophical studies. The letters to Reinhold also illustrate the nature and extent of Kant's work towards the close of this period. The old friendship or acquaintance with Hamann, for some time interrupted, was renewed in 1780, about which time Kant seems to have revised a translation of Hume's 'Dialogues concerning Natural Religion,' which Hamann had made, while Hamann undertook to negotiate for the publication of the 'Critique.' The latter writes

to Herder [xxxiv] under date April 8th, 1781, “The day before yesterday I received the first thirty sheets of the ‘Critique of Pure Reason,’ but I had the strength of mind to resist looking at any of it till the following day. Yesterday I remained all day at home, and swallowed the whole thirty sheets at a gulp. . . . It seems to me to be tolerably free from printers’ errors, though my eye caught sight of a dozen or so. According to all human probabilities it will create an excitement, give occasion to new investigations, revisions, &c. But in the end, very few readers will be equal to the scholastic nature of its contents. It increases in interest as you go on, and there are fresh and charming oases, after one has been wading in the sand for a long time. Altogether, the work is rich in prospects and leaven to new decoctions whether within or outside the faculty.” And again, “On May 8th, on Sunday, I received eighteen sheets from Kant, but it is not yet finished, and will hardly be so in ten sheets more.” Finally on August 5th, he writes, “A week ago to-day, I received a bound copy from Kant. On the 5th of July I sketched a criticism *en gros*, but have put it aside, because I do not care to offend the author, he being an old friend, and I might almost say benefactor, seeing that I owe my first post entirely to him; but should my translation of Hume see the light ever, I shall hold no leaf before my mouth, but shall say what I think. Kant has the intention of bringing out a popular abstract of his work.” The popular abstract referred to was the Prolegomena. Hartknoch, the original publisher of the ‘Critique,’ expressed the wish to undertake the latter work, and received, through Hamann, a reply from Kant, accepting his offer, but intimating at the same time that, as far as his other writings were concerned, he could not pass over the local booksellers, of whose shops he made such extensive use. This resolution he adhered to, and, in spite of the pressing offers of other firms, gave almost all his subsequent works into the hands of Nicolovius, a young bookseller of Königsberg. Hamann, who, during the publication of the Prolegomena, seems once more to have quarrelled with Kant, exhibited nevertheless considerable interest in its progress, making repeated inquiries of Hartknoch on the subject.

The adverse criticism of Herder’s ‘Ideas to a Philosophy of History of Mankind’ excited considerable attention at the time it was written. There was published in the *Deutsche Mercur*; a bitter reply, curiously enough by Reinhold, subsequently Kant’s most ardent disciple, which elicited a rejoinder from Kant even more severe than the original criticism. In 1785 appeared the ‘Metaphysic of Ethics,’ the first edition of which was sold out in a few months, and a second, almost unaltered, issued early in 1786. Towards the end of the same year, we find Kant studying Jacobi’s recently published ‘Letters to Moses Mendelssohn on the Doctrines of Spinoza.’ Hamann says Kant could never make anything of Spinoza, though he had many long conversations on the subject with his intimate friend Kraus. In a letter of a few weeks later to Jacobi, he writes, “Kraus told me, that Kant had the intention to refute Mendelssohn, and make the first onslaught in a polemic against him. He confessed, notwithstanding, that with himself, as with Mendelssohn, your exposition was just as incomprehensible as the text of Spinoza.” Hamann’s letter to Jacobi of Nov. 20th contains the important statement (if it is to be relied on) that “Kant confessed to me, that he had never properly studied Spinoza, and that, being taken up with his own system, he had neither the desire nor the time to enter into others.” Shortly after, we hear from the same source, that the notion of refuting Mendelssohn had been given up, but that Hamann was going to do all in his power to induce [xxxvi] Kant to reconsider this decision, when the death of Mendelssohn, shortly after, terminated the matter. Kant’s admiration for Mendelssohn’s style was very great; indeed his estimate of the Jewish writer’s genius seems to have been somewhat exaggerated. It is probable that they never came personally into contact, but several letters passed between the two thinkers.

Kant’s academic fame was now (1786) at its height. Places had to be taken at least an hour before the commencement of the lecture, so great was the “rush.” I must not omit to mention

an important change in our philosopher's mode of life, which took place a little while before this time. In 1783 he had purchased the house which he retained till death. It was situated in the centre of the town, and may still be seen, bearing, on a marble tablet, the inscription, "Immanuel Kant lived and taught here from 1783 till the 12th of February 1804." A few years later, he established a *ménage* of his own. It is almost needless to say this was of the greatest simplicity, Kant's abhorrence to the least appearance of ostentation being proverbial. From this time he regularly invited a few friends to dine with him every day, with the exception of Sunday, when he dined at the house of the English merchant, Motherby. He could not entertain more than six persons at the table, as his dinner-service only accommodated that number. Among the friends invited, one of the most constant was Professor Kraus. Kraus was also a frequent companion of Kant in his daily constitutional walks. Kant often intimated to various members of his acquaintance that he regarded Kraus as one of the greatest intellects the world had ever produced. "Of all the men I have ever known in my life," he used to say, "I have found none with such a talent for comprehending everything, and learning everything, and yet for excelling, and distinguishing himself in everything, as [xxxvii] our Professor Kraus. He is quite a unique man." Kraus, on his side, denied himself his single relaxation, a summer trip to the country residence of his friend Auerswald, in order to spend the vacations with his old teacher Kant. This friendship with Kraus lasted uninterruptedly till the death of Kant, although latterly, for various reasons, the two men saw each other less frequently than at the period of which we are speaking.

Another of Kant's "table-companions" was Hippel, a man of tremendous conversational powers, and of varied culture. His intimacy with Hippel was not of the same nature as that with Kraus, being chiefly limited to mutual invitations to dinner, but the acquaintance thus far continued without any noteworthy breach till Hippel's death in 1796. Two letters of Kant to Hippel are preserved, which are not uninteresting, one as exhibiting the humorous side to Kant's character, and the other his good nature. Hippel, it should be premised, at the time, held the office of Chief Burgomaster, police-director, and inspector of the city prison. The first letter, dated July 9th, 1784, runs as follows: "Your excellency was so good as to desire to remove the grievance of the inhabitants of the *Schlossgarten*, with regard to the stentorian tones of the hypocrites in gaol. I do not think they would have cause to complain that their souls' salvation was in danger, if their voices were moderated in singing, so far that they might be heard with closed windows, without having to exhaust themselves by shrieking. The testimony of the warder, with which it seems you are chiefly concerned, as to their being a God-fearing folk, you might have, notwithstanding, for *he* would still be able to hear them, and after all, their tones would only be lowered to the point which the pious burghers of our good town find adequate to their edification, in their own houses. One word to the warder, if you will send for him, and order him to make the above a fixed rule, will suffice to put a stop to this nuisance for once and for all, and remove an annoyance from him, whose peace you have been good enough to promote on more occasions than one, and who will always remain, with the deepest respect, your most obedient servant, I. Kant."

The second letter, dated the 29th of September, 1786, commences with a compliment on a title being conferred on its destined recipient, but the real object is to petition for the continuance of the stipend of a young student: "Your excellency, accept my sincere congratulations on the well-merited distinction appended to your name, which, although it can add nothing to your already well-established public recognition, is a pledge that you will meet with less opposition in your purpose of doing good, the only interest I know which you have at heart. Permit me, in accordance with your good nature, now to bring before you a little matter connected with the University. Herr Jachmann, the elder, has informed me that the stipend he has hitherto

enjoyed by your forethought, terminates this next Michaelmas. As he is now zealously devoting himself to his medical studies, and can thus afford no time for the private teaching necessary to his subsistence, he earnestly begs you to have the goodness to allow him one of the stipends announced in the 'Intelligencer.' Should you permit him, either personally or by writing, to make this application to you, please to give me a hint of the same. This act of goodness will always profit a brave, thoughtful, and talented young man: so much I can vouch for. I remain, with respect and affection, yours ever, I. Kant."

We have now reached the period when Kant had become the central figure in the intellectual world of Germany. The 'Critique of Practical Reason' appeared in 1788, and the 'Critique of Judgment' in 1790. The critical philosophy, now complete, was being taught in every important university throughout every German-speaking country, irrespective of creed. Men of science, no less than philosophers, were attracted to it on all sides. Professors and savants made pilgrimages to Königsberg from the most distant places—Berlin, Jena, Heidelberg, Würzburg, and even Vienna—to visit the philosophic Jupiter of the Baltic town, and seek elucidation on obscure points in the 'Critique.'

When it is remembered that at the period in question not merely were railroads undreamt of, but even good roads all but unknown in central Europe, the enthusiasm and determination which led to journeys being undertaken involving the expense and fatigue these must have done, will be fully realised. Sometimes, it is true, the cost was defrayed by the prince or grand-duke of the State in which some prominent university was situated, but such cases were exceptional.

It would hardly be rash to say that no single book has ever achieved a success at once so rapid and lasting as the 'Critique of Pure Reason.' Although just at first it failed to attract much notice, within ten years of its publication it occupied the position of a classic. For such an effect to be produced by a philosophic work, written without any regard to style whatever, is a unique fact in the history of culture. A new light had, as Schiller expressed it, been lighted for men.

"Many regarded Kant as the prophet of a new religion, and Reinhold declared that, 'in a hundred years Kant would have the reputation of Jesus Christ.' The Jena *Allgemeine Literatur Zeitung* proclaimed a *novus ordo rerum*. In the course of some ten years 300 attacks and defences of Kant's philosophy appeared. The enthusiasm aroused the hatred of opponents. Herder characterised the whole movement as a St. Vitus's dance, while fanatical priests sought to degrade the name of the sage of Königsberg to a dog's name. We must not alone be acquainted with the books written from a more or less impartial standpoint, but also with the subjectively coloured pamphlets and letters belonging to the period, to form an adequate idea of the, at present, almost inconceivable commotion. The powerful impression of the Kantian philosophy on all classes in the nation, implied a corresponding influence on every sphere of intellectual activity. Theology, jurisprudence, philology, even natural science and medicine were soon drawn into the movement, quite apart, of course, from the special philosophical disciplines which were subjected to its mighty influence.*"

The critical movement, at first confined to Germany, was not long in spreading over Europe. Nitsch, a pupil of Kant, appeared in London in February, 1794, with a prospectus bearing the psychologically coloured heading, 'Proposals for a course of lectures on the perceptive and reasoning faculties of the mind, according to the principles of Professor Kant.' In this prospectus he offered to deliver three lectures, admission gratis, and at the close of each to defend the principles enunciated against all comers. On the evening of the 3rd of March, the occasion of the first lecture, the street in which the lectureroom was situated was early lined with carriages, and Nitsch, on his appearance on the platform, found himself confronted by a large audience, composed of members of the nobility, the clergy, and the "learned" professions generally, and including, as we are informed, many "richly attired" ladies. The lecture lasted an hour and a

half, and was received with applause, but Nitsch had no sooner concluded than he was forced to commence a disputation, lasting two hours, in the course of which he was required to answer every conceivable objection that could be raised in a running fire of questions. So successfully did he pass through this ordeal, and so much interest did the three introductory lectures evoke, that a sufficiently large number of subscribers was got together to make it worth while for him to undertake a course of thirty-six lectures, at a fee of three guineas each person, expounding in detail the principles of the critical philosophy. He concluded them in August. But, meanwhile, the desire for further information had become so great, that a repetition of the lectures was commenced the following October, and a subscription raised for their subsequent publication.

The success of Nitsch in his introduction of “criticism” into England is certainly somewhat surprising, when we consider the newness of the doctrine, and the conservative nature of English thought. It is difficult to conceive that his hearers, accustomed as they were to a treatment of philosophical questions so alien to that of Kant, really comprehended the full bearings of the new system.

The next representative of Kant’s principles in this country, was John Richardson, who studied philosophy in Halle under Beck, and on his return to England published a translation of the ‘Prolegomena,’ and some other short pieces. Richardson admits, in his preface, that he had found the transition from empiricism to critical idealism very difficult, notwithstanding his having had the advantage of a German university education.

In France, where the Revolution was at its height (the Revolution which was the deathblow of the material structure of ages, as Kant’s philosophy was of the intellectual structure of ages), and communication with central Europe was interrupted for some time, except the *pièce d’occasion* entitled, ‘Everlasting Peace,’ translated in 1795, little was known of Kant beyond the fact that he was the head of a great intellectual movement in Germany, till, in 1798, the recently established *Institut Nationale* ordered a report of the new doctrine to be laid before it. In the following year (1799), Kant’s first French disciple, Charles François Dominique de Villers, published at Metz an abstract of the ‘Critique,’ and, a year or two later, another treatise, entitled *La philosophie de Kant, ou principes fondamentaux de la philosophie transcendente*.

Among the other Latin nationalities, Kant remained little more than a name till some years after his death, and the same may be said of the Slav countries of Eastern Europe. In the Netherlands, on the contrary, in 1796, an elaborate work in four volumes, ‘De Beginzels der Kantiaansche Wysgeerte,’ was published, in which, notwithstanding its modest title, critical principles were exhaustively expounded, while in October 1798 a new magazine, the ‘Kritische Magazin,’ was founded for the express purpose of propagating and defending the principles of the new philosophy.

Among the numerous pilgrims to Königsberg, one of the most interesting, if not from any special eminence, from the probably unique enthusiasm Kant inspired in him, was the Berlin physician Erhard, who arrived in Königsberg about the same time as Fichte. “All pleasure that I have ever had in my life,” he writes in his autobiography, “is as nothing against the thrill sent throughout my whole soul by several passages in the ‘Critique of Practical Reason.’ Tears of the highest rapture, how often have I not shed over this book? The very recollection, even now, of those happy days brings tears to my eyes.” And again, “Do I hold my own in the battle with the crushing thought with which the history of the time, like an evil demon, so often fills my soul—that the belief in the development of humanity in the whirl of human action, is an old wives’ fable, designed to restrain the child from wandering down the path of coarse pleasures, and an empty consolation for the jubilation of his comrades—do I withstand this soul-oppressing thought, then it is thy work, my teacher, my spiritual father.”

The last letter (April 16, 1800) of Erhard to Kant closes with the words, “Think of me as of

a son who intensely loves and reverences him who brought him up, for you are even to me as my father, though him I have to thank that he left me prepared for your instruction.”

Among the eminent men, not professional philosophers, who, at this time (1790–1800), were zealous votaries of Kant, foremost stand Schiller, Wilhelm von Humboldt, and Jean Paul Friedrich Richter. The influence of Kant on Goethe was less marked, and probably in the main derived from Schiller. The ‘Critique of Pure Reason,’ he said, lay outside his sphere, though the ‘Critique of the Faculty of Judgment’ seemed to have interested him considerably. He admits that much in Kant’s thought he was unable to assimilate. How thoroughly, on the other hand, Schiller was imbued with Kantianism his works and letters testify. Wilhelm von Humboldt remarks in the ‘Introduction to his Correspondence with Schiller’ (published in 1830): “Kant undertook and completed the greatest work for which the philosophic reason has to thank any single man. He proved and sifted the whole of philosophic procedure, in a way that led him to encounter the philosophies of all times and all nations. . . He carried, in the true sense of the words, philosophy back into the human bosom. Every attribute of the great thinker he possessed in the fullest measure.” The whole of this introduction is masterly in its estimate of Kant’s work, but belonging as it does to a period long subsequent to the death of Kant, our only purpose in alluding to it here is, to show the impression left on the mind of Humboldt by the study of the ‘Critiques’ undertaken by him between thirty and forty years previously, and which is abundantly reflected in the correspondence itself.

The enthusiasm of Jean Paul is characteristically expressed in a letter to his friend, the Pastor Vogel: “For Heaven’s sake buy two books, Kant’s ‘Foundation to a Metaphysic of Ethics,’ and Kant’s ‘Critique of the Practical Reason.’ Kant is no mere light of the world, but a whole dazzling solar system at once.”

The bulk of Kant’s collected correspondence falls within these last twenty years of the century, the crowning period of his life. It comprises, amongst others, letters to and from Moses Mendelssohn, Marcus Herz, Reinhold, Schiller, and Fichte. As instances of Kant’s epistolary style, we quote letters to the two last-named, respectively.

Schiller had written, asking Kant to contribute to his newly-founded periodical, *Die Horen*, at the same time taking the opportunity of thanking him for a favourable review of his (Schiller’s) essay on ‘Grace and Dignity,’ and acknowledging his indebtedness to the critical philosophy. Kant replied nine months subsequently (Schiller’s letter is dated June 13th, 1794, and Kant’s, March 30th, 1795), as follows: “The acquaintance and literary intercourse of a learned and talented man like yourself cannot, my dear friend, be otherwise than desired by me to enter upon and cultivate. The plan for a new journal, communicated by you last summer, came duly to hand, also the two first numbers a short time ago. The letters on the ‘Æsthetic Education of Man,’ I find admirable, and shall study them in order to be able to communicate to you my ideas on the subject. The paper contained in the second number on the difference of sex in organic nature, I cannot decipher, although the writer seems a capable man. . . An idea of the kind flashes across one’s mind occasionally, but one does not know how to make anything of it. For instance, the natural arrangement that all impregnation in both of the organic kingdoms requires two sexes, in order to propagate its kind, is always astonishing, and opens up an abyss of thought for the human reason. If we are unwilling to assume providence to have chosen this arrangement, in a playful manner, as it were, to avoid monotony, but believe ourselves to have reason for regarding it as the only possible one, an infinite prospect lies before us, of which we can make simply nothing, as little indeed as from what Milton’s angel tells Adam of the Creation: ‘Male light of distant suns mingles with female for ends unknown.’ I am concerned lest your journal should be prejudiced by the fact that your writers do not sign their articles, and thus make themselves responsible for their opinions, a point which interests the public very

much.

“For this gift, then, I offer my best thanks, but as regards my small contribution, I must ask for a somewhat lengthy postponement, since political and religious matters are now under a certain embargo [referring to the stringent press censorship, of which more later on]. and beside these subjects, there are hardly any of interest for articles such as would commend themselves to the great reading world, at least at this moment; so we must watch for a change in the weather, and accommodate ourselves to the time. I beg you to give Herr Professor Fichte greetings and thanks for the many works from his pen which he has sent me. I would have done this myself if the variety of my labours, and the discomforts of old age had not compelled me to postpone it constantly. Kindly give my remembrances also to Herren Schultz and Hufeland.

“And now, dearest man, I wish your talents and good intentions adequate strength, health, and longevity, the friendship included, with which you honour him who is, with the greatest esteem your devoted and true servant, Immanuel Kant.”

The letter to Fichte which we quote, is, as far as we are aware, the last written by Kant to this philosopher. Rather more than a year subsequently, Kant, possibly from fear of sharing the charge of atheism that had been brought against Fichte, made a formal declaration that he considered the *Wissenschaftslehre* “to contain an utterly untenable system.” The curt, and certainly unjustifiable language of this manifesto naturally created an irreparable breach between the two thinkers. The letter itself, although, on the whole, friendly, is not without one or two sneers at the Fichtean system, betokening the coming rupture, as will be seen: “Highly valued friend,” writes Kant, “should you take my three-quarters of a year’s delay in answering you for a want of friendship or impoliteness, I could never forgive you. Did you know my state of health and the weakness of my age, which have compelled me for the past year and a half [the letter is not dated, but was probably written towards the end of the year 1797], certainly not out of laziness, to give up my lectures, you would find my behaviour excusable, notwithstanding my now and then giving notice of my continued existence by means of the *Berliner Monatschrift* and more recently of the *Berliner Blätter*; a thing I accomplish slowly and with exertion, and even then feel myself driven into practical departments, the subtleties of theoretical speculation, especially when it refers to your finely pointed *apices* being willingly left to others. That I have chosen no other journal than the *Berliner Blätter* for my recent productions, you and my other philosophic friends will lay to the score of invalidism. The reason is, that in this way I see my work published and criticised soonest, for, like a political paper, it satisfies expectation almost daily, and I do not know how long it will continue possible for me to work at all. Your books, sent in 1795 and 1796, have come to hand by Herr Hartung. It is a particular pleasure to me that my ideas on jurisprudence meet with your approval. Pray do not hesitate to further honour me with your letters, if your objection to my delay in answering be not too great, as well as to forward me literary reports. I shall man myself, in future, to be more industrious in this matter, especially as I see by your recent pieces that your excellent talent is developing a vigorous and popular style in exposition, that you have already passed through the thorny paths of Scholasticism, and will not find it necessary to return to them. With perfect esteem and friendship, I am always, &c., I. Kant.”

To this Fichte replies, that he does not for a moment contemplate bidding farewell to Scholasticism, but that on the contrary he carries it on with pleasure and facility as it strengthens and raises his powers.

Kant’s objection to Fichte’s system as being purely *formal* and logical, and inadequate to explain the *real*, inasmuch as it makes abstraction of the *material* element essential to reality, although by no means unfounded, especially as regards its later developments, will apply perhaps more to the systems of Fichte’s successors, Schelling and Hegel.

Before concluding the subject of Kant's correspondence, we append a specimen of a singular class of letters, of which he was a not infrequent recipient. The writer was an Austrian baroness, Maria von Herbert by name; she and her brother were victims of the sultry moral atmosphere characterising the decades of the last century immediately preceding the French Revolution: "Great Kant!" runs this erratic epistle, "to thee I cry as a believer to his God for help, be it for consolation or for sentence of death. The grounds assigned in thy works for continued existence are sufficient for me. Hence my flight to thee. For *this* life I found nothing—absolutely nothing—to replace my lost treasure, for I loved one who in my eyes was *everything*, so that for him only I lived. He was to me a compensation for all that I lacked, for all else seemed a toy, and all other human beings vapid and empty. I have offended this object of my affection by a lie of long standing, which I have only just confessed to him. And yet it contained naught affecting my character, for I have never had a vice to conceal. But the lie alone was enough for him, and his love vanished. He is an honourable man, and therefore he does not deny me friendship and fidelity, but that inmost feeling, which attracted us involuntarily to each other, is no more. Oh, my heart will break into a thousand pieces. Had I not read much of your writings I had certainly, even now, ended my life by violence. [The writer committed suicide six months after Kant's death.] But the conclusion I am forced to draw from your theory, that I ought not to die because of my wretched life, but to live even in my present existence, held me back. Now put yourself in my place, and give me consolation or condemnation. I have read the 'Metaphysics of Ethics,' with its categorical imperative. It does not help me. My reason forsakes me when I need it most. An answer, I conjure you, or you do not act according to your own Imperative."

Unfortunately Kant's reply to this strange communication is lost. Borowski states that Kant persistently postponed producing it when asked for by him. But even apart from the comments of a great man, the letter has its "human" interest, as has every fugitive glimpse, of one of those tragedies of which the world knows nothing, and the very actors in which pass for ever from mortal ken in a few years, one of those instances of individual suffering that the tide of time sweeps in such countless numbers into the ocean of oblivion. History, the mind's eye of the race, sees the individual only through the universal, only as the concrete mark of some universal schema; the individual as such exists only for a few other individuals and perishes, even as a name and a memory with them; thus affording us in a possibly unexpected manner an illustration of the critical doctrine that the universal alone gives reality and persistence to the particular. We know Maria von Herbert only as a background to Kant, the figurehead of a great intellectual movement.

In the midst of all this fame and homage—a fame and homage such as it has been the lot of few men to attain during their lives—trouble was preparing for Kant. His staunch friend and "protector," the minister Von Zedlitz, resigned his office in the educational department of the ministry, on July 3rd, 1788, and was replaced by a *ci-devant* cleric, Johann Christoph Wöllner, whose first act was the issue of a rescript to the ministers of the Lutheran and Calvinistic churches, warning them against the rationalistic "errors" prevalent. This was followed a few months later by an edict limiting the freedom of the press. The evils of unrestrained liberty in the expression of opinion were dwelt upon with the emphasis usual to such productions, and all writings ordered to be submitted to special bodies, whose authorisation was to be necessary, prior to publication. A committee of obscurantist clergy was thereupon appointed in Berlin for adjudication on works affecting religion. Their attention was soon turned to the founder of the critical philosophy, but the victim was so well entrenched in the favour of public opinion, that more than ordinary circumspection had to be employed in the attack. One of their number accordingly drew up a report to the King, in which the desirability of prohibiting the publication of any further works from Kant's pen was delicately suggested. This flank movement seems, for

the time at least, to have come to nothing. But the course of events assisted the obscurantists. With the progress of the French revolution the portentous charge of Jacobinism came every day more conveniently to hand as a weapon for branding all aspirations after freedom, whether social, political, or religious, till, with the general armament of 1792, the full tide of the reaction destined, in its political aspect, to culminate in the infamous Holy Alliance, set in. All who refused to anathematise every person and thing having any connection near or remote with the great convulsion became an object of suspicion, and of governmental if not social ostracism.

On September 14, 1794, an ordinance was promulgated, that all teachers, in the universities and higher seminaries, no less than the lower schools, should pledge themselves to adhere in their instruction to the letter of the orthodox creed. It happened that at this time Kant's more important works, touching directly on religious and political subjects, were being published. The authorities at Berlin, with characteristic stupidity, instead of seeing in these the natural development of principles contained in the system from the beginning, thought they detected a deliberately planned attempt, on the part of a thinker of pre-eminent influence, to undermine the *status quo*.

Kant's treatise on 'Radical Evil' was allowed to pass, on the score that only deep-thinking scholars read Kant's works. But the publication of a second essay 'On the Conflict of the Good Principle with the Evil for the mastery in Man' was prohibited as "striking at the root of Biblical theology." A remonstrance on the part of the editor of the *Berliner Monatschrift*, in which the essay was to appear, was repulsed with a curt refusal to enter further into explanations. The difficulty was obviated as concerns the ensuing treatise on 'Religion within the Boundaries of mere Reason,' by its publication at once as an independent work by Nicolovius of Königsberg—the Königsberg theological faculty, consisting for the most part of zealous friends of Kant, as may be supposed offering no objection. In the preface to this work Kant takes the opportunity of defining his views on the relations of the two faculties of philosophy and theology, and of protesting against the intrusion of a theological censorship in works written from a philosophic standpoint, and for philosophers. But the reactionaries at Berlin were inexorable. Nettled by the fact that the work last-mentioned reached a second edition by Easter, 1794, they at once set about the consideration of means for more effectually silencing the voice of the intellectual Titan. Their deliberations resulted in the issue of an Order in Council, dated the 1st of October, 1794, which, after charging Kant with undermining and defaming the fundamental doctrines of Christianity, forbade him, under pain of royal displeasure, from further expounding his views either by lecturing or writing. This order was communicated directly to Kant in person. He refrained from mentioning the circumstance even to his intimate friends, but replied, pledging himself to abstain from publicly expressing his views on any question affecting religion or theology. Among his papers a note relating to this incident was found after his death in which he says: "Recantation and abnegation of one's inmost convictions is contemptible, but silence in a case like the present is the duty of a subject. Although all that one says must be true, one is not bound to express every truth publicly." The action with regard to Kant was followed by the [lii] expulsion of all theological candidates, who refused to belie their convictions, from the faculty, and the prohibition of all professors discoursing on the doctrines contained in Kant's "Religion within the Boundaries of mere Reason." The loss of the theological lectures was severely felt by Kant, as his bodily powers were now rapidly waning, and he was extremely anxious to establish a school of liberal theologians to carry out the work he had commenced. There can be little doubt that this, combined with the painful impression produced by what Kant felt as an insult offered him in his old age by a shameless ignorance and bigotry under the ægis of the very department which, in the person of its late chief, had been the first to honour him, contributed to accelerate the progress of the symptoms of senility already appearing.

From this time he went little into society, and the following year (1795) gave up all his lectures with the exception of those on logic and metaphysics, which were reduced to one hour daily. He worked, notwithstanding, zealously at the completion of his 'Anthropology' (destined to be his last publication), and at other literary projects, the principal being the second part of the 'Metaphysics of Ethics' and the 'Theory of Jurisprudence,' which he was now annotating and revising. In 1797 the two latter works were published, and almost immediately after, for the first time, unmistakable and serious signs of decay manifested themselves in the form of an alarming illness, from which he but slowly recovered. The last term of Kant's lecturing was ushered in by a procession of all the students of the university, in holiday attire, before his house. Kant was much pleased by the present from Hufeland of his recently published 'Art of prolonging Human Life.' The book was a favourite companion ever after, and he frequently made extracts from it. The letter of Hufeland's which accompanied his gift affords one other instance of the deep reverence in which the mighty thinker was held by contemporary men of science. Another writer (at the time of some eminence) with whom Kant had epistolary intercourse at this time was Garve, whose last work, a translation of Aristotle's 'Ethics,' was dedicated to him.

With Michaelmas, 1797, Kant's academical career and public life terminated. On the 16th of the following November the reactionary and orthodox King Friedrich Wilhelm II. died, and with his death the game of the obscurantists was played out. His ministry retiring immediately after, the oppressive press regulations were rescinded. These circumstances led to the issue by Kant of an essay on the 'Conflict of the Faculties,' in which the subject of freedom of the press generally was treated.

The 'Anthropology' appeared in 1798, with a remark appended to the preface, that the author had intended issuing a similar manual of Physical Geography, but would probably be prevented by the infirmities of old age, and intimating the fear that the notes prepared for this purpose would be too illegible to admit of the labour being undertaken by any one else. Several pupils at once expressed their willingness to do their best; but Kant, averse to delegate the work to others, waited in the hope that a little rest would enable him personally to complete the task to his satisfaction. Only on finding the utter hopelessness of this, did he entrust Professor Rink with the work of preparing and editing his lectures and scattered notes on 'Physical Geography,' together with those on 'Pedagogic,' at the same time giving his pupil Jäsche permission to publish in completed form the notes he had taken of Kant's lectures on Logic. It may be mentioned that the 'Anthropology,' the last work from Kant's own pen, in spite of its appearing in an edition of 2000 copies (a larger issue than that of any previous work of Kant's), was exhausted in a few months, and another almost as large demanded. Meanwhile, twilight, forerunner of the eternal darkness soon to come, was gathering apace around the mighty intellect. Yet, even now, in his growing weakness, schemes of a great philosophical undertaking floated before the mind of Kant. It was to be entitled 'The System of Pure Philosophy in its whole Content,' and was to exhibit, among other things, the transition from Physics to Metaphysics. It is probably identical in conception with the work indicated years before, in the first edition of the 'Critique of Pure Reason,' as being in contemplation. He worked on it every day as long as his strength permitted till the year before his death. He said it was to be his *opus maximum*. It is described as intrinsically worthless, mostly consisting of repetitions of previous ideas, interspersed with passages of which it is impossible to make any sense.

In the year 1802 his memory failed him with remarkable suddenness. He was unable to recall the most familiar names of persons and places. Before long he could not converse connectedly, owing to the same cause. But though the commonest words and idioms forsook him in speaking, it was with a reluctance amounting frequently to irritability that he permitted

assistance from any one.

Kant never deceived himself as to his weakness and approaching death. Already, in 1799, he used to say to his “table-companions,” “I am old and weak, you must regard me as a child.” In 1802, although he had no special attacks, his weak state compelled him to adopt a new *régime*. He gave up his old plan of rising at five in the morning and retiring at ten at night. At first he derived benefit from the prolonged rest, but this was but temporary. He soon found a difficulty in walking or standing, and had many falls, though none of a serious nature. On such occasions he used to joke, saying that the lightness of his body prevented disastrous results. His regular walks had now been given up for some time, and the only outdoor exercise he took was an occasional quiet promenade in the Königsgarten near his house. In spite of the measured and careful way in which he was accustomed to plant his foot on the ground, he had one fall in the street, when two young ladies who were passing assisted him home and received as a *souvenir* the rose he was carrying in his hand. From this time forth he never again ventured outside the house alone. Even reading, his chief occupation, was becoming irksome to him, and for the first time in his life he acquired the habit of falling asleep in his chair. His woollen cap, coming in contact with the light on the table at his elbow, caught fire on one of these occasions.

Domestic arrangements were now given over mainly to the superintendence of friends, Kant’s former pupil, Wasianski, his most intimate companion during the last three or four years of his life, being entrusted with pecuniary matters, and made his executor.

In January 1802, Kant had felt himself obliged to make a change in the *personnel* of his household. He had to dismiss his old attendant Lampe. This worthy, owing to his connection with Kant, has obtained sufficient notoriety to warrant his detaining our attention for a moment. Formerly a soldier in the Prussian army, though a Bavarian by birth, Lampe had entered Kant’s service immediately on leaving his regiment. His behaviour at the first was such as to lead Kant to entertain a high opinion of him, and show him considerable liberality in various ways. This conduct, however, soon changed. He was continually making demands on Kant’s purse [lvi] by careless or unscrupulous expenditure, getting drunk quarrelling with the cook, stopping out late at night and otherwise rendering himself obnoxious. This altered demeanour in the course of time decided Kant to get rid of the man. But the matter seems to have been pending some years. At his advanced age Kant was naturally averse to changes of a domestic nature, particularly as he conceived he might find a difficulty in getting well suited. The result was that the affair went on till January 1802, when Kant one morning confronted Wasianski with the announcement that Lampe had behaved to him in a way he was ashamed to repeat, and that he must dismiss him without further delay. Wasianski, with little difficulty, procured another attendant, Johannes Kaufmann by name, who proved admirably adapted to the requirements of the situation, and Lampe received his *congé*, and, in consideration of his thirty years’ service, an annual pension of forty thalers for the remainder of his life, to cease at once, should he at any time enter the house, or otherwise annoy Kant. Nearly a month afterwards, a *Dienstschein* (the German form for servants’ characters) was forwarded to Kant from Lampe to be filled up. After some hesitation Kant wrote:—“He (Lampe) has proved himself faithful, but for me no longer suited.” A “peace, retrenchment and reform” now reigned in the domestic affairs of the house on the Schlossgarten, which contrasted favourably with the continual quarrels with the cook, defective management and general unsatisfactoriness of the latter part of the Lampe period. Kant’s excessive delicacy in social matters is evinced by his embarrassment at having to call his new servant Kaufmann (merchant) when Motherby and other of his “table-companions” were, or had been, engaged in commercial pursuits. So strong was his feeling on this point that he subsequently adopted the practice of calling him by his Christian name, Johannes.

In the spring of the year Kant awaited with impatience the arrival of a linnet which was

accustomed to sing on the windowsill of his study. He was a great lover of birds, and used regularly to feed the sparrows that built their nests under the eaves of the house. As the season advanced, Wasianski persuaded him to take some drives, to which he consented with some reluctance. The usual concomitant of greatness attended him on these occasions. Crowds assembled to see him come out, as soon as the carriage drove up to the door; and as long as he remained within the precincts of the town it was difficult to evade the eager curiosity of sightseers. As the winter drew near, he complained much of flatulence—a malady nothing seemed effectually to relieve. His indisposition to food also increased. The winter proved a trying one for him. He expressed himself as tired of life. He could be of no use in the world any longer, he said, and was at a loss to know what to do with himself. Strange as it may seem, the desire for travel seized him now for the first time, and the notion of gratifying it the following summer was his only consolation. Towards the end of the winter he began to be distressed by bad dreams, as well as by the painfully continuous iteration in his mind of snatches of popular melodies, and the school-boy rhymes of his childhood. He started up continually in the night, rang the bell violently for his attendant, who, in spite of his haste, frequently found his master already out of the bedroom and wandering about the house.

Not until June did Wasianski venture to take Kant into the country. No sooner had Kant entered the carriage than he expressed the wish that the journey might be a long one, but they had scarcely reached the city gate before he was wearied and asked to return. The drive was persevered in, notwithstanding, and Kant felt the benefit in the form of increased sleep and a generally quieter night. About eight drives of a similar kind were taken during this summer of 1803. He would now frequently sit abstractedly during and after meals (the times he was formerly wont to devote to social intercourse) without saying a word. He only roused if the conversation turned on some philosophical or scientific question; on any other subject he seemed unable to collect his thoughts. Wasianski used commonly to divert his attention from his ailments by propounding some problem in physics or chemistry.

Callers were frequent, indeed, far too frequent, only a small proportion of them obtaining admission to Kant's presence. When greeted with the complimentary announcement of pleasure at seeing him, Kant would reply: "In me you see a failing, worn-out and weak old man." His aversion to seeing strangers was caused by a feeling of shame at the wreck of his former self, he presented to those who came to see "the great philosopher." Wasianski tells an amusing story of a young Russian physician who succeeded in obtaining an audience. Immediately Kant entered the room he seized both his hands and covered them with kisses. Kant, who was always averse to demonstrations of this sort, was even now in his old age embarrassed by his visitor's vigorous manifestation of enthusiasm. The next day the young man again called and begged a memento. Kaufmann, the attendant, happened to light upon a corrected proof-sheet of the 'Anthropology,' lying on the ground, which he was authorised by Wasianski to give. The enthusiast, on receiving the *souvenir* and kissing it reverentially, took off his coat and waistcoat and handed them together with a thaler to the servant.

With the 8th of October, 1803, a serious change for the worse took place in Kant's condition. The crisis was brought on by a severe attack of indigestion, consequent on too much indulgence in English cheese, a diet of which Kant became inordinately fond during the last years of his life, to the exclusion of all taste for other food. From this time forward it was plain that the end was approaching. Though Wasianski with great difficulty persuaded him to give up the cheese, he became more and more averse to food of all kinds, while his mental and physical powers were palpably ebbing away fast. It is interesting to know that one of Kant's sisters attended him during this last illness and remained till his death.

We must pass over the next few months of suffering, and hasten to the closing scene, which

we give in the words of Wasianski: “Saturday, the 11th (of February, 1804), he lay with closed eyes, but apparently free from pain. I asked him whether he knew me? He could not answer, but raised his face to me for a kiss. I was deeply moved at this, and again he motioned me with his pale lips. I almost dared to think he meant it as a parting recognition of many years’ friendship and assistance. I am not aware that he ever offered one of his friends a kiss, at least I have never seen him kiss any of them, and I never before received a kiss from him myself, until a few months before his death, when he kissed me and his sister. But he seemed then as not knowing what he did in his weakness. Taking all the circumstances into consideration, I am tempted to consider this last offer as a real symbol of the friendship so soon to be ended in death. This kiss was also the last sign that he knew me. The medicine handed to him was swallowed now with difficulty, and with a noise, such as is frequent with the dying. All the symptoms of approaching death were present. It was a solemn scene—the death-bed of the great man. . . . I remained the last night by his bed. He did not sleep, his state was more one of stupor. The spoon that was reached to him he often thrust away; but in the night, about one o’clock, he motioned for it. I concluded he was thirsty, and passed him a sweetened mixture of wine and water. He moved his mouth to the glass, and as it could not retain the liquid through weakness, he held it with his hand till, with considerable difficulty, it was swallowed. He seemed to want more; I repeated my offer until he was sufficiently invigorated to say (although not clearly), ‘it is enough.’ These were his last words. Several times he thrust aside the eider-down bed-covering. The whole body and the extremities were already cold; the pulse intermitted. At a quarter to four on the morning of the 12th he laid himself flat on his back, and gave his body a regular position (as it were in preparation of his approaching death), which he maintained till the end. The pulse was perceptible neither in the hands, the feet, or the throat. I tested every part where a pulse beats, and found that only in the left hip was there one remaining, which was beating heavily, but not continuously. At ten o’clock in the morning a great change was noticeable; the eye was closed and rigid, the whiteness of death was on the lips and face, and yet not the least trace of a death-sweat was visible. Towards eleven o’clock the last moment of life seemed to be near. His sister stood at the foot of the bed, his sister’s son at the head. In order to view him well, and to observe the pulse in the hip, I kneeled by his bedside, for the bent position of his head (owing to old age), prevented my seeing his face in a standing position. I called his servant to be witness of the death of his good master. The moment had come in which the functions of life ceased. Just now his esteemed friend Herr R. R. V., whom I had had sent for, entered the room. The breath was weaker, its regularity failed, it stopped, the upper lip twitched almost imperceptibly, and a weak breath followed—the last one. The pulse beat for a few seconds, it became slower and weaker, till it could be felt no more. The mechanism stopped, and the last movement of the machine ended. His death was a cessation of life, and not a violent act of nature. The clock now struck eleven. All attempts made to discover whether a trace of life remained, were unsuccessful; everything indicated death. The feeling, which seized his friend and me, was unnameable and indescribable.” Thus passed away one of the mightiest intellects the world has ever produced.

The body of Kant was exposed to public view in the dining-room of the house. Crowds, comprising all classes of society, thronged to gaze on the dead face of the giant thinker. “All,” adds Wasianski, “hurried to avail themselves of the last opportunity of being able to say, ‘I have seen Kant.’” This lasted for some days.

Kant had, in former years, expressed his wishes as regards burial, in writing. He desired to be buried in all quietness, early in the morning, accompanied only by his “table-companions.” He would not appear, however, in his later years, to have attached any importance to this document, but to have left everything to his executor Wasianski’s discretion. In accordance with a general

desire, it was decided that the funeral should be in every sense a public one. It took place on the 28th of February at two o'clock in the afternoon, when the "notabilities," not only of the town, but of the adjacent districts, assembled to do honour to the memory of their great countryman. The students, in suitable costume, met the procession at the university. As the coffin was borne out of the house, the bells throughout the whole city began to toll. The procession, of enormous length, accompanied by a considerable portion of the city's population, proceeded on foot to the cathedral. A funeral cantata was there sung, after which followed two orations; at the close of the ceremony Kant's body being interred in the Academical vault, beside those of his predecessors in the government of the university.

The will was proved at 21,539 Prussian thalers, or about £3,230, not much, according to current notions; but a considerable sum for a German professor to leave at that time. Kant would doubtless have left more but for the liberal assistance he rendered his relations, and the amount he gave away in charity, several poor families almost entirely depending on him for support during the winter months. Every one connected with him was remembered, down to the old cook, who received over 666 thalers, and the attendant Johannes Kaufmann, who, although he had scarcely been in Kant's service two years, obtained a legacy of 250 thalers, in consideration of his attentions during the last illness. An annuity of 100 thalers was left to his childless sister, Frau Theuerin, and one of 40 thalers to old Lampe. With the exception of one or two legacies to university colleagues, in which his library of 500 volumes was included, the remainder of Kant's fortune and effects accrued in an equal division to his nephews and nieces. It is said that Kant several times altered his will, no less than four different drafts having been found among his papers. Kant's life, as will have been seen, was a life of academical routine and study, with scarcely any incident—in which one day was like another for years in succession—and hence which, inasmuch as the variety came from within rather than from outward circumstance, fails to furnish interesting material, in the ordinary sense of the words, for the biographer.

Kant's person is described as formed by nature with the impress of weakness upon it. Scarcely five feet high, with a sunken-in chest, and generally delicate frame, he had every appearance, when a young man, of being destined for a premature grave. In the opinion of many, it was only his punctilious attention to the laws of health and the regularity of his habits that preserved his life. His flaxen hair and mild blue eyes, combined with the fresh colour on his cheeks, which never forsook him to old age, to render an otherwise plain face agreeable to look upon, even in repose, while the fire and expression which lighted it up in speaking, transformed it at once into an object of absorbing interest. A remarkable feature in Kant's character is his modesty and dislike of everything approaching adulation, in which respect he offers a pleasing contrast to the obtrusive vanity and self-assertion of a Comte or a Schopenhauer. This modesty is observable in all his relations with other men, whether in personal intercourse or literature. At the same time he never failed to express his opinions with decision, however "high," in a worldly sense, were the personages in whose society he was. In the mansions of noblemen he was as outspoken as among his intimate friends. A love of animals and children was also a noteworthy characteristic of the founder of Criticism. His fondness for social intercourse has been more than once alluded to in the course of our narrative. It is said that at his table-talks he lavishly expended a wealth of ideas, which he seldom remembered afterwards, and was always too censorious to think worthy of reproduction or development. Moderation was Kant's great practical principle in life. His excessive regularity admitted of scarcely any interruptions. He rose punctually at five o'clock, drank two cups of tea or coffee, and smoked a pipe. He then worked till the hour for lecture, generally seven or eight o'clock. After the lecture he retired again to his study till nearly one, when he dressed himself for dinner, which usually occupied two or three hours. On Sundays and holidays the whole forenoon, from five till one, was spent

at his desk. The dinner-hour was as welcome to Kant as to many inferior mortals, though not so much for the sake of the meal as the rest and social intercourse it brought with it. After dining he took his constitutional walk, and on returning home, read journals and other lighter matter. The lecture for the following morning was then prepared, after which, at ten o'clock, he retired to rest.

Kant's relations to the female sex were few and not intimate. Twice in his life the question of matrimony presented itself to him in a practical light. The first time we are told it was a "young, beautiful and gentle" widow who won his affections. His scrupulous integrity and forethought led him, before proposing, to institute a rigorous investigation into his means for maintaining a wife and family in tolerable circumstances. Before he had concluded this to his satisfaction, the widow married another man. The second captivation occurred some years later. This time a young Westphalian girl, residing in Königsberg in the capacity of companion to the wife of a nobleman, took his fancy. A delay in the expression of his feelings again occurring from the same cause as before, Kant had the mortification of finding his beloved returned to her home, without having received his offer. We have reason to think that he never again contemplated marriage as a personal contingency. In any case, it is certain Kant remained to the end with philosophy only for a bride, and "theory of knowledge" for a child.

A somewhat bitter feeling was entertained at one time by certain members of the family at Kant's behaviour to them. It seems strange that, although resident in the same town, Kant never spoke to his sisters once in twenty-five years, especially as there does not appear to have been any specific cause of breach between them. Without attempting to justify what probably does not admit any justification, the fact may be explained perhaps by an unwillingness to encounter the embarrassment which many of us feel in the society of those we have been intimately connected with in early years, after having lived through an intellectual experience which constitutes, so to speak, a great gulf between them and us. It is unquestionably painful to sensitive natures, to be continually reminded of the existence of this gulf, of the *rappports* which one could wish did exist, but which do not exist, and, in all probability, never will exist again. And the feeling is naturally stronger in the case of blood-relations than in any other. I make this suggestion to ward off the imputation of pride which has been cast at Kant. To be ashamed of his relations because they were poor working people would have implied a vulgarity totally alien to the nature of a man who freely mixed with all classes. To those who can understand the feeling referred to, which does not depend on difference of social position or even on intrinsic intellectual superiority, the imputation of pride in any form will seem altogether gratuitous. Still, whatever the cause, it is to be regretted that Kant laid himself open to these imputations by his conduct, though he made amends for any personal neglect by the material support he afforded his relations. It should not be forgotten that later, and especially during the last few years of his life, as we have seen, even the personal intercourse was renewed.

Kant's tastes were least developed on the side of art. We hear little of any interest in painting, while music he regarded as quite dispensable, seldom attending concerts, and, as far as we know, never the theatre. Among the German poets, Haller, Wieland, Lessing and Bürger were his favourite. He knew little or nothing of Goethe, and of Schiller only the prose writings more or less immediately bearing on his philosophy. The above surprising circumstance is accounted for partly by the fact that the masterpieces of both poets appeared at the time he was busiest in the elaboration of his system, but this will not apply in the case of 'Faust,' which was first published in 1799, and for his supineness in neglecting to read one of the greatest poetic masterpieces, not only of Goethe or of Germany, but of any time or country, old age must be held responsible. Outside German literature his favourite authors, besides the Latin classics, were Locke, Pope, Hume, Hutcheson, Butler, among English, and Montaigne and Rousseau

among French writers. Don Quixote was also a favourite book. Of Italian literature he knew little or nothing.

In early and middle life Kant was a great billiard and l'hombre player; but in his later years games failed to afford him any amusement. He had always a great partiality for satire, a direction in which he was himself not ungifted. He said that Erasmus of Rotterdam had worked more good with his satires than all the metaphysicians that had ever lived. His contempt for the English as a nation, always great, was enhanced as he grew older by the French war and the reactionary policy of the Pitt administration generally, which he regarded as tending directly to barbarism and slavery. When reproached with hating the English, he replied that he could not give himself so much trouble with regard to them. This strong antipathy is curious, as Kant counted more than one Englishman among his intimate friends.

The somewhat wide problem of Kant's attitude in political and religious questions is simplified by bearing in mind the fact that two souls dwelt in Kant's breast, and throughout his life were struggling for supremacy. The one was a soul of reverence for authority and tradition, the other of devotion to justice and truth. In politics, while in theory fully recognising the great principle to which his century gave birth, i.e., the equal rights of man, in practice, he bowed before the *status quo* and deprecated revolutionary changes. Kant's interest in the course of the French Revolution was intense, though it is probable that even he scarcely realised the full importance of that great world-historic event. He was extremely averse to any foreign intervention in the affairs of France, and wished free play to be allowed in the working out of the great social and political problem on which the French were engaged. The basis of Kant's political theory was the separation of the legislative and executive powers in the state, and their rigid equilibration. The popular will being once embodied in the laws, the question of Monarchy or Republicanism he regarded as immaterial. This somewhat barren and unpromising conception is neither better nor worse than the rest of those current at a time when the social question was still subordinated to the political. It bears, indeed, a close resemblance to that formulated by Jean Paul Marat in his *Plan de Constitution*. The fact is, in political theory Kant's originality of genius forsook him. Like all other political theorists of the time, he was under the influence of Rousseau. Had Kant not allowed prudential motives to deter him from accepting the offer, indirectly made, of entering upon a correspondence with the Abbé Siéyès, much light would have been thrown upon his political opinions generally and especially in relation to contemporary events. Kant was an inveterate enemy of all feudalism, and a friend of all that be regarded as conducing [lxviii] to freedom of the individual. Unfortunately, he never seems to have clearly formulated to himself the conditions of individual freedom. In economical questions his views were crude in the extreme. Schopenhauer is probably right in attributing to the weakness of old age what he justly terms "a strange interweaving of mutually-implicative fallacies," namely, the *Rechtslehre*. But Kant's immoral "non-resistance" doctrine is worse and far less excusable than his economic fallacies, and must continue an everlasting stain on the memory of the great thinker. Indeed, unwilling as we may be to admit it, we can hardly absolve Kant altogether from the charge of intellectual cowardice. It is not our purpose here to add another contribution to the interminable controversy respecting the changes made in the second edition of the 'Critique;' but it may be observed that Kant's most ardent defenders in this matter, however indignantly they may repudiate the language of Schopenhauer's strictures, are bound to admit the existence of an "apologetic tone" in the amended work, thereby conceding their substantial justice.

Our allusion to this topic leads us to Kant's relation to the religious question generally. Here again we find him countenancing only too often that wretched sophistry of the 18th century, according to which the truth is only for the elect few; which could accept with complacent cynicism an arrangement whereby all religions are equally true to the devotee, equally false

to the philosopher, and equally useful to the statesman. It is true we have not a few glimpses of a nobler and more truly philosophic view of the goal of human culture; but, practically, Kant advanced but little beyond the standpoint of Voltaire and other 18th-century thinkers in this particular. Against this may be set off the fact that he never in his own person belied his convictions. He never, with all his obsequiousness to authority, for form's sake practised the rites of any *cultus*, public or private. He never attended church, or otherwise, by word or act, implied an acquiescence in the current theology. It must always remain a delicate question in how far Kant really believed in the necessity, nay, even the possibility, of a theology based solely on practical considerations, or in how far his doctrine on this point was dictated by subservience and a constitutional dread of the "subversiveness" of atheism, or any distinctively non-theological attitude. Is it credible that an acute thinker like Kant could regard, as a real foundation for the belief in any doctrine, a mere sense of its desirability, however strong, for so much and no more is contained in Kant's so-called practical necessity? For the present writer, it must be confessed, it is impossible to read the passages in which this principle is inculcated without the consciousness of a Mephistophelic smile lurking somewhere between the lines. Of course it is open to any one to call this an illusion, and yet the fact of such an effect being produced (the case in point not being singular), would seem to indicate a lack of sincerity, though possibly an unconscious one. The best, as it is certainly the most charitable explanation of Kant's attitude towards the "art of wholesome persuasion" (the phrase he uses to designate theology), is surely that above suggested, namely, that it only represents the most important phase of Kant's compromise between the conservative and revolutionary sides of his character (to wit, between the *dévot* and the *honnête homme*). What is here said does not of course refer to the basis of Kant's practical philosophy, namely, *noumenal* freedom and the categorical imperative, which there is no doubt that, rightly or wrongly, he regarded as integral elements in his system. The only point in doubt relates to the practical sanctions. Granted that Kant conceived morality to be impossible apart from the doctrines of theism and immortality, did he believe, himself, or expect others to believe, in the objective validity of a proposition, merely because the interest of morality rendered its truth desirable? This is a question which has, as far as I am aware, never yet been boldly faced by Kantian scholars. The doctrine itself has been criticised often enough, but the critics have mostly shirked the question as to whether Kant himself was, in the full sense of the word, sincere in his enunciation of it. As regards Kant's personal feelings on immortality, Jachmann relates that he once expressed an opinion to the effect that an eternal duration of consciousness would under any circumstances be a questionable boon.

It is needless to say we have only indicated in a few lines points in Kant's character and opinions that might readily have been expanded into chapters. In a general estimate of the intellectual and moral character of a thinker, it is of the first importance to bear in mind the conditions of thought in his time, and the particular aspect of the problems which confronted him. The greatest intellect is incapable of transcending the thought of its epoch; the most it can do is to develop and bring to light principles immanent therein, and this Kant did to an extent unsurpassed by any other man. In philosophy he found a narrow psychological point of view and a barren scholastic metaphysics prevalent, and from these unpromising materials educed an entirely new way of approach to the great problems of philosophy. In science he enunciated, if he did not formulate, the doctrine of evolution merely from the scientific data at his disposal, and without a hint from extraneous sources. In practical questions Kant's circumstances, and the habits of life and thought thence acquired, accustomed him to look at things from a too exclusively academical standpoint. He lacked, moreover, the breadth of view acquired by travel. In his views of subordination to constituted authority we see reflected the rector of the

university maintaining order among a host of students and subordinate dignitaries. It is, in fact, pedagogy carried into the sphere of politics. We must remember, however, in considering Kant's theories of government, that the great social problem was only just beginning to loom above the political horizon even in Kant's old age, and hence that it is not surprising if his views on economical and social questions generally should be comparatively worthless at the present day, when such questions have for more than half-a-century occupied a place of growing importance. Kant's attitude toward all great practical questions is also in large measure accounted for by the fact that the formulation of the conception of evolution as applied to human progress, the crowning achievement of 19th-century thought, dates from a period long subsequent to the great thinker's death. No hint of a science of sociology existed, and it was not given to Kant to found one, great and essential as were his contributions to its origination. Art, again, had not in the 18th century acquired the importance of a primary element in culture which it possesses to-day. Music, the art in which the æsthetic sense of the modern age is pre-eminently embodied, was little better than the afterdinner amusement of princes and nobles—a mere sensuous entertainment and nothing more. It was in the latter light that Kant viewed it, and more or less all forms of art, and hence it is not a matter for wonderment, if Art was not a thing of serious human interest to him. We now pass on to a closer consideration of Kant's position as a philosophic thinker.

KANT'S POSITION IN PHILOSOPHY

The three great epochs in modern philosophy are characterised respectively by the names of Descartes, Locke and Kant. Of these epochs, that inaugurated by Kant is the one to which the thought of our own day may be said to belong, and this in more than a special sense, for the influence of Kant is almost as deeply visible in the general current of speculation as in philosophy proper. There is, indeed, scarcely a doctrine or portion of modern science or controversy, the germ of which is not to be found in Kant, hazarded, it may be, in the form of a mere idle fancy, but unmistakably there. Kant was a Titan alike in the range and depth of his knowledge, as in his almost unequalled and certainly unsurpassed intellectual grasp. The only other thinker in the world's history who can be deemed worthy of a place beside him for this all-but unique combination of qualities is perhaps Aristotle. But the results of the Königsberg philosopher's labour have been incomparably richer than even those of the Stagirite. The works of the latter thinker may constitute an encyclopædia of ancient thought, but neither his own successors nor the ancient world generally showed any capacity for developing the hints and speculations thrown out by him. They became an oracle of appeal for his followers, of which the meaning was to be elucidated, but so far as any capacity for organic assimilation is concerned they fell upon barren ground. Ancient philosophy practically reached high-water mark in Plato and Aristotle. No real advance was made upon these thinkers. With Kant the case is different. He stands at the commencement instead of the culmination of an epoch. Though he also brought to a focus the speculation and research of his predecessors; the intellectual ferment of the 19th century lay before him, and it was in this fruitful soil that his doctrines were destined to germinate. With none but 18th-century materials he founded 19th-century thought. The Kantian system, as propounded by Kant, is too full of contradictions ever to become petrified into a code of philosophical dogma. It steadily refuses to crystallise. Many positions equally insisted upon fail to blend with one another, notwithstanding the profusion of ingenuity that has been lavished in the attempt to make them do so. This applies almost as much to the general bearings of the system as to its special points and technical details. Idealist and

realist, theist and agnostic, severally draw from Kant's writings arguments and expressions of approval for their respective standpoints; but no one has yet succeeded in placing the Kantian system as a whole beyond the reach of criticism. Hence, no two Kantians can be found to agree in its interpretation, one accentuating one line of thought and one another. The reason of this lies in the untrodden nature of the ground he was exploring.

There is no trace of Kant's ever having studied Spinoza at first hand, though he unquestionably took up the mantle of the author of the *Tractatus theologicopoliticus*, in matters concerning Biblical criticism and the free expression of opinion in theology and politics. The thinker with whom Kant was most in contact at the outset of his philosophical career was Leibnitz, especially through the medium of the Leibnitzians Wolff and Baumgarten. He subsequently entered on a thorough study of the English philosophic dynasty—Locke, Berkeley and Hume. He appears also to have had some acquaintance with the Scotch psychologists, Reid, Beattie, etc. Thus he became versed no less in the English empiricist, than in the dogmatic-metaphysical school then uppermost on the continent. It was Hume, he says, who first broke his dogmatic slumber with his statement of the causation problem. With no one is it more important than with Kant to bear in mind the sources whence the start was made on the philosophical voyage of discovery, a neglect of this rendering many elements of Kant's thought well nigh incomprehensible. It cannot be too much insisted upon that in the 'Critique' two distinct lines of philosophic thought meet, but fail to coalesce satisfactorily.

The phenomenalism and scepticism of the British school appear uppermost at one time, while at another, repudiation of Berkeleyan idealism, and protestations as to the necessary existence of a world of *things-in-themselves* reveal the former disciple of Leibnitz and Wolff. A few words on the philosophy then dominant in Germany may be desirable to facilitate an appreciation of the influences under which Kant started.

Leibnitz had sought to bridge over the Cartesian dualism between matter and spirit by his hypothesis of an intelligible world as expounded in the 'Monadology,' and by the celebrated doctrine of a "Pre-established harmony." The monads of Leibnitz may be described as spiritual atoms in contradistinction to the material atoms of the ordinary atomistic doctrine. They were infinite in number, unextended and possessed of various degrees of consciousness. These immaterial essences were thus subjects capable of receiving impressions, the differences between them consisting in the relative clearness or confusion of these impressions. A material body is an aggregate of monads, which, owing to our confused consciousness, is presented as a continuous whole. Minerals and plants consist, so to speak, of sleeping monads, whose impressions do not reach the *niveau* of consciousness. The order of impressions or presentations, i.e., the subjective order, in each monad is determined by an immanent causality; but the objective relations of the monads among each other by a purely mechanical causality, the system of pre-established harmony, effecting and regulating the correspondence of these two orders with one another. Christian Wolff, while adopting the Leibnitzian positions in the main, endeavoured to reconcile them with the older Aristotelian system of the schools, and to reduce their somewhat confused statement to scholastic form and precision. This endeavour, if successful in its immediate object, was so at the sacrifice of all that gave to the system its plausibility and attractiveness in the hands of its author. Wolff is nevertheless saved from oblivion by Kant's employment of his terminology and classification. Wolff divided philosophy into Ontology, or the science of being in general; Psychology, or the science of the soul as a simple substance; Cosmology, or the science of the material universe; and Theology, or the science of the existence and attributes of the Deity. The traces of this division in the Transcendental Dialectic are apparent on its very surface.

While Wolff, Baumgarten and their disciples in Germany were thus engaged in developing

the principles and following the abstract and dogmatic method propounded by Descartes, on the lines of Leibnitz (Spinoza's monism remaining a dead letter to his immediate successors no less than his contemporaries, except for an occasional polemic) another and very different view was being worked out in this country. Hobbes and Locke had successfully applied the inductive method laid down by Bacon to the problems of empirical psychology, and more than hinted at the nescience of human knowledge of all save the phenomena immediately present in consciousness. Berkeley had carried these principles to their logical issue on the one side, in denying a matter other than the qualities known to us, and the existence of which is equivalent to their perception by a mind; while Hume had developed the equally logical thesis on the other side that the word "mind" itself merely denoted a succession of impressions and ideas, and had thence argued that our notion of causality is solely the result of habit, and therefore limited in its application to experience.

In France the great materialist and sensationalist school held sway, and its echoes probably reached the shores of the Baltic. The reason Kant makes little direct allusion to it, is not unlikely to be that he regarded it as an extreme one-sided off-shoot of Lockeian empiricism. The German *Aufklärung* of Basedow, Reimarus, etc., affected the current of philosophy proper but slightly. Two fundamental lines of thought were thus at this time visible—the German dogmatic-metaphysical, and the English empirist-sceptical, with its dogmatic pendant, the French materialist. These two principal lines met in Kant, and their respective doctrines were destined to be resolved in his critical crucible. Idealism and Materialism, supposed to be irreconcilable, were to be exhibited as merely diverse aspects of one problem, the solution of which, if to be found at all, must be sought for in a higher synthesis. Their respective pretensions to "pluck out the heart" of the mystery of existence were to be disposed of; dogmatism of every kind was to receive its death-blow, and the first real attempt (because the first which adequately recognised the strength of its position) be made to grapple with philosophic scepticism. Kant's system is comprised in three treatises, the 'Critique of the Pure Reason,' the 'Critique of the Practical Reason,' and the 'Critique of the Faculty of Judgment'—the first of these dealing with the origin of Knowledge, the second with the criterion of Ethics, and the third with the data of *Æsthetics*. The fundamental task of the 'Critique of the Pure Reason,' immeasurably the most important of the three, is to reduce conscious experience to its elements. It is in no sense intended as a treatise on psychology. Psychology deals with the objects or phenomena given in internal experience and their relations, just as the natural sciences deal with the objects or phenomena given in external experience and *their* relations. The purpose of the branch of philosophy founded by Kant, and of which the 'Critique' is the organon, is to inquire into the conditions of consciousness, and not to analyse its content, whether external or internal. He termed it *Erkenntnisstheorie*, or "Theory of knowledge," its problem being to discover how knowledge is possible? Psychology started from consciousness as a given fact, without inquiring as to its genesis. The old dogmatic metaphysicians applied its conceptions as they listed without, no less than within, the region of possible experience. Kant cried, "hold!"—the first duty of philosophy is to inquire at once into the credentials of experience, and of the conceptions that profess to transcend it. The question, as propounded by him, was accordingly, "How are synthetic propositions *à priori* possible?" His own solution of this momentous question, which has revolutionised the whole of philosophy, is contained in the 'Critique.'

We have more than once spoken of Kant's "system," though it must be remembered that Kant formulated no system in the old sense of the word, namely, as implying a body of doctrines concerning speculative questions in general. This is acknowledged under the title of the *Prolegomena*. Kant claimed to have founded and elaborated the science of Criticism, as a special philosophic discipline (to use the old expression), which was to constitute the

propædeutic to every other philosophic discipline, but not to have attempted a definite solution of the problems of philosophy. The Kantian system, then, is one of criticism. It is concerned with the elements and modes of cognition, the synthesis of which we term experience, or in other words it is a critical investigation into the primary conditions of our knowledge. We may remark that there is also another and a secondary sense in which Kant's system is critical. As Dr. Vaihinger observes, "Kant's 'Critique,' more than any other work arose out of polemic, and hence consists in such." As a natural consequence, any explanation of the 'Critique' must largely occupy itself in tracing each doctrine and discussion to its historical source. But to a right understanding of Kant, it is not only necessary to trace the pedigree of every principle; it is also necessary to follow its subsequent development in the post-Kantian philosophy. The elementary constituent of every post-Kantian system is to be found in the 'Critique,' in the form of some principle implicitly or explicitly given, and this is in many cases first seen in its full bearings in the system into which it developed.

It does not lie within the scope of the present introduction to add one more to the many condensed expositions of the 'Critique' already before the world. At the same time, a brief notice of one or two of the leading points in dispute, together with a rather more extended examination of one of its fundamental principles, may not be out of place, or without an interest for the student of Kant. It is of the utmost importance to remember that "knowledge" or "experience," in a critical sense, does not mean knowledge or experience in the individual *quâ* individual, which is a matter concerning empirical psychology; and that Kant's object is not to trace the origin and progress of knowledge or experience in the individual mind, but to discover the elements which go to make an experience in general,—or in other words, objectivity itself—possible, without which no such thing as individual experience could exist at all, but yet which lie concealed in individual experience.

Kant's main question may be split up into two: I. How is pure Reason possible? II. How is experience possible? These questions severally recall the dogmatic and empirical sides of Kant's philosophic training. Kant had to show the dogmatists that the possibility of *à priori* cognition presupposed experience. He had to show the empiricists that an *à priori* element lay concealed in experience itself. Experience and Reason, according to Kant, mutually condition one another. The inchoate matter of feeling receives its form from the *à priori* Reason and the world of conscious experience arises. True cognition *à priori* implies experience, while experience, in so far as it is necessary and universal (in other words, objectively valid), implies cognition *à priori*. Hence Kant's answer to the above question was, pure Reason is possible in and through experience, and experience is possible by means of a system of pure conceptions, conditioned by an *à priori* unity, or, in other words, through pure Reason.

The respective positions of Dogmatism, Empiricism and Criticism, with regard to the problem of the origin of knowledge, may be expressed in terms of the old scholastic controversy. Dogmatism assumed the forms of a *consciousness in general* as obtaining apart from and independently of the particular consciousness of the individual (the extreme realist position, *universalia ante res*). Psychological Empiricism denied these forms any standing, otherwise than as abstract notions derived from individual experience of particulars (the extreme nominalist position, *universalia post res*). Criticism re-affirmed the universal forms of conscious experience in general, apart from the particular consciousness of the individual, but only, in and with reference to, some such individual consciousness (*universalia in rebus*). The above affords us an illustration of how old and apparently barren controversies reappear in the evolution of thought, so metamorphosed, and with such an infinitely richer content, as to be hardly recognisable.

Kant's statement of the theory of knowledge, it is scarcely necessary to remind the reader,

falls into three divisions. The first, the transcendental *Æsthetic*, deals with the Sensibility, the receptive element, which intuites the as yet blind matter of feeling under the forms of space and time; the second, the transcendental *Analytic*, treats of the Understanding, the active element, which contributes to the material furnished by sense its own categories or conceptions; the third, the transcendental *Dialectic*, is concerned with Pure Reason, which through its ideas extends the conditioned, actual experience attained by means of the former, unconditionally.

A good instance of a typical English misconception of Kant is to be found in Mr. Herbert Spencer's 'First Principles' (p. 50), where an attempt is made to crush Kant by attributing to him an inconsequence hardly possible with the merest tyro in philosophic thought. "If," says Mr. Spencer, "space and time are the conditions under which we think, then when we think of space and time themselves, our thoughts must be unconditioned; and if there can be unconditioned thoughts, what becomes of the theory?" Now, it so happens that Kant did not claim space and time as conditions of thought, but of sensuous intuition. Thought, moreover, in the sense of the passage quoted, namely, empirical reproductive thought, lies altogether outside the range of Kant's inquiry, which is concerned with the genetic origin of cognition, and not with its empirical character. Space and time, he might have answered, we can, indeed, only think of reproductively as abstractions; it is only thus that they can become objects of empirical thought. But this does not touch the critical position. The possibility of their reproduction *in* experience in the form of abstract notions does not invalidate the claim for them to be *à priori* conditions of the possibility of the original *productive* synthesis of experience. We have here an instance of how the most eminent representatives of the typical English school beat the air in attempting to combat Kant.

Much has been written on the relation of the "Understanding" to the "Reason," in the critical philosophy. There is no doubt that the difference as conceived by Kant was more one of function than of structure, although his utterances on this point are by no means always clear or even consistent. As Schopenhauer points out, there are passages intended to be elucidatory in which the distinction sought to be established is so wiredrawn as to be hardly intelligible. The function of the understanding is out of perceptions to construct cognitions or experience. This it effects by imposing upon them its pure conceptions or categories, or, in Kant's language, "subsuming" the forms containing the perceptions (*viz.*, space and time) under these. Kant appears at times to overlook the fact that mere perception itself involves the category. Perception, he says, which is purely subjective, merely presupposes the primitive unity of the consciousness, together with the laws of the connection of perceptions therein. Knowledge, cognition or experience, on the contrary, which passes beyond the mere subjective connection of the perceptions, ascribing objective reality and a definite objective order to the presentations contained in them, presupposes the categories. The essence of objectivity is, in fact, space, and the dynamic categories. The function of the "Ideas of the Reason" is, according to Kant, "to posit the unconditioned possible to the conditioned actual." But the realm of the Pure Reason, in Kant's sense, is purely "regulative." It is a determination of the pure conceptions of the understanding in a particular manner, the objective validity of which, and of the propositions based upon it, is assumed on "practical" grounds. The "Ideas," in short, are not constitutive of experience. Their reality is not implied in the nature of cognition in general, like the categories or the pure forms of space and time. They are outworks, as it were, of the main edifice of the theory of knowledge, giving symmetry, perhaps, to the form the structure assumed in Kant's hands, but hardly indispensable to it even in his case.

The great battleground in the critical philosophy is unquestionably the problem of the relation between the Thing-in-itself and the phenomenon present in consciousness. That Kant himself is by no means clear as to his own position in the matter is evident. On this ground the principles

of dogmatism and scepticism have, in fact, contended for possession of the critical philosophy, both in the person of the Königsberg sage himself and his successors. A clear and correct view of the significance of the *Ding-an-sich* in Kant's system would go a long way toward settling all other questions with regard to it. The *noumenon*, or thing-in-itself, is the point of contact between "theory of knowledge" and ontology. In the critical philosophy it appears in three forms; I. as the unconditioned object of the internal sense; II. as the unconditioned object of the external sense; and III. as the unconditioned object in general, the *ens realissimum* or Absolute. In briefly considering these several aspects of the Kantian *Ding-an-sich*, we will take the second and third in order first, a procedure the desirability of which will become apparent in the course of our investigation.

In the transcendental *Æsthetic*, by reducing space and time to the subjective forms of the Sensibility, Kant logically carried out the position taken up, but imperfectly developed, by Berkeley, that all perception is just as much affection of a conscious subject as the sensations of pleasure and pain, and just as little entitled to be regarded as obtaining outside consciousness. But at this point Kant diverged from Berkeley. Besides contending that the forms of experience in general (as opposed to that merely referable to the individual mind) namely, space and time, together with the categories, give external reality to the presentation in the only sense in which we understand the expression, he assumed, somewhat inconsequently, the existence of a world of unknown and unknowable things-in-themselves, as giving rise to the material element in the affections of sense. The conception of objects as *phenomena* supposes the existence of things-in-themselves, or *noumena*. Without the reference of the empirical object to a non-empirical object—of the appearance to a thing of which it is the appearance—the word phenomenon itself would lose all meaning, there would be nothing, philosophically speaking, to distinguish it from sheer illusion.* That which gives material as opposed to formal reality to the empirical object is its necessary reference to a thing or object *in itself*. We may term this non-empirical object of the outer sense the cosmological *thing-in-itself*, to distinguish it from the two other forms in which the thing-in-itself appears in Kant, and which may be characterised respectively as the psychological and the theological thing-in-itself. It is worthy of note that the cosmological thing-in-itself is frequently spoken of as plural by Kant. Phenomena are said to imply things-in-themselves, the obvious inference being that to each empirical object there corresponds a non-empirical. Now as will be seen this reference to individuation and number, which, as implying space, time and the category of quantity, should, on Kant's principles, apply exclusively to phenomena, to the unknown ground outside phenomena, is an obvious inconsequence. Individuation and plurality imply limitation in time, or space, or both. Can we ascribe such a glaring inconsistency to a mere carelessness of language? The more probable explanation seems to the present writer to be that we have here an indication of the fact that Kant was still haunted, even in his critical days, by the Leibnitz-Wolffian monads, and that in the cosmological things-in-themselves, the *noumena* which affect the external sense, we may see a survival of the Monadology. Kant doubtless disengaged himself with difficulty from his old philosophical associations, a circumstance which here, as elsewhere, prevented him from clearly grasping the import of his own doctrines. But, whatever the explanation, the fact remains that Kant never fully realised that the exclusive subjectivity of space and time, the sources of individuation, must necessarily preclude the assumption of individuation in the *noumenon*.

A further inconsistency is traceable in Kant's doctrine of an objective world of *noumena*. The noumenal object is continually referred to as the *cause* of our sense-presentations, a transcendent application of the category of cause and effect, hardly less reprehensible on critical principles than the one above mentioned. Kant's subjectivism is at times too strong to admit of any *via media* between the dualism implied in this conception and a thoroughgoing illusionism;

for the *via media* of Monism was not for him, but his successors. As a consequence, whenever he thinks it is landing him in the quicksands of absolute illusion, he clutches desperately at this problematical straw of an objective world of things-in-themselves. Throughout the whole system the struggle between the two points of view—phenomenalism and dogmatism—is maintained.

The thing-in-itself, as the ideal of the Reason, stands at the opposite pole of the ‘Critique’ to the thing-in-itself as transcendental object. It is admittedly not an assumption necessitated by the nature of cognition in general, but a “mere idea.” Though the culminating “idea” of the Pure Reason, it is no more than an “idea.” The cosmological things-in-themselves, on the other hand, only appear in the domain of the Reason, indirectly, viz., as affording a basis for the idea of freedom, the antinomies furnishing a kind of *reductio ad absurdum* of the claims of nature to be more than empirically valid. In its objective or cosmological aspect, the *noumenon* appears as an infinite plurality; in its Ideal aspect as an infinite unity. If in the one we have an echo of the Leibnitz-Wolffian monads, in the other we are recalled to the One Substance of Spinoza. It is undeniable that both points of view are alike remnants of the old transcendent or dogmatic metaphysics. Notwithstanding that Kant’s acquaintance with the system of Spinoza was merely secondhand and superficial, the first two of the following passages are scarcely distinguishable from Spinozism. Kant defines the Ideal object as a “transcendental substratum” lying “at the foundation of the complete determination of things—a substratum which is to form the fund from which all possible predicates of things are to be supplied,” in short, as an “ideal of a sum total of all reality.” “In this view,” continues Kant, “negations are nothing but *limitations*—a term which could not with propriety be applied to them if the unlimited (the all) did not form the true basis of our conception” “The conception of an *ens realissimum*,” says Kant, “is the conception of an individual being, inasmuch as it is determined by that predicate of all possible predicates which indicates and belongs to *being*.” The course of the exposition shows a progressive development on the theological side, till we arrive at the theistic idea in its complete form. “We proceed to hypostasise this idea of the sum total of all reality, by changing the *distributive* unity of the empirical exercise of the understanding into the collective unity of an empirical whole, a dialectical illusion, and by cogitating the whole or sum of experience as an individual thing, which stands at the head of the possibility of all things, the real conditions of whose determination it presents”.

In Kant’s exposition, the conception of a sum total of reality mingles itself in a rather vague manner with that of a first cause. In a note to the passage last quoted, Kant adds: “This ideal of the *ens realissimum*, although merely a mental representation, is first *objectivised*, that is, has an objective existence attributed to it, then *hypostasised*, and finally, by the natural progress of the Reason, *personified*, as we shall show presently. For the regulative unity of experience is not based upon phenomena themselves, but upon the connection of the variety of phenomena by the understanding, and a *consciousness*, and thus the unity of the supreme reality seems to reside in a Supreme Understanding in a *conscious intelligence*”. Kant then proceeds to demolish the traditional arguments for the existence of a Supreme Being, which start from the assumed validity of these conditions of experience outside the range of experience, in other words, from their transcendent application. The theistic idea, being thus deprived of all dogmatic character and objective reality, is reduced to the mere conception or ideal for the regulation of the theoretical Reason in its investigations into Nature, which is to be regarded *as though* it were the work of a Supreme Understanding and Will; and of the Practical Reason in life, which is to be conceived *as though* it were under the superintendence of an all-wise and all-just Ruler. As to the nature and extent of the debt Kant claims theology to be under for this attenuation of its fundamental doctrine, theologians may be left to decide.

The *noumenon*, under all the forms in which it appears in Kant, is characterised by certain unmistakable features. It is throughout defined as an intelligible object, that is, one which, if it is to be cognised at all, must be so, in and through the intellect without any sensuous medium. It is further described as a boundary conception, the analogy being drawn from geometry. Just as the point, line and superficies cannot be constructed *in* actual space, because they severally exclude in definition one or more of the dimensions of space, but at the same time serve as boundaries *of* actual space; so the *thing-in-itself*, although it can never be given *in* any experience, external or internal, inasmuch as it excludes by its definition all the predicates drawn from experience, serves, nevertheless, to mark the boundaries *of* experience, to indicate the unknown quantity, the X., which experience presupposes.

An objection has been raised and is much insisted upon by Ueberweg... that Kant in excluding the formal conditions of experience from the *thing-in-itself*, trenches in a negative sense on the incognisability of the latter. In asserting, it is said, that space and time, inasmuch as they are the forms of our sensibility, *cannot* obtain in objects as *things-in-themselves*, he is assuming a dogmatic attitude with regard to it. To this we would observe that, admitting the apodictic phraseology used, negative though it be, to be technically inconsequent, the inconsequence is not more than technical. Kant's aim is to show that we have no grounds for ascribing any of the qualities of the sense or phenomenal world to the intelligible or noumenal world. Granting him to have been successful in this, all that the objection amounts to is that he failed to use language sufficiently guarded to admit the technical contingency that among all possible contradictory modes of existence this one is included. But inasmuch as this possibility is only as one against infinity, the error can have no material significance whatever. It is nevertheless curious that Kant should not have recognised it, as he is sponsor for "possibilities" of this nature when hard-pressed on the practical side of his philosophy.

It must be apparent to every student of the 'Critique' that the three aspects of the *noumenon*, the three sets of *noumena*, as they have been called, altogether fail to harmonise with one another. Their mutual relations are throughout completely undetermined. The connection of the cosmological with the psychological *thing-in-itself*, and of either with the ideal *thing-in-itself*, the *Ens realissimum*, or Absolute, is nowhere indicated. Are we to understand Kant as really implying a quantitative or qualitative distinction, or both, or are the differences merely due to the diverse points of view from which he is regarding one conception? These are questions which may occupy the student of Kant for some time to come. That Kant was, in the modern sense of the word, a Monist, is however, extremely improbable, the passages sometimes supposed to show a monistic tendency being more naturally interpretable otherwise. It is worthy of note that, while transcendental reality is asserted of the constitutive aspects of the *thing-in-itself*, i.e. the psychological and cosmological *noumena*—although all knowledge of this reality is denied; with the purely regulative aspect (i.e. ideal of the Reason) conversely, the reality is denied, although its nature as a mere idea is asserted to be fully determinable. In the one case the stress is laid on the *reality*, in the other on the *determinability*, in accordance with the supposed requirements of the Reason. The "ideas" all have a practical reference, are *maxims* rather than *principles*, and as such do not touch the real import of the *thing-in-itself* as a theoretic datum in the critical philosophy. While the cosmological and psychological *noumena* form an integral element in the structure of the 'Critique,' the theological Absolute is merely the crowning of the edifice. Immortality, Freedom, God take their rise in the fact that the practical Reason may assume what it likes respecting that of which the Pure Reason asserts the bare predicate of existence and nothing more. A consistent carrying out of the idealistic and sceptical element contained in Kant's thought would have led to a declaration of our complete nescience, even of the bare existence of anything beyond our own presentations and thoughts, and the laws of their

unity in consciousness. But Kant's purpose was other than that of restating empiricism; only the enormous mass of raw material he had to deal with rendered consistency impracticable. He discovered the [xc] ore, forged the tools, and indicated the process by which it was to be worked, but the complete "opening up" of the mine exceeded the powers of its discoverer, even though he was a Kant.

The furthest point we reach on critical principles in our investigation into the sources of knowledge is the transcendental subject at its basis. The original synthetic unity of consciousness is to be distinguished from the quantitative categorical unity (which is opposed to plurality and totality), inasmuch as it is from the former that the categories themselves are deduced. The assumption of a soul or thinking principle in the individual is only due to the dialectical illusion by which the original synthetic unity is hypostasised. The "internal sense" only shows us ourselves as we *appear*, not as we *are*. The *ego* in itself can never be known, but only its states. Hence both the idealist and materialist hypotheses are alike inadmissible. The reduction of the extended or material world to a mere mode of the unextended or ideal world is as fallacious as the converse procedure. Both orders of phenomena, the inner and the outer, are equally fundamental data of experience, incapable of any legitimate reduction into terms of one another. Feelings, thoughts and volitions are as much *phenomena* of experience as the presentations called external. But the *thought* or *feeling* is no more identical with *that which has* the thought or feeling than is the outward presentation. What it is which thinks, feels, perceives, etc., we can never cognise. The material or objective order, and the immaterial or subjective order remain irreducible factors of conscious experience or cognition in all respects but one—they equally presuppose a self-centred fact to which they are, in the last resort, referable. This fact of *I-ness* or *Egoition* is thus the primary condition of all possible experience. It must be distinguished from the synthetic unity which is merely formal, as well as from the internal sense. "The subject of the categories cannot therefore, for the very reason that it cogitates these, frame any conception of itself as an object of the categories; for to cogitate these it must lie at the foundation of its own pure self-consciousness—the very thing that it wishes to explain and describe. In like manner, the subject in which the representation of time has its basis cannot determine, for this very reason, its own existence in time". Notwithstanding this, the postulate at the foundation of the forms of sensibility and the categories is given immediately in consciousness as, to use Kant's expression, "a feeling of an existence without the least conception." I am conscious not of *what* I am, but *that* I am, as the seat of phenomenalisation, or, more clearly, that something fundamentally the same as this "I" is that in and for which alone phenomenalisation can take place. In the indication of this fact we see the germs of the Monism of modern thought; but it remains a germ. The most (apparently) monistic passage in Kant occurs in the section in the paralogisms where Kant is discussing the community between the subjective and the objective orders, or, in terms of the old psychological formula of the "soul with the body." The difficulty, he observes, consists in the supposed heterogeneity of the two orders; "inasmuch as the formal intuition of the one is time, and that of the other, space also." "But if we consider," he adds, "that both kinds of objects do not differ internally, but only in so far as the one *appears* externally to the other, consequently that what lies at the basis of phenomena, as a thing-in-itself, may not be heterogeneous, this difficulty disappears." Here we certainly seem to have indications of a monistic point of view, but from the context, and especially what follows relative to a "community of substances," it is evident that qualitative, not quantitative homogeneity is meant; in other words, it is evident at once that the psychological formulæ still retain their hold on Kant, and that the spell of the Leibnitzian monads has not been dissolved.

The only point of community, then, between the internal and external orders of phenomena lies, if the foregoing be admitted, in their both being conditioned by an *ego* under the form of

time. This is the central condition of phenomenalisation. It is plain that this *foundation* of all consciousness, whether of subject or object, cannot be identified with either “mind” or “matter,” both of which are terms designating sets of phenomena *in* consciousness. The old mode of stating the problem as to the possibility of two dissimilar substances, soul and body, thought and extension, furnishing the unity of man and of consciousness, ceases to have any meaning when we recognise them to be not substances, but mere phenomena of *that which becomes conscious*, i.e. the primal condition of the synthesis of experience. To the question, whether there is such a thing as matter without mind, or mind without matter, the answer is, matter is a name for a class of feelings connected by certain categories under the form of *space* as well as time; mind is a name for another class of feelings connected by those categories under the form of *time* alone; that each class constitutes an integral element in the whole Conscious Experience, and hence that mind or soul (a thinking subject) apart from material conditions, is philosophically as absurd a notion as matter (an extended object) apart from its perception in a consciousness, either hypothesis involving self-contradictory assumptions. *That which becomes conscious*, in other words, the *possibility of a consciousness in general*, regarded *materialiter*, must be genetically prior to the individual consciousness and the formal conditions at its foundation. The principle in question, considered *in itself*, in short, must be independent [xciii] of space, time and the categories, with the formal unity at their basis; in other words, independent of individuation whether of subject or object. It is in fact the pure subject or subject proper, in contradistinction to the pseudo-subject of psychology which is really object—the “object of the internal sense,” to use Kant’s language—although Kant himself in the main confounds it with the latter. It will be seen, therefore, that on this view, Kant’s transcendental object disappears, as based at bottom on the old dualist fallacy so severely criticised by him on other occasions; the abstract *ens realissimum* ceases to have any significance in a philosophical connection, while the transcendental subject itself loses the psychological character usually assigned to it by Kant, owing to his inability to free himself from the psychological method. We thus arrive at a pure Monism distinct alike from Spiritualism, Materialism and Dualism.

It is becoming more and more recognised by philosophers and philosophic *savants*, that no justifiable break can be made in our interpretation of objective phenomena; that just as we infer a mind in the case of other men and the higher animals (interpreting the phenomena in terms of our own consciousness), so we must infer all matter whatever to involve a mental side analogous in kind to, however differing in degree from, our own consciousness. The late Professor Clifford, the bestknown exponent of the view in question in this country (a view more or less implied in all the post-Kantian systems of Germany, especially in those of Schopenhauer and Hartmann), writes, “we may assume that the quasimental fact, which goes along with the motion of every particle of matter, is of such inconceivable simplicity as compared with our own mental fact, our consciousness, as the motion of a molecule of matter is of inconceivable simplicity when compared with motion in our brain” (Essay on “Body and Mind”). This mode of statement is unimpeachable as far as it goes, expressing, as it does, a logical consequence of the doctrine of evolution; but when the thesis is put forward (as is done by Professor Clifford) in the sense of an ontology, it is open to the obvious objection that it is a generalisation respecting phenomena alone, and, although embracing the totality of phenomena within its pale, does not deal with “things-in-themselves.” Like all pluralistic pseudo-ontologies it assumes the conditions of experience, space, time and individuation, i.e. the very points an ontology (assuming such to be possible) ought to explain, and is thus no ontology at all. It is obvious that an ultimate ontological postulate must lie outside the differentiation of subject and object with the conditions involved therein. The monistic view forces us to regard the whole of nature, or the external world, in other words, matter in all its forms, from inorganic upwards, as simply a

transfigured representation in the complex forms of our sensuous consciousness of the momenta of the one transcendental fact or thing-in-itself at its basis, of which, in the words of Kant, we have “the feeling of an existence without the least conception.” This transfigured sense-world, it may be observed, is re-transfigured in abstract thought in the shape of the generalisations of science and philosophy. Nature, if the foregoing be admitted, with [xcv] its great evolutionary stages, the atom, the molecule, the cell, the organism, is simply the phenomenised unfolding of a timeless transcendental process. The difficulty of apprehending this is owing to the impossibility of placing ourselves, fixed in a highly complex consciousness, at the subjective standpoint of lower forms of being. We cannot represent to ourselves that the externality or world present to the quasi-consciousness of the zoophyte or crustacean is something *toto-cælo* different from our world in which we cognise the zoophyte or the crustacean. The whole scale of nature is unrolled before us as object, but as object only—as subject-object our knowledge of it is rigorously bounded by our own place in the scale. As an individual then, on the one side a synthesis of thoughts, feelings and volitions, and on the other, of cells, tissues and organs, I am a phenomenon amongst phenomena, but that which feels, thinks, cognises, etc., whether in me or the monad or the molecule, is transcendently indistinguishable from the incognisable if intuitable *self* constituting the *material* postulate at the basis of my (our) own *formal* self-consciousness.

Fichte was the first among Kant’s followers to show that his master’s teaching, when logically carried out, led to a transcendental Monism of this description; but it forms the basis of all the more important post-Kantian philosophies of Germany. Professor Adamson observes, relative to Kant’s position as a thinker: “In the Kantian system, the problems of speculation were taken up in the form presented by the antecedent popular philosophy—a form essentially limited in scope—and it was therefore matter of some difficulty to discern the real import of the new treatment to which they were subjected. One may even say that from Kant himself the significance of much of his work was concealed by the limited and partial character of the questions which presented themselves to him as the essential problems of speculative inquiry. In the critical philosophy can be traced the somewhat narrow psychological method characteristic of modern thought to the larger view of speculative problems which recalls the work of the Greek thinkers. The analysis of human knowledge, which had been for Locke and his successors the sole function of philosophy, appears in the critical system as part, though an essential part, of the more comprehensive inquiry dealing with the whole ground of human interests, to which only the title of philosophy by right belongs”

To Fichte, as we have said, undoubtedly attaches the credit of the first attempt to construct, on the basis of criticism, a philosophy proper—in fact to reduce criticism to coherence and system. Neither his idealistic terminology and mode of exposition, nor the mystical and extravagant tendencies of the later developments of his system should blind us to this fact or to the general soundness of his starting-point. Schelling’s subject-object or Absolute is, at bottom, and apart from mystical terminology, nothing but the same principle otherwise stated, the stress being laid on the indifference between subject and object of the *prius* of reality—of that which constitutes the *possibility of consciousness*. The method and terminology originated by Fichte, and carried out in a modified form by Schelling, reached its culmination in Hegel, who may be said to have anticipated in metaphysical guise the doctrine of evolution. The dialectical method which, though discovered by Fichte, was perfected as regards expression by Hegel is contained in principle in the table of the categories. The *noumenal* fact constituting the essence of conscious experience consists with Hegel in the *process* of the categories themselves. “The *idee* is essentially *process*, because its identity is only the absoluteness and freedom of the conception, in so far as it is absolute negativity and therefore dialectic” (*Encyclopædie*

der Philosophischen Wissenschaften). Hegel, in seizing the *formal* element at the root of experience, lets fall the *material*, and hence some have failed to distinguish his philosophy from an Absolute Illusionism.

The systems of which Hegel's is the culmination are founded essentially on the *transcendental analytic* and *dialectic*. Side by side with the dialectical, two other schools have coexisted in Germany equally claiming the parentage of Kant, but founding more especially upon the *transcendental æsthetic*. Rejecting the dialectical method, they endeavour to obtain speculative results by induction. Their most prominent representatives are Schopenhauer, Hartmann and Bahnsen on the one side, and Herbart, Beneke and Lotze on the other.

Schopenhauer, in identifying the metaphysical principle at the basis of the Conscious, with Will, holds fast the Kantian antithesis of *noumenon* and *phenomenon*. The pure self-existence posited in every conscious act is opposed to its realisation as phenomenon of consciousness, but this opposition cannot be said to involve dualism as the Hegelians contend. The world as *will* and the world as *presentation*, in other words, the world as thing-in-itself, and the world as appearance are only diverse aspects of the same fundamental fact. The identification of the thing-in-itself with the function termed Will may be open to criticism, but Schopenhauer's Monism can hardly be called in question. An attempt to obliterate the distinction between the content of consciousness and the principle it presupposes can only be completely successful at the cost of the whole critical position, and by a relapse into the crude Materialism or Idealism of the last century, which would make either "matter" or "mind" itself absolute.

The most distinguished modern representative of the [xcviii] Pessimist doctrine, Eduard von Hartmann, defines the fact at the foundation of the reality given in consciousness as "the Unconscious." This negative designation he employs to discountenance the vulgar anthropomorphic confusion by which consciousness is attributed to the Absolute it implies (*Philosophie des Unbewussten*). Consciousness is a contradiction in any other than a phenomenal sense. A peculiarity of Hartmann's metaphysics is his rehabilitation of the Kantian things-in-themselves, which he conceives not to be inconsistent with a monistic postulate. In opposition to Schopenhauer he maintains *will* to be impossible apart from *presentation*, hence a noumenal *will* implies a noumenal *presentation* as its correlate. Space, time and the individuation deducible from them are generated unconsciously, or extraconsciously, and in this way a world of things-in-themselves arises, which becomes transformed in consciousness into the world of phenomena with its determinate forms. Only thus, according to Hartmann, can individuation of consciousness be explained. The objective thing-in-itself is thus, on Hartmann's principles, not an ultimate but a derivative fact. The objective *thing* exists *in itself* in so far as it is independent of consciousness, but not absolutely.

Herbart (1776–1840), the founder of the second line of thought mentioned, represents a partial reaction to a dogmatic standpoint. Being is assumed as coincident with appearance, in so far that every quality in the phenomenon indicates a corresponding thing-in-itself. This, as will be seen, is simply the re-introduction of the Kantian cosmological *noumena* and *à fortiori* of the Leibnitzian monadology in a slightly altered form. Not only every thing but every quality of the sense-world has a noumenal correlate according to Herbart. The monistic indications in Kant are lost in a maze of Leibnitzian pluralism based upon mathematical formulæ. Herbart's philosophy is not unjustly defined by Dühring (*Geschichte der Philosophie*), as based on the principle of "making a mistake in order to excuse it by another mistake." Most of Herbart's followers (e.g. Beneke) have confined themselves to psychology, and it is noteworthy that, whereas in the case of Hermann Lotze a wider range is attempted, the pluralist basis has been abandoned as untenable.

The extent to which the modern scientific materialist school is indebted to Kant may be seen

from Lange's great work. Professor Wundt remarks ('Mind,' vol. ii. p. 502) of its doctrines: "In them a strictly mechanical and atomistic theory of the universe is connected with the idea that the atoms possess internal states, and that these internal states in combination constitute what we call physical phenomena. Such a theory is evidently not materialism, but may be more fitly designated "Monism," as by Haeckel, to distinguish it from the Dualism in vogue." This is of course closely analogous to the "mind-stuff" theory of Clifford, and the same criticism will apply to it, namely, that it leaves the fundamental difficulty untouched, while professing to solve it. It assumes a phenomenal world as given, without attempting to deduce it from any principle, such as "theory of knowledge" demands. The designation "Monism" is therefore hardly applicable.

The tendency of all systematic thought in the present day is nevertheless toward a Monism, and this explains the favour beginning to be shown by scientists for Spinoza. Most *savants* of any eminence instinctively recognise the impossibility of a mere mechanical aggregate of phenomena being the "last word" of systematised human knowledge. Scientific Monism, as is perhaps only natural, seeks to attain satisfaction by mere phrases such as "unknowable," "one reality," &c. (frequently so expressed as to imply a dualism), rather than by a diligent [c] investigation into the conditions of knowledge itself, the method inaugurated by Kant, and the only one which can lead to a permanently satisfactory synthesis. That which is posited in the very fact of consciousness, but which can only find a place in discursive thought as the notion of an existence realising itself in the world-process—this fact, the fundamental postulate of all conscious experience, and therefore of all reality—can alone be the starting-point for any synthetic system. The notion of plurality—a mechanical aggregate in space and time—will not explain the relation of myself to other phenomena like myself, still less to the world-evolution as a whole. The erection of the individual consciousness (the empirical ego) or of ideas or presentations into things-in-themselves will further this quite as little as the erection of material qualities into things-in-themselves, standpoints we see appearing in protean guises in the present day both in this country and on the continent.

It is generally recognised that no existing system can lay any claim to finality. There can hardly be said now to be a philosophical school in the old sense of the word, namely, a body of thinkers slavishly adhering to every detail of a master, if we except the Comtists. The tendency of the modern mind is rather (so to speak) to revel in disintegration. It is the mode, to exaggerate differences, to repudiate all connection, save, perhaps, that of suggestion, with older systems, even when, notwithstanding the parade of originality, the assumed new departure leads us back to old positions essentially unchanged, but for being presented in a modern guise and with a precision of language more in accordance with the present state of philosophic terminology. This is to be regretted, as the bane of philosophy in the past, even in its most eminent representatives, has lain in overstraining after originality. The divergency with which metaphysicians are commonly taunted lies more in terminology than is often thought. This fact is strikingly illustrated by the case of Fichte and Schopenhauer. The leading principles and much of the development of Schopenhauer's system is contained in Fichte's *Wissenschaftslehre*, yet this did not prevent Schopenhauer from stigmatising the last-named work as a farrago of absurdities. Had Schopenhauer been less solicitous to maintain his character as an "original thinker," he would possibly have admitted his debt to the elder philosopher.

The tendency of the various eddies and streamlets of current philosophic thought, to converge into two main channels is unmistakable. These main channels are the philosophy of modern scientific realism, with its leading doctrines of the Persistence of Force and of Evolution, based on induction from the data of completed experience; and the philosophy of transcendental Monism, based on an analysis of those processes of consciousness in general, which make

experience possible. The seeming hostility of these two lines of thought is owing to the fact that one is based on experience made, the other on experience in the making.* The immediate task of philosophy is their reconciliation in a synthesis.

“Our knowledge,” says the scientist, “is strictly confined to what is contained in the teaching of experience.” “With all my heart,” replies the transcendentalist (with reminiscences of Carlyle), “only, what *is* contained in the teaching of experience?” In philosophy we have to reconstruct the world in reproductive consciousness, i.e. in abstract thought; the only way we can do this effectually is by educing it from the most elementary datum of that *productive* experience, in and for which the world alone exists. To the oft-repeated sneers as to Metaphysics being a thing of the past, and having to give way before positive science, the object-matter of which alone deals with realities, the reply is easy so far as concerns Metaphysics in the modern sense of the word, the only sense in which a thinker of the present day would care to defend it. Metaphysics deals as much with reality as any abstract science. But the propositions of every abstract science represent a *transfigured* reality, and this the more so, the more abstract it is; in other words, the more its subject-matter is removed from the given concrete reality of sensuous intuition. The atom, the ultimate postulate of physical science, is in itself a striking instance of this. The same may be said of the postulates of the higher mathematics, &c. It is surely, then, only to be expected that the most abstract of all sciences, that which has for its subject-matter, not merely the laws of a particular department or aspect of the content of experience, but the conditions of experience itself, should, by reason of its abstractness, be unintelligible to the superficial thinker. Metaphysics, in so far as we understand by this term “Theory of Knowledge,” is as little in danger of becoming obsolete as Mathematics. The future may reject in whole or in part Kant’s solution, but mankind will never be able permanently to ignore the problem Kant formulated. Philosophy, since Kant, it has been well said, is the re-reading of experience rather than, as previously, the transcending of experience.

The renewed study of Kant must certainly be regarded as a hopeful sign of the times. Philosophy, there is reason to believe, is ceasing to be a thing of class-rooms and examinations merely, and becoming a common interest among all thinking men. At the same time that dissatisfaction is felt with existing systems the need of a synthesis—the intrinsic worthlessness of any serious study that does not have synthesis for an end—is more and more generally recognised. This being the state of things, a conviction of the importance of a thorough study of Kant, the fountainhead of modern systematic thought, is a natural consequence.

It would be impossible to give anything like a sketch, however general, of the flood of neo-Kantian literature, which for some years past has been pouring from the press. Germany is, of course, first in the Kantian revival, but it has extended, in a relatively equal degree, to Britain, the United States and even France. Indeed, everywhere where philosophy is being studied it is felt that the results of post-Kantian thought need thorough revision, if not complete reconstruction, and hence attention is being turned on all sides to a further elucidation of the great Königsberg thinker’s work itself.

We can devote but little space to an indication of the obligations, immense though they be, which science and general culture are under to Kant. The first germ of the modern scientific doctrine of Evolution, the nebular theory of the origin of the planetary systems, was enunciated and developed by Kant in his *Theorie des Himmels*, published in 1755, forty years previous to the publication by Laplace, in 1796, of his celebrated *Système du Monde*. The hypothesis of the sun being surrounded by an atmosphere of luminous gas, and if not itself of gaseous nature, at least a molten body, undergoing a slow process of solidification, was verified by independent research, a few years after being put forward by Kant. “There will come a time,” wrote Kant, “when it” (the sun) “will be burnt out, and its place, at present the centre of light and life, will

be occupied by an eternal darkness.” The fixed stars Kant regarded (equally in accord with the views of modern astronomers) as the centres of solar systems like our own. His observations on earthquakes and volcanoes represent no less, in the main, present views on the subject. It is noteworthy that one important idea, thrown out by Kant as a speculation, namely, that of the gradual diminution of the earth’s motion on its axis, owing to the friction produced by the contrary action of the tides, was first theoretically verified by Mayer in his work *Beitrag zur Mechanik des Himmels*, in the year 1848. It was not before 1865, a hundred years after its hypothetical enunciation by Kant, that the fact of such a diminution having actually taken place was astronomically established by Hausen of Gotha. The same eminent astronomer had previously substantiated another astronomical suggestion of Kant’s, i.e. that the moon’s centre of gravity did not coincide with its actual centre, but lay on the side furthest removed from the earth. It may not be generally known that Kant predicted on theoretical grounds the existence of the planet Uranus, many years before its discovery by Herschel. Dove’s law of the motion of the winds was also anticipated by Kant in his ‘Observations on the Theory of the Winds,’ published in 1756. But by far the most significant fact in connection with Kant as a scientific thinker is his forestallment of Darwinism, and indeed of the doctrine of Evolution in its broadest form, as the following passages will show: “The union of so many species of animals,” says Kant, “in a certain common schema . . . seeming to form their basis, where remarkable simplicity of outline seems capable—by the shortening of one and the lengthening of another, the compression of this and the development of that part—of bringing forth so great a variety of species, allows us, at least, a faint ray of hope that something may be explained here on that principle of the mechanism of Nature, without [cv] which there could be no such thing as natural science at all. This analogy of forms, which, in spite of all their diversity, seem to be generated from a common origin, strengthens the supposition of a real relationship between them, in their production from an original parent form, by the progressive approach of one species to another, from that in which the principle of purpose seems most exhibited, namely, *from the man, to the polyp, and from this again to the moss and lichen, and finally to the lowest phase of nature known to us—to inorganic matter—from which, together with its forces, the whole technique of nature seems derivable according to mechanical laws—that technique of nature, to us so incomprehensible in organised beings, that we believe ourselves obliged to assume a distinct principle for its explanation*” (*Kritik der Urtheilskraft*, ed. Kirchmann). And again, “He (the naturalist) may allow the earth—itsself arisen from chaotic conditions—to have given birth originally to beings of a less perfect form, these again to others, which have developed themselves in a manner more adapted to their habitat, and their mutual relations [natural selection?], till this mother-earth—herself becoming rigid—has limited her births to definite species, incapable of further modifications; and thus their variety has remained as it was at the end of the operation of her formative productivity.” Further on, Kant speaks of the possibility of “certain water-animals developing by degrees into marsh-animals, and these, again, after some generations, into land-animals.” History can point to few more distinct premonitions of a great truth than is contained in the foregoing and many other passages of similar import. It must be remembered that while these views were laid before the world in 1780, Erasmus Darwin’s ‘Zoonomia, or the laws of organic life,’ did not appear till, at the earliest, 1794, so that Kant’s utterances actually preceded those of the father of so-called Darwinism, the grandfather of Charles Darwin himself.

Although, as we observed on a previous page, Kant cannot be said to have founded a science of society, and although his views on some subjects, embraced within this wide field (especially on their practical side), are to modern notions crude, we must not forget the brilliant glimpses occasionally to be met with in his works, of vistas, which to Kant were obscure and hazy, but which the subsequent evolution of thought and social life has placed in a comparatively clear

light. The most remarkable of these glimpses is contained in the short essay entitled “An Idea of Universal History from the point of view of Humanity,” an essay which explicitly recognises the phenomena of human society as under the dominion of law, and hence as capable of scientific treatment, anticipating in many points the “historical method” of modern thought, and even the actual conceptions of a Comte, a Buckle, or a Spencer. Kant, indeed, went so far as to prophesy the advent of thinkers who would elaborate and develop to an incalculable extent the hints thrown out in his now slight sketch. It would perhaps be hardly too great praise to describe this little *brochure* as the most valuable of all Kant’s minor works, when viewed in its relation to later thought.

We have only detailed a few of the more important achievements of Kant in natural science; his works teem with fruitful suggestions and hints to the interrogator of nature. But Kant’s scientific achievements were, during his lifetime, as they have been since his death, eclipsed by his philosophic fame. Had he confined himself to physical research, it is likely enough the world would have recognised in him the rival of Newton. As it is, Kant the philosopher, not Kant the scientist, has come down to us.

Kant’s influence on the general culture and thought of the nineteenth century, apart from the “faculties” of philosophy and science in a special sense, is so immense and wide-reaching, that to follow its course through all its ramifications, direct and indirect, would be an undertaking amounting to little less than writing a history of nineteenth-century thought itself. As we have seen, nearly all the great speculative problems of the present age were formulated by Kant. There is scarcely a subject of human interest upon which he has not thrown some light, if not by actual suggestion, by the impulse of the mighty wave of thought he inaugurated. Perhaps the most prominent feature of this wave of thought is the conception of the universality of law which characterises it. Before Kant’s time the great principle referred to was apprehended in its full bearing by none but a few isolated *savants* and philosophers; since his time it has become the common heritage of the thoughtful and cultured among all nations. We do not mean to imply that the conception itself, much less the great change of mental attitude involved therein, is entirely the work of Kant. All we claim is that the Königsberg colossus may fairly be taken as the representative personality of that intellectual movement which is based on a recognition of the universal reign of law.

The tremendous hold the critical spirit took upon the minds of Kant’s countrymen in every direction, even in matters most immediately under the *ægis* of obscurantism and authority, is illustrated by the rise and rapid spread of the schools of scientific Biblical criticism, some of which, indeed, like that of Paulus, were soon superseded, but only to give way to others, which have achieved results now the common property of modern scholarship. Regard it in what light we may, the fact is incontestable that Kant indirectly dealt a deadly blow at supernatural religion in Germany among all classes—a blow from the effects of which it has never since recovered.

Kant’s relation to traditional authority generally is aptly expressed by Schopenhauer (*Welt als Wille und Vorstellung*). “Descartes was a remarkable intellect, and when one considers the age in which he lived, he achieved much. But if we leave this consideration aside and measure him by his boasted emancipation of thought from all its chains and his would-be inauguration of a new period of independent research, we shall find—with all his scepticism, which was destitute of any real earnestness, and therefore quickly and readily yielding—that he indeed *made* as though he were about to strike off all the chains of indoctrinated opinion that bound his age and nation; but that this is merely a pretence, assumed for the purpose of immediately taking them up again and riveting them so much the faster—And thus it is with all his successors till Kant.* Goethe’s verse is especially applicable to an independent thinker of this stamp:

‘With all due deference he appears to me,
Much like your long-legged grasshopper to be,
Which flits about, and flying bounds along,
Then in the grass sings his familiar song.’

Kant had reason to make as though he too meant no more. But the bound contemplated—which was permitted because it was known only to lead back again into the grass—developed this time into a flight, and now those who stood below could only look after him, unable as they were to seize him.”

We may conclude this chapter, and our introduction, by observing that, whatever may be the advances made in philosophy since Kant’s death, and whatever the obvious and even grave defects in Kant’s work, the ‘Critique of Pure Reason’ must assuredly continue to furnish the most valuable of historical landmarks in all future philosophical investigations. Adapting the words used by an eminent modern historian in reference to Gibbon and the study of history, to Kant and the study of philosophy, we may say, “Whatever else is read” Kant “must be read too.”

Kant’s Prolegomena and Metaphysical Foundations of Natural Science. Trans. Ernest Belfort Bax. London: George Bell and Sons, 1891.

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