

# The Critical Philosophy

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**Source:** From “Hegel’s Logic”, translated by William Wallace, with Foreword by J N Findlay, Clarendon Press 1975. First published 1873. The additions by the original editors have been omitted to bring out the line of argument more clearly.

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## §40

In common with Empiricism the Critical Philosophy assumes that experience affords the one sole foundation for cognitions; which however it does not allow to rank as truths, but only as knowledge of phenomena.

The Critical theory starts originally from the distinction of elements presented in the analysis of experience, viz. the matter of sense, and its universal relations. Taking into account Humes's criticism on this distinction as given in the preceding section, viz. that sensation does not explicitly apprehend more than an individual or more than a mere event, it insists at the same time on the fact that universality and necessity are seen to perform a function equally essential in constituting what is called experience. This element, not being derived from the empirical facts as such, must belong to the spontaneity of thought; in other words, it is *a priori*. The Categories or Notions of the Understanding constitute the *objectivity* of experiential cognitions. In every case they involve a connective reference, and hence through their means are formed synthetic judgements *a priori*, that is, primary and underivative connections of opposites.

Even Hume's scepticism does not deny that the characteristics of universality and necessity are found in cognition. And even in Kant this

fact remains a presupposition after all; it may be said, to use the ordinary phraseology of the sciences, that Kant did no more than offer another *explanation* of the fact.

## § 41

The Critical Philosophy proceeds to test the value of the categories employed in metaphysic, as well as in other sciences and in ordinary conception. This scrutiny however is not directed to the content of these categories, nor does it inquire into the exact relation they bear to one another: but simply considers them as affected by the contrast between subjective and objective. The contrast, as we are to understand it here, bears upon the distinction (see preceding §) of the two elements in experience. The name of objectivity is here given to the element of universality and necessity, i.e. to the categories themselves, or what is called the *a priori* constituent. The Critical Philosophy however widened the contrast in such a way, that the subjectivity comes to embrace the *ensemble* of experience, including both of the aforesaid elements; and nothing remains on the other side but the 'thing-in-itself'.

The special forms of the *a priori* element, in other words, of thought, which in spite of its objectivity is looked upon as a purely subjective act, present themselves as follows in a systematic order which, it may be remarked, is solely based upon psychological and historical grounds.

## § 42

(a) **The Theoretical Faculty.** Cognition *qua* cognition. The specific ground of the categories is declared by the Critical system to lie in the primary identity of the 'I' in thought what Kant calls the 'transcendental unity of self-consciousness'. The impressions from feeling and perception are, if we look to their contents, a multiplicity or miscellany of elements:

and the multiplicity is equally conspicuous in their form. For sense is marked by a mutual exclusion of members; and that under two aspects, namely space and time, which, being the forms, that is to say, the universal type of perception, are themselves *a priori*. This congeries, afforded by sensation and perception, must however be reduced to an identity or primary synthesis. To accomplish this the 'I' brings it in relation to itself and unites it there in *one* consciousness which Kant calls 'pure apperception'. The specific modes in which the Ego refers to itself the multiplicity of sense are the pure concepts of the understanding, the Categories.

Kant, it is well known, did not put himself to much trouble in discovering the categories. 'I', the unity of selfconsciousness, being quite abstract and completely indeterminate, the question arises, how are we to get at the specialised forms of the 'I', the categories? Fortunately, the common logic offers to our hand an empirical classification of the kinds of *judgement*. Now, to judge is the same as to *think* of a determinate object. Hence the various modes of judgement, as enumerated to our hand, provide us with the several categories of thought. To the philosophy of Fichte belongs the great merit of having called attention to the need of exhibiting the *necessity* of these categories and giving a genuine *deduction* of them. Fichte ought to have produced at least one effect on the method of logic. One might have expected that the general laws of thought, the usual stock-in-trade of logicians, or the classification of notions, judgements, and syllogisms, would be no longer taken merely from observation and so only empirically treated, but be deduced from thought itself. If thought is to be capable of proving anything at all, if logic must insist upon the necessity of proofs, and if it proposes to teach the theory of demonstration, its first care should be to give a reason for its own subject.

## § 43

The Categories may be viewed in two aspects. On the one hand it is by their instrumentality that the mere perception of sense rises to objectivity and experience. On the other hand these notions are unities in our consciousness merely: they are consequently conditioned by the material given to them, and having nothing of their own they can be applied to use only within the range of experience. But the other constituent of experience, the impressions of feeling and perception, is not one whit less subjective than the categories.

## § 44

It follows that the categories are no fit terms to express the Absolute the Absolute not being given in perception and Understanding, or knowledge by means of the categories, is consequently incapable of knowing the Things-in-themselves.

The Thing-in-itself (and under 'thing' is embraced even Mind and God) expresses the object when we leave out of sight all that consciousness makes of it, all its emotional aspects, and all specific thoughts of it. It is easy to see what is left utter abstraction, total emptiness, only described still as an 'other-world' the negative of every image, feeling, and definite thought. Nor does it require much penetration to see that this *caput mortuum* is still only a product of thought, such as accrues when thought is carried on to abstraction unalloyed: that it is the work of the empty 'Ego', which makes an *object* out of this empty self-identity of its own. The *negative* characteristic which this abstract identity receives as an object is also enumerated among the categories of Kant, and is no less familiar than the empty identity aforesaid. Hence one can only read with surprise the perpetual remark that we do not know the Thing-in-itself. On the contrary there is nothing we can know so easily.

## § 45

It is Reason, the faculty of the Unconditioned, which discovers the conditioned nature of the knowledge comprised in experience. What is thus called the object of Reason, the Infinite or Unconditioned, is nothing but self-sameness, or the primary identity of the 'Ego' in thought (mentioned in § 42). Reason itself is the name given to the abstract 'Ego' or thought, which makes this pure identity its aim or object (cf. note to the preceding §). Now this identity, having no definite attribute at all, can receive no illumination from the truths of experience, for the reason that these refer always to definite facts. Such is the sort of Unconditioned that is supposed to be the absolute truth of Reason what is termed the *Idea*; while the cognitions of experience are reduced to the level of untruth and declared to be appearances.

## § 46

But it is not enough simply to indicate the existence of the object of Reason. Curiosity impels us to seek for knowledge of this identity, this empty thing-in-itself. Now knowledge means such an acquaintance with the object as apprehends its distinct and special subject-matter. But such subject-matter involves a complex interconnection in the object itself, and supplies a ground of connection with many other objects. In the present case, to express the nature of the features of the Infinite or Thing-in-itself, Reason would have nothing except the categories: and in any endeavour so to employ them Reason becomes over-soaring or 'transcendent'.

Here begins the second stage of the Criticism of Reason which, as an independent piece of work, is more valuable than the first. The first part, as has been explained above, teaches that the categories originate in the unity of self-consciousness; that any knowledge which is gained by their means has nothing objective in it, and that the very objectivity claimed for

them is only subjective. So far as this goes, the Kantian Criticism presents that 'common' type of idealism known as Subjective Idealism. It asks no questions about the meaning or scope of the categories, but simply considers the abstract form of subjectivity and objectivity, and that even in such a partial way that the former aspect, that of subjectivity, is retained as a final and purely affirmative term of thought. In the second part, however, when Kant examines the *application*, as it is called, which Reason makes of the categories in order to know its objects, the content of the categories, at least in some points of view, comes in for discussion: or, at any rate, an opportunity presented itself for a discussion of the question. It is worth while to see what decision Kant arrives at on the subject of metaphysic, as this application of the categories to the unconditioned is called. His method of procedure we shall here briefly state and criticise.

## §47

[a] The first of the unconditioned entities which Kant examines is the Soul (see above, § 34). 'In my consciousness', he says, 'I always find that I (1) am the determining subject; (2) am singular or abstractly simple; (3) am identical, or one and the same, in all the variety of what I am conscious of; (4) distinguish myself as thinking from all the things outside me.'

Now the method of the old metaphysic, as Kant correctly states it, consisted in substituting for these statements of experience the corresponding categories or metaphysical terms. Thus arise these four new propositions: (a) the Soul is a substance; (b) it is a simple substance; (c) it is numerically identical at the various periods of existence; (d) it stands in relation to space

Kant discusses this translation, and draws attention to the Paralogism or mistake of confounding one kind of truth with another. He points out that empirical attributes have here been replaced by categories; and shows that

we are not entitled to argue from the former to the latter, or to put the latter in place of the former.

This criticism obviously but repeats the observation of Hume (§ 39) that the categories as a whole ideas of universality and necessity are entirely absent from sensation; and that the empirical fact both in form and contents differs from its intellectual formulation.

If the purely empirical fact were held to constitute the credentials of the thought, then no doubt it would be indispensable to be able precisely to identify the 'idea' in the 'impression'.

And in order to make out, in his criticism of the metaphysical psychology, that the soul cannot be described as substantial, simple, self-same, and as maintaining its independence in intercourse with the material world, Kant argues from the single ground that the several attributes of the soul, which consciousness lets us feel in *experience*, are not exactly the same attributes as result from the action of *thought* thereon. But we have seen above that according to Kant all knowledge, even experience, consists in thinking our impressions in other words, in transforming into intellectual categories the attributes primarily belonging to sensation.

Unquestionably one good result of the Kantian criticism was that it emancipated mental philosophy from the 'soul-thing', from the categories, and, consequently, from questions about the simplicity, complexity, materiality, etc., of the soul. But even for the common sense of ordinary men, the true point of view, from which the inadmissibility of these forms best appears, will be not that they are thoughts, but that thoughts of such a stamp neither can nor do retain truth.

## §47

If thought and phenomenon do not perfectly correspond to one another, we are free at least to choose which of the two shall be held the defaulter. The Kantian idealism, where it touches on the world of Reason, throws the blame on the thoughts; saying that the thoughts are defective, as not being exactly fitted to the sensations and to a mode of mind wholly restricted within the range of sensation, in which as such there are no traces of the presence of these thoughts. But as to the actual content of the thought, no question is raised.

## § 48

[b] The second unconditioned object is the World (§ 35). In the attempt which reason makes to comprehend the unconditioned nature of the World, it falls into what are called Antinomies. In other words it maintains two opposite propositions about the same object, and in such a way that each of them has to be maintained with equal necessity. From this it follows that the body of cosmical fact, the specific statements descriptive of which run into contradiction, cannot be a self-subsistent reality, but only an appearance. The explanation offered by Kant alleges that the contradiction does not affect the object in its own proper essence, but attaches only to the Reason which seeks to comprehend it.

In this way the suggestion was broached that the contradiction is occasioned by the subject-matter itself, or by the intrinsic quality of the categories. And to offer the idea that the contradiction introduced into the world of Reason by the categories of Understanding is inevitable and essential was to make one of the most important steps in the progress of Modern Philosophy. But the more important the issue thus raised the more trivial was the solution. Its only motive was an excess of tenderness for the things of the world. The blemish of contradiction, it seems, could not be allowed to mar the essence of the world; but there could be no objection to attach it to the thinking Reason, to the essence of mind.



Probably nobody will feel disposed to deny that the phenomenal world presents contradictions to the observing mind; meaning by 'phenomenal' the world as it presents itself to the senses and understanding, to the subjective mind. But if a comparison is instituted between the essence of the world and the essence of the mind, it does seem strange to hear how calmly and confidently the modest dogma has been advanced by one, and repeated by others, that thought or Reason, and not the World, is the seat of contradiction. It is no escape to turn round and explain that Reason falls into contradiction only by applying the categories. For this application of the categories is maintained to be necessary, and Reason is not supposed to be equipped with any other forms but the categories for the purpose of cognition. But cognition is determining and determinate thinking: so that, if Reason be mere empty indeterminate thinking, it thinks nothing. And if in the end Reason be reduced to mere identity without diversity (see next §), it will in the end also win a happy release from contradiction at the slight sacrifice of all its facets and contents.

It may also be noted that his failure to make a more thorough study of Antinomy was one of the reasons why Kant enumerated only *four* Antinomies. These four attracted his notice, because, as may be seen in his discussion of the so-called Paralogisms of Reason, he assumed the list of the categories as a basis of his argument. Employing what has subsequently become a favourite fashion, he simply put the object under a rubric otherwise ready to hand, instead of deducing its characteristics from its notion. Further deficiencies in the treatment of the Antinomies I have pointed out, as occasion offered, in my *Science of Logic*. Here it will be sufficient to say that the Antinomies are not confined to the four special objects taken from Cosmology: they appear in all objects of every kind, in all conceptions, notions, and Ideas. To be aware of this and to know objects in this property of theirs makes a vital part in a

philosophical theory. For the property thus indicated is what we shall afterwards describe as the Dialectical influence in Logic.

## § 49

[c] The third object of the Reason is God (§ 36): he also must be known and defined in terms of thought. But in comparison with an unalloyed identity, every defining term as such seems to the understanding to be only a limit and a negation: every reality accordingly must be taken as limitless, i.e. undefined. Accordingly God, when he is defined to be the sum of all realities, the most real of beings, turns into a *mere abstract*. And the only term under which that most real of real things can be defined is that of Being itself the height of abstraction. These are two elements, abstract identity, on one hand, which is spoken of in this place as the notion; and Being on the other which Reason seeks to unify. And their union is the *Ideal* of Reason.

## § 50

... The organic structures, and the evidence they afford of mutual adaptation, belong to a higher province, the province of animated nature. But even without taking into consideration the possible blemish which the study of animated nature and of the other teleological aspects of existing things may contract from the pettiness of the final causes, and from puerile instances of them and their bearings, merely animated nature is, at the best, incapable of supplying the material for a truthful expression to the idea to God. God is more than life: he is Spirit. And therefore if the thought of the Absolute takes a starting-point for its rise, and desires to take the nearest, the most true and adequate starting-point will be found in the nature of spirit alone.

## § 51

The other way of unification by which to realise the Ideal of Reason is to set out from the *abstractum* of Thought and seek to characterise it: for which purpose Being is the only available term. This is the method of the Ontological proof. The opposition, here presented from a merely subjective point of view, lies between Thought and Being; whereas in the first way of junction, being is common to the two sides of the antithesis, and the contrast lies only between its individualisation and universality. Understanding meets this second way with what is implicitly the same objection as it made to the first. It denied that the empirical involves the universal; so it denies that the universal involves the specialisation, which specialisation in this instance is being. In other words it says: Being cannot be deduced from the notion by any analysis.

The uniformly favourable reception and acceptance which attended Kant's criticism of the Ontological proof was undoubtedly due to the illustration which he made use of. To explain the difference between thought and being, he took the instance of a hundred sovereigns, which, for anything it matters to the notion, are the same hundred whether they are real or only possible, though the difference of the two cases is very perceptible in their effect on a man's purse. Nothing can be more obvious than that anything we only think or conceive is not on that account actual; that mental representation, and even notional comprehension, always falls short of being. Still it may not unfairly be styled a barbarism in language, when the name of notion is given to things like a hundred sovereigns. And, putting that mistake aside, those who perpetually urge against the philosophic Idea the difference between Being and Thought might have admitted that philosophers were not wholly ignorant of the fact. Can there be any proposition more trite than this ? But after all, it is well to remember, when we speak of God, that we have an object of another kind than any hundred sovereigns, and unlike any one particular notion, representation, or however else it may be styled. It is in fact this and this

alone which marks everything finite: its being in time and space is discrepant from its notion. God, on the contrary, expressly has to be what can only be 'thought as existing'; his notion involves being. It is this unity of the notion and being that constitutes the notion of God.

If this were all, we should have only a formal expression of the divine nature which would not really go beyond a statement of the nature of the notion itself. And that the notion, in its most abstract terms, involves being is plain. For the notion, whatever other determination it may receive, is at least reference back on itself, which results by abolishing the intermediation, and thus is immediate. And what is that reference to self, but being? Certainly it would be strange if the notion, the very inmost of mind, if even the 'Ego', or above all the concrete totality we call God, were not rich enough to include so poor a category as being, the very poorest and most abstract of all. For, if we look at the thought it holds, nothing can be more insignificant than being. And yet there may be something still more insignificant than being that which at first sight is perhaps supposed to *be*, an external and sensible existence, like that of the paper lying before me. However, in this matter, nobody proposes to speak of the sensible existence of a limited and perishable thing. Besides, the petty stricture of the *Kritik* that 'thought and being are different' can at most molest the path of the human mind from the thought of God to the certainty that he is: it cannot take it away. It is this process of transition, depending on the absolute inseparability of the thought of God from his being, for which its proper authority has been revindicated in the theory of faith or immediate knowledge whereof hereafter.

## § 52

In this way thought, at its highest pitch, has to go outside for any determinateness; and although it is continually termed Reason, is out-and-out abstract thinking. And the result of all is that Reason supplies nothing

beyond the formal unity required to simplify and systematise experiences; it is a *canon*, not an *organon*, of truth, and can furnish only a criticism of knowledge, not a *doctrine* of the infinite. In its final analysis this criticism is summed up in the assertion that in strictness thought is only the indeterminate unity and the action of this indeterminate unity.

## § 53

(b) The **Practical Reason** is understood by Kant to mean a *thinking* Will, i.e. a Will that determines itself on universal principles. Its office is to give objective, imperative laws of freedom laws, that is, which state what ought to happen. The warrant for thus assuming thought to be an activity which makes itself felt objectively, that is, to be really a Reason, is the alleged possibility of proving practical freedom by experience, that is, of showing it in the phenomenon of selfconsciousness. This experience in consciousness is at once met by all that the Necessitarian produces from contrary experience, particularly by the sceptical induction (employed among others by Hume) from the endless diversity of what men regard as right and duty i.e. from the diversity apparent in those professedly objective laws of freedom.

## § 54

What, then, is to serve as the law which the Practical Reason embraces and obeys, and as the criterion in its act of selfdetermination? There is no rule at hand but the same abstract identity of understanding as before: there must be no contradiction in the act of self-determination. Hence the Practical Reason never shakes off the formalism which is represented as the climax of the Theoretical Reason.

But this Practical Reason does not confine the universal principle of the Good to its own inward regulation: it first becomes *practical*, in the true

sense of the word, when it insists on the Good being manifested in the world with an outward objectivity, and requires that the thought shall be objective throughout, and not merely subjective. We shall speak of this postulate of the Practical Reason afterwards.

## § 55

(c) The **Reflective Power of Judgment** is invested by Kant with the function of an Intuitive Understanding. That is to say, whereas the particulars had hitherto appeared, so far as the universal or abstract identity was concerned, adventitious and incapable of being deduced from it, the *Intuitive* Understanding apprehends the particulars as moulded and formed by the universal itself. Experience presents such universalised particulars in the products of Art and of *organic* nature.

The capital feature in Kant's Criticism of the Judgement is, that in it he gave a representation and a name, if not even an intellectual expression, to the Idea. Such a representation, as an Intuitive Understanding, or an inner adaptation, suggests a universal which is at the same time apprehended as essentially a concrete unity. It is in these *aperçus* alone that the Kantian philosophy rises to the speculative height. Schiller, and others, have found in the idea of artistic beauty, where thought and sensuous conception have grown together into one, a way of escape from the abstract and separatist understanding. Others have found the same relief in the perception and consciousness of life and of living things, whether that life be natural or intellectual. The work of Art, as well as the living individual, is, it must be owned, of limited content. But in the postulated harmony of nature (or necessity) and free purpose in the final purpose of the world conceived as realised, Kant has put before us the Idea, comprehensive even in its content. Yet what may be called the laziness of thought, when dealing with the supreme Idea, finds a too easy mode of evasion in the 'ought to be': instead of the actual realisation of the ultimate end, it clings hard to

the disjunction of the notion from reality. Yet if thought will not *think* the ideal realised, the senses and the intuition can at any rate see it in the present reality of living organisms and of the beautiful in Art. And consequently Kant's remarks on these objects were well adapted to lead the mind on to grasp and think the concrete Idea.

## § 56

We are thus led to conceive a different relation between the universal of understanding and the particular of perception, than that on which the theory-of the Theoretical and Practical Reason is founded. But while this is so, it is not supplemented by a recognition that the former is the genuine relation and the very truth. Instead of that, the unity (of universal with particular) is accepted only as it exists in finite phenomena, and is adduced only as a fact of experience. Such experience, at first only personal, may come from two sources. It may spring from Genius, the faculty which produces 'aesthetic ideas'; meaning by aesthetic ideas, the picture-thoughts of the free imagination which subserve an idea and suggest thoughts, although their content is not expressed in a notional form, and even admits of no such expression. It may also be due to Taste, the feeling of congruity between the free play of intuition or imagination and the uniformity of understanding.

## § 57

The principle by which the Reflective faculty of Judgement regulates and arranges the products of animated nature is described as the End or final cause the notion in action, the universal at once determining and determinate in itself. At the same time Kant is careful to discard the conception of external or finite adaptation, in which the End is only an adventitious form for the means and material in which it is realised. In the living organism, on the contrary, the final cause is a moulding principle

and an energy immanent in the matter, and every member is in its turn a means as well as an end.

## § 58

Such an Idea evidently radically transforms the relation which the understanding institutes between means and ends, between subjectivity and objectivity. And yet in the face of this unification, the End or design is subsequently explained to be a cause which exists and acts subjectively, i.e. as our idea only: and teleology is accordingly explained to be only a principle of criticism, purely personal to our understanding.

After the Critical philosophy had settled that Reason can know phenomena only, there would still have been an option for animated nature between two equally subjective modes of thought. Even according to Kant's own exposition, there would have been an obligation to admit, in the case of natural productions, a knowledge not confined to the categories of quality, cause and effect, composition, constituents, and so on. The principle of inward adaptation or design, had it been kept to and carried out in scientific application, would have led to a different and a higher method of observing nature.

## § 59

If we adopt this principle, the Idea, when all limitations were removed from it, would appear as follows. The universality moulded by Reason, and described as the absolute and final end or the Good, would be realised in the world, and realised moreover by means of a third thing, the power which proposes this End as well as realises it that is, God. Thus in him, who is the absolute truth, those oppositions of universal and individual, subjective and objective, are solved and explained to be neither self-subsistent nor true.



## § 60

But Good which is thus put forward as the final cause of the world has been already described as only *our* good, the moral law of *our* Practical Reason. This being so, the unity in question goes no further than make the state of the world and the course of its events harmonise with our moral standards. Besides, even with this limitation, the final cause, or Good, is a vague abstraction, and the same vagueness attaches to what is to be Duty. But, further, this harmony is met by the revival and reassertion of the antithesis, which it by its own principle had nullified. The harmony is then described as merely subjective, something which merely ought to be, and which at the same time is not real a mere article of faith, possessing a subjective certainty, but without truth, or that objectivity which is proper to the Idea. This contradiction may seem to be disguised by adjourning the realisation of the Idea to a future, to a *time* when the Idea will also be. But a sensuous condition like time is the reverse of a reconciliation of the discrepancy; and an infinite progression which is the corresponding image adopted by the understanding on the very face of it only repeats and re-enacts the contradiction.

A general remark may still be offered on the result to which the Critical philosophy led as to the nature of knowledge; a result which has grown one of the current 'idols' or axiomatic beliefs of the day. In every dualistic system, and especially in that of Kant, the fundamental defect makes itself visible in the inconsistency of unifying at one moment what a moment before had been explained to be independent and therefore incapable of unification. And then, at the very moment after unification has been alleged to be the truth, we suddenly come upon the doctrine that the two elements, which, in their true status of unification, had been refused all independent subsistence, are only true and actual in their state of separation. Philosophising of this kind wants the little penetration needed to discover, that this shuffling only evidences how unsatisfactory each one

of the two terms is. And it fails simply because it is incapable of bringing two thoughts together. (And in point of form there are never more than two.) It argues an utter want of consistency to say, on the one hand, that the understanding only knows phenomena, and, on the other, assert the absolute character of this knowledge, by such statements as 'Cognition can go no further'; 'Here is the *natural* and absolute limit of human knowledge.' But 'natural' is the wrong word here. The things of nature are limited and are natural things only to such extent as they are not aware of their universal limit, or to such extent as their mode or quality is a limit from our point of view, and not from their own. No one knows, or even feels, that anything is a limit or defect, until he is at the same time above and beyond it. Living beings, for example, possess the privilege of pain which is denied to the inanimate: even with living beings, a single mode or quality passes into the feeling of a negative. For living beings as such possess within them a universal vitality, which overpasses and includes the single mode; and thus, as they maintain themselves in the negative of themselves, they feel the contradiction to exist within them. But the contradiction is within them only in so far as one and the same subject includes both the universality of their sense of life, and the individual mode which is in negation with it. This illustration will show how a limit or imperfection in knowledge comes to be termed a limit or imperfection, only when it is compared with the actually present Idea of the universal, of a total and perfect. A very little consideration might show that to call a thing finite or limited proves by implication the very presence of the infinite and unlimited, and that our knowledge of a limit can only be when the unlimited is *on this side* in consciousness.

The result however of Kant's view of cognition suggests a second remark. The philosophy of Kant could have no influence on the method of the sciences. It leaves the categories and method of ordinary knowledge quite unmolested. Occasionally, it may be, in the first sections of a

scientific work of that period, we find propositions borrowed from the Kantian philosophy; but the course of the treatise renders it apparent that these propositions were superfluous decoration, and that the few first pages might have been omitted without producing the least change in the empirical contents.

We may next institute a comparison of Kant with the metaphysics of the empirical school. Natural plain Empiricism, though it unquestionably insists most upon sensuous perception, still allows a supersensible world or spiritual reality, whatever may be its structure and constitution, and whether derived from intellect, or from imagination, etc. So far as form goes, the facts of this supersensible world rest on the authority of mind, in the same way as the other facts embraced in empirical knowledge rest on the authority of external perception. But when Empiricism becomes reflective and logically consistent, it turns its arms against this dualism in the ultimate and highest species of fact; it denies the independence of the thinking principle and of a spiritual world which develops itself in thought. Materialism or Naturalism, therefore, is the consistent and thoroughgoing system of Empiricism. In direct opposition to such an Empiricism, Kant asserts the principle of thought and freedom, and attaches himself to the first mentioned form of empirical doctrine, the general principles of which he never departed from. There is a dualism in his philosophy also. On one side stands the world of sensation, and of the understanding which reflects upon it. This world, it is true, he alleges to be a world of appearances. But that is only a title or formal description; for the source, the facts, and the modes of observation continue quite the same as in Empiricism. On the other side and independent stands a self-apprehending thought, the principle of freedom, which Kant has in common with ordinary and bygone metaphysic, but emptied of all that it held, and without his being able to infuse into it anything new. For, in the Critical doctrine, thought, or, as it is there called, Reason, is divested of

every specific form, and thus bereft of all authority. The main effect of the Kantian philosophy has been to revive the consciousness of Reason, or the absolute inwardness of thought. Its abstractness indeed prevented that inwardness from developing into anything, or from originating any special forms, whether cognitive principles or moral laws; but nevertheless it absolutely refused to accept or indulge anything possessing the character of an externality. Henceforth the principle of the independence of Reason, or of its absolute self-subsistence, is made a general principle of philosophy, as well as a foregone conclusion of the time.