LECTURE I.

INTRODUCTORY: THE GENERAL PROBLEM OF THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

No fact in the recent history of speculation seems of more importance in itself or of greater significance for the future than the revived study of the Kantian philosophy.¹ Resuscitations of earlier thinkers are not, indeed, uncommon, and at no time more than at the present has historic inquiry busied itself with the accurate statement and careful criticism of past systems. But it would be a mistake to regard the revival of Kantian studies as having merely historic aims in view. Doubtless, in that revival much must be done, and has been done, towards clear exposition of Kant's peculiar thoughts, many of which require to be rescued from the obscurity and neglect into which they have been allowed to fall. Nor is such 'philological' work without its special value and importance.² But the movement has a much deeper origin and a wider significance.
The return to Kant must be regarded as return to a mode of stating and viewing the problems of philosophy which appears to stand in peculiarly close relations to our present needs, and from which advance to a new solution may at least be looked for.

We know that every age has its own method of approaching and contemplating the problem of philosophy. The fact of return on our part to the position of an earlier thinker is, therefore, significant enough to demand that the reasons for such a movement shall be carefully scrutinised. It seems to me that we are able to trace two distinct lines of influence which have united in compelling philosophic thought again to contemplate the speculative problem in the form given it by Kant. One of these influences has been more particularly prominent in English thought, the other among German writers. To characterise them very briefly, it may be said that the return to Kant on the part of English philosophy is but the logical result to which penetrating criticism or the natural development of its principles must inevitably lead; whereas in Germany the movement has been largely due to the pressure of speculative difficulties on scientific thinkers, who have felt the necessity for a thorough investigation of the prin-
cles on which scientific cognition rests. Ultimately the two influences coincide, just as ultimately science and philosophy have the same aim, and express the same tendency; but the fact of their co-existence, and specially the nature of the second, seem to me to deserve particular attention, and to be more than commonly significant.

The mode of thought which may be regarded as typically English, that familiar to us in Locke, Berkeley, and Butler, is marked by its meditative and practical character. It has shown itself unwilling to develop its own principles to their logical conclusions, and able to hold together in unanalysed unity doctrines radically inconsistent. Penetrated with a sense of the limited and finite nature of the individual, it has delighted to dwell upon the narrow bounds of human knowledge, and seems incapable of contemplating the possibility of rationalising experience. As a natural consequence, the method of English philosophising has been the psychological; metaphysics has come to mean an examination of the contents of the individual consciousness. So far as empirical psychology is concerned, the results have not been unfruitful, and they have at least the merit of having prepared the way for the critical consideration of knowledge which cannot be given by psychology,
but to which psychology, like any other study of experience, must itself be subordinate.

Characteristic of this psychological method, naturally resulting from it, is the manner in which English thought has endeavoured to rest content with the concrete contingent fact of experience. Even in Berkeley, through whose lucid expositions one can ever and again trace the presence and influence of principles, the significance of which is not at first apparent, the world, so far as our intelligence is concerned, was regarded as contingent in itself and arbitrary in its connections. There was experience; a Divine Spirit who gave it, and a finite spirit who received it. The world of experience was but the manner in which the finite subject was affected by the Supreme Mind. A theory of subjective or theological idealism, apparently so simple, manifested its incoherence and incompleteness so soon as it was attempted to remain faithful to the principle which lay at its foundation. Grant only the finite spirit, with particular detached ideas or facts of experience, known in isolation, and no ingenuity can escape the phenomenalism of Hume. To remain within the position of subjective idealism proved itself a logical impossibility even for Berkeley himself. The experience which he regarded as throughout
contingent, was for him, as it must be for any one who will critically consider it, intelligible only through principles which are not in the isolated facts as subjective idealism would have them. Were it possible that these isolated facts, these ideal atoms, should be known as such, then the conclusion is inevitable that thought can never transcend them, can never connect them otherwise than contingently, if at all. The individual spirit becomes but the theatre on which ideas appear, and from which they disappear; it knows not whence they come, nor whither they tend, nor what they signify. Berkeley, it is true, contrives to unite with this view of the absolute contingency of experience, a contingency in which the finite spirit must itself disappear, the higher notion of the finite spirit as having a certain filling in or content of the rational or necessary, and the successive stages of his philosophical conception mark the increasing clearness with which he recognised the presence of the second element. The two views, however, are logically incompatible, and cannot be reconciled. With full meaning one may say that Hume is the true result of Berkeley. The results of Hume's speculation are but the necessary consequence of the assumption with which Berkeley and English thought begin their
constructive work in philosophy, the assumption that experience is a given fact, consisting of individual isolated elements, cognised in their isolation. In Hume the rational and empirical elements which Berkeley obscurely united stand out in clear opposition, and the final step is taken when the general or universal element is regarded as the contingent psychological result of the particular and phenomenal. The finite spirit itself, with all its content, becomes one of the contingent unconnected facts of experience. It does not require to be pointed out at length that in Hume the results of speculation are destructive of the very principle from which speculation started. Ultimate contingency is a more positive conclusion than it was open to Hume to draw. The unconnectedness of phenomena, which must be thought as absolute, is for intelligence equivalent to the ultimate non-existence of phenomena. Here, then, in Hume, we have the infallible sign of abstractness or onesidedness of principle. English thought, working along the lines laid down by Locke, has, by a natural development, led to the problem with which the Kantian philosophy takes its start. How is it possible that the finite subject should have experience at all? The subject has been supposed to have a quite ade-
quate, though arbitrary, knowledge of isolated facts, but we have still to ask, What is meant by knowledge of a fact? Until this be answered no further speculation can possibly be fruitful; nor can any amount of examination of the "contents of mind" explain what is involved in the examination itself. The answer, when fully worked out, may show that on certain deeper questions of metaphysical import the results of German and English thought come nigh one another; but any such similarity of result is of indefinitely small significance when compared with the profound difference of method by which they are reached.

The movement towards Kant originated, as I said, not only within the limited sphere of philosophy proper, but in the wider sphere of science and the ordinary consciousness. That this should have been so, seems to prove with peculiar evidence that the return to Kant is due to pressing need for some mode of regarding the perennial problem of philosophy which is suited to the special wants of the present stage of thought. The rapid development of the physical sciences has not only brought their results into apparent conflict with the ordinary principles of thought and conduct, but has roused attention to the ultimate notions involved in scientific procedure as such. It may be said
that to a certain extent physical science has recently changed its categories, and scientific thought, operating with new ideas, has come in contact with problems, possibly quite beyond their reach. The progress that has been effected in the general reduction of all physical processes to mechanical law, and the extension of mechanical relations to all departments of external phenomena, at once bring into prominence the questions as to the ultimate significance of the idea of mechanism, the warrant for its application to any phenomena, and the limits within which it may be employed. Mere experience of certain mechanical connections among phenomena cannot permit us without further investigation to affirm that all phenomena whatsoever must be explicable in like manner. To justify the method of science at least two things are requisite: the general assumption or hypothesis that nature is intelligible, and proof that the only intelligible relations among the phenomena of nature are purely mechanical. No amount of scientific observation can be adequate to these requirements, and that for two reasons. In the first place, by such means we should at best only approximate towards a general principle; and in the second place, no scientific observation
is possible save under the assumption of the general rule itself.  

Not only, however, has it become clear that without critical investigation of our scientific conceptions no result attained by their means can have any real value or ultimate significance for thought, but it has become increasingly evident that the results themselves suffer from inner contradiction, and stand, to all appearance, in complete opposition to other principles of thought and action. With their help alone we cannot hope to explain consistently all the phenomena of experience, unless indeed our conceptions of these phenomena are radically altered. The idea of causal connection, for example, as applied with valuable results in physical science, and as stated in modern form, prevents any possible scientific explanation of consciousness as such, and if developed rigorously would lead to, the scientific denial of consciousness. The old antinomy, which was so fatal to the fresh metaphysical efforts of Cartesianism, has reappeared in its crudest form. The conscious subject, with subjective states, stands opposed to a physical universe in which he can have no part save by violating the scientific principle of energy; just as in Cartesianism, thought could not intervene in the extended universe with
its constant quantum of motion. Either, then, thought, as such, must be regarded as in its very essence physical, i.e., as an object of external observation—a kind of *contradictio in adjectis*—or the idea of cause in its modern acceptation must receive qualification. It is not possible, to take another instance, that we should continue to regard physical facts as the cause or ground of the phenomena of consciousness, and at the same time hold that our knowledge is limited to such phenomena. One or other of these views must be given up, or we must endeavour to gain a position from which a reconciliation of such antinomies is possible.

Now the presence of such unsolved contradictions in the development of a principle apparently sound—and the two noted are not by any means solitary—is clear proof that the principle itself is one-sided or abstract. Such consequences invariably show that general explanation or explanation of a whole has been sought in what is but one aspect of the whole, and that for complete solution return must be made to the organic unity of which the principle in question is but a part. If we are with any safety to apply the mechanical conception, we must accurately investigate its nature and origin, and be able to show how and why it applies to phenomena, either as a whole or
partially. In other words, we require to determine the place held by the idea of mechanism in the completed whole of experience; we require a criticism of the principles of knowledge; and for such criticism scientific thinkers with increasing unanimity refer to the Kantian philosophy.\textsuperscript{11}

There is certainly an historic reason for reference to the critical philosophy rather than to any of its successors. For the natural sciences have, since 1848 at least, pursued their way not only in entire independence of general philosophy, but with more or less open opposition to it. In or about that year the stream of speculation which had been started by Kant seemed to come to a standstill. Up to that point there had been continuity of development; since then, efforts after a completed philosophic conception have been fragmentary and without definite plan. It may be said, with Zeller,\textsuperscript{12} that "philosophic activity had for a time exhausted itself in the systems which in quick succession followed from Kant to Hegel and Herbart, and that the need was felt for collecting, criticising, and working up the new material which had been thrown out in such profusion;" but it requires specially to be pointed out that at this period, one otherwise of much intellectual and political fervour, the best thinking seemed to have
given up in despair the problems of pure philosophy, and to have thrown itself into the work of the empirical sciences. The cause of this has been sought in the increasing discrepancy between the results of pure or philosophic thought and experience, a discrepancy felt not only in the department of natural observation, but in politics and religion. It is not to be denied that much of the so-called *Natur-philosophie*, specially of Schelling, and in a less degree of Hegel, was well calculated to cast discredit on philosophy proper, and that to all appearance the last-named thinker did attempt what Zeller calls an "*a priori* construction of the universe." 13 Without meantime raising a question as to the accuracy of this interpretation of Hegel, 14 I may point out that no such opposition between metaphysic and natural science was to be found in Kant. 15 Of all pure metaphysicians he stands in the closest and most intimate relations to the researches and methods of natural science, and it lay, therefore, in the nature of things, that when a resort to philosophy was felt to be imperative if the notions of scientific method were to be justified, the return should be to the Kantian system rather than to any of its successors. Whatever results that system may have led to, it was in the first instance an examination of the nature and
validity of the principles which are applied in the construction of science, and consequently claimed

• no place within science itself. "The philosophy of Kant," says Helmholtz,16 "did not contemplate any increase of knowledge through pure thought, for its supreme principle was that all knowledge of reality must be gained from experience, but only purported to examine the sources of our knowledge and the degree of its validity, an inquiry which no age without harm can decline to enter upon." In other words, according to Kant, the indispensable portion of philosophical system is transcendental logic, the analysis of the conditions on which our cognition depends, or critique of the whole faculty of knowledge. Empirical research is doubtless possible without this logic, but no application of the results of experience can be made, nor can we feel assured of the objective worth of our procedure, until the problems of such logic are solved.17 Only by means of such critical investigation can the limits of our knowledge be discovered, and to define the limits of a notion or principle is to determine its legitimacy and objective worth.

In another respect, also, the Kantian philosophy appears as peculiarly fitted to effect the transition to a renewed examination of those questions which are raised both by metaphysic and by science when
pushed to its ultimate conclusions. The ideas within which that philosophy moved were not so removed from those of the present age as to place any marked barrier between them. Philosophy is, and must always be, affected by the general current of thought, of which it is but the highest and purest expression, and the fundamental changes of view which disclose themselves in the course of history render it impossible for the ideas of earlier systems to be adequate to the wants of later times. Problems once important lose their significance, questions require to be re-stated, and the divisions of philosophical system assume new forms as our general conceptions of humanity and its surroundings change, and become deeper and truer. The consciousness of man develops not solely by inner reflection, but by participation in the general stream of the world's progress. It is, perhaps, peculiarly characteristic of the philosophic efforts of the present age that they should be largely determined in aim and method by reference to current scientific ideas; nevertheless, great as have been the advances in scientific thought since the time of Kant, it cannot be said that there is much now before us fundamentally differing in principle from what lay before him. The views as to the antiquity of the human race, our knowledge of the slow
progress by which the general human consciousness has advanced from its primitive stages, the theoretical proof of the origin and probable extinction of this physical system, the hypothesis of the evolution of man from lower organic types and of all organisms from inorganic substance—these ideas, which seem to demand some change in our philosophical conception of man and his position in the universe, were all, in one form or another, present to Kant, and in special connection with some of them his own peculiar doctrines were wrought out. It might at first sight appear that the conception of man as but one of the organic formations thrown up at a particular period in the long evolution of an infinite physical universe, moulded by the forces which brought him into being, and with all the filling in of his consciousness—his science, his ethics, and religion—due to the pressure of this external system, was the very antithesis of the Kantian conception of man as the thinking agent, the forms of whose thought are the conditions of experience, with the consciousness of a supreme law of duty connecting him with ultimate intelligence, and endowed with freedom to regulate his conduct thereby. Yet the facts on which such a doctrine rests were by no means foreign to Kant. In his early scientific
work (*General Theory of the Heavens*) he traces the whole genesis of the cosmical system as we now know it from the primitive chaotic or gaseous condition, explains by mechanical principles solely, and emphasises strongly the dependence of man on nature. He has speculated on the origin of the human race, on the mode by which the motives of ethical right gain recognition in consciousness, and on the mechanism necessarily involved in organic life. Nor were the principles of his scientific work ever thrown aside as belonging to a field of observation foreign to philosophy. No one ever held more firmly the balance between empirical and speculative ideas, or strove with fuller consciousness of both to gain the point of view from which their ultimate harmony might become apparent. What definite position Kant holds with regard to what may fairly be called the leading ideas of modern science will be seen later on; it is sufficient, meanwhile, to have drawn attention to the fact that these ideas were fully recognised by him, and that his philosophy must be understood as having definite reference to them.

Now the question which is brought into the foreground in the development of these diverse lines of thought, though stated variously, is in
truth the one problem with which philosophy as such is ever concerned—the relation of the individual subject to the universe of existence. Whether we ask how knowledge is possible, or what place the human being occupies in the physical world, we are engaged with this all-comprehensive problem. No philosophic system has ever done more than render possible a deeper glance into the nature of this relation; the history of speculation is but the slow evolution of man's conception of his own nature. It is for this reason that philosophy so faithfully reflects the general culture and knowledge of each stage in the progress of humanity. The forms under which the ultimate problem presents itself to any thinker or generation may vary, but the burden of the problem remains the same. To Kant the aspects of the question were due to the previous movements of modern philosophy, for the specific oppositions of thought which he had to reconcile were exactly such as had appeared in Cartesianism, and had been brought into sharper contrast by the development of the Cartesian principle. A brief statement of them is necessary in order to bring out the peculiarity in the Kantian method of dealing with them, for it is the Kantian method of approaching the funda-
mental oppositions of philosophical conception that has greatest value for present thought.

(a.) The individual subject is, in the first instance, related to the universe as to material of knowledge. The world appears to him in cognition, or, rather, part of his very substance is his cognition of the world of objective facts. Such a mode of expression, like natural thinking itself, seems to involve sharp distinction between the thinker and the universe thought by him, but the true place and significance of the distinction must not be overlooked. 21 Evidently the relation cannot be purely one of opposition or negation; the universe cannot be the material known minus the subject knowing. We cannot have an Infinite placed alongside of a finite as constituting the sum of things. Possibly it may become apparent that for cognition or knowledge, as such, this distinction is a necessary element, 22 but it must be noted that the problem of the theory of knowledge does not involve the absoluteness of the distinction. It is only needful to recognise that in cognition the individual is through thought related to the universe. The special modes of that relation, and the conclusions to be drawn from them, form the substance of the Kantian critique of Reason, in which the
foundations are laid for answers to all the problems of practice or speculation.

* (b.) In the second place, we have the problem as to the nature or mode of existence of the universe which is brought before us in cognition. We appear, at the first glance, to be in contact with a world extended, resistant, in ceaseless motion and change; a world of bodies; substances, in which we live, and move, and have our being. Yet Hume tells us \textsuperscript{23} “This universal and primary opinion of all men is soon destroyed by the slightest philosophy, which teaches us that nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception, and that the senses are only the inlets through which these images are conveyed, without being able to produce any immediate intercourse between the mind and thought.” In more modern phraseology, though with no change of thought, all our knowledge is a knowledge of states of consciousness;\textsuperscript{24} materialism and idealism are one. This psychological idealism has been regarded by many writers\textsuperscript{25} as the outcome of Kant, but nothing can be further from the truth. Indeed, as Hume says, such a theory is reached by the “slightest philosophy.” Were this the result of criticism, the machinery is laborious and unnecessary, constructed for much higher ends than it achieves.
Much of the value of Kant for present thought depends on the mode by which he endeavoured to demonstrate the one-sidedness and inadequacy of a theory which had thrown insuperable obstacles in the way of Cartesianism, and which led to strange results in the hands of Berkeley. The Berkeleian subjective idealism and the Kantian transcendentalism are wide as the poles asunder. A subordinate form of this second problem is, historically, of so much importance as to demand separate notice. In the concrete consciousness of the individual thinker and agent there appears an opposition between the states of consciousness, properly so called, or subjective modes; and certain facts or states of consciousness, which are called objective, are regarded as common to us with other intelligences, and are sharply distinguished from the others, but with which, nevertheless, we have a quite peculiar connection. Experience gives us definite connections between the two series of facts—one called Body, the other called Mind. The apparently absolute opposition between these two, and the peculiar nature of their connection, have caused them to be selected as typical of the general opposition between the subjective thinker and the objective world thought. Kant has only treated indirectly of this problem,
but the principles of his critique supply the point of view from which we can with fairness examine not only the facts themselves but the various theories in explanation of them.  

(c.) Finally, in the general question of the relation of the individual to the universe are involved these problems of ethics and religion which concern his nature and existence, not only as a subject of thought, but as a concrete living agent. The solution of these problems, such, e.g. as the mode of connection between the individual will and the orderly world of facts, the relation of the human individual moved by individual passions to the general law of moral order, can only be approached through the theory of knowledge to which they furnish the complement. These problems play a remarkable part in the Kantian system, and I shall have to point out, in regard to them, the specific relation in which they stand to the completed Kantian philosophic conception, and also the results to which Kant's analysis has been supposed to lead. For the so-called Neo-Kantians, with Lange as their chief, seem to view the *Kritik* as the theoretic demonstration of Positivism, as the rigid proof that the ideas of Duty, God, and Immortality, are mere products of the idealising or poetic faculty, useful as rules for conduct, but base-
less as dreams. One of the main objects of these lectures is to show that no such severance can be effected in the Kantian doctrines, and that the leading idea of the theory of knowledge is at the same time the foundation of Kant's ethical metaphysics.

The method for approaching these fundamental oppositions of human thought must be given, as was above said, in the theory of knowledge. We must not, however, confound this with the naïve doctrine that philosophy must begin, as it ends, with an examination of the "contents of consciousness." Such a conception is fatal to all progress, and the very peculiarity of Kant is his rejection of this so-called psychological method. Before entering on the detailed consideration of his theory of knowledge, it will be well to indicate briefly how his method is distinguished from that of science or empirical psychology, and how, as a consequence, the speculative problem is approached from a new point.

In essence the methods of Science and Psychology cannot differ, for both are concerned with the nature and relations of objects known, with phenomena, and both, as a consequence, remain within the division into things known and subject knowing. It is evident that no principles drawn from
examination of this sphere can afford completed explanation of the phenomena themselves, or can touch the deeper problem of the relations between the two factors which have been severed from one another. Only through some principle, not found in the phenomena, but added from without, e.g. that of the complete intelligibility of nature, can Science even come in sight of the speculative problem properly so called. Nor is Psychology in any better position. It treats, so far as it can, a particular class of known phenomena, for the most part in a descriptive manner; but no conclusion drawn from these facts can ever go beyond them, can ever explain the ultimate synthesis of self-known and phenomena known. Nay more, in so far as psychology continues to be a descriptive science, employing the methods of finite thought, and endeavouring to explain the natural laws of psychical phenomena, its results must be regarded as of quite secondary import for the ultimate doctrine of knowledge. And it is worth while noticing that all the conclusions from the physiology of the senses, which Lange regards as furnishing confirmation of the Kantian criticism, lie entirely beyond and without its sphere. To place on the same level the propositions that Space and Time are conditions of intuition, and that colours, sounds,
etc., are dependent on the structure of the organs of sense, manifests singular want of apprehension of the cardinal distinction of philosophy.\textsuperscript{39} It is of interest for psychology to know those facts on which the peculiarity of sensations depends; but for the theory of knowledge the matter is entirely indifferent. Here we only inquire what are the conditions under which the subject can have the filling in of intuition, however that intuition may be constituted. We must not confound the conditions of this or that phenomenon with the conditions of knowledge of phenomena at all. The one belongs to Science or Psychology; the other to Transcendental Logic. Science and psychology must thus, per force, leave out of account the one fact which forms the burden of philosophy proper, the synthesis of things known, whatever they may be, and self knowing.\textsuperscript{30} It is this transcendental logic which Kant substitutes for the older psychological method of approaching speculative questions,\textsuperscript{31} and in the substitution lies his significance for the history of thought. In very general terms, the object of transcendental logic may be described as the complete analysis of self-consciousness, and the systematic evolution of all that is contained in the very notion of self-consciousness. It is true that at the first glance such analysis
may appear too abstract to be in any way adequate to explanation of existence, and it is to be admitted that something of this abstractness clings throughout to Kant’s treatment of the subject. But we must recognise that consideration of self-consciousness not only leads to the statement of the purely logical conditions of intelligence, but involves the whole filling in which is given in nature and in the development of thought. Even in Kant recognition of this concrete element, which in one of its aspects may be called the ethical and historical, is by no means wanting, and I hope to be able to show you that the restriction of view to the Kantian theory of cognition gives an altogether one-sided and insufficient representation of that system. At the same time, it is to be said that the historical element in its widest sense never received its full due at the hands of Kant, whose deficiency in the historic interest was remarkable. Imperfect, however, as may have been Kant’s realisation of his own idea, he was yet the first who showed that the problems of philosophy must be approached through transcendental logic. He sketched the outlines and methods of this science, and by so doing opened a new era in metaphysical thinking. In order to consider, then, how the new philosophy stands related to more recent ideas, and how the
systematic conception of metaphysics sketched by Kant affords a reconciliation of those oppositions which previous thought had brought into clear relief, it is necessary to analyse somewhat in detail the Kantian theory of knowledge.

*Kant's Theory of Knowledge.*

The manner in which Kant himself stated the problem of his philosophy does not at first sight appear identical with that above given, and, in truth, it is far from easy to find any one expression to include all that he contemplated. The historical conditions under which his system took shape and form naturally exercised great influence in determining his starting-point, and the formulæ which he gives as expressing the essence of his philosophic endeavours have direct reference to more than one previous theory. Even the classic question, "How are synthetic a priori judgments possible?" opens up only one aspect of the complete problem, and that one too limited in scope to be a fair representative of the whole. Without entering here upon a consideration of the various stages through which Kant's thought gradually advanced to the question so placed in the foreground of the *Kritik*—a consideration given in ample detail by Fischer, Paulsen, and Caird—it
will be sufficient for my purpose to note the manner in which Kant stood related on the one hand to pure empiricism, as represented by Hume; on the other, to pure rationalism, as represented by Leibnitz. Throughout the *Kritik* these are the writers ever present to Kant’s mind; and we may say that only unconsciously was he at the same time demonstrating how the abstract universalism of the Cartesian philosophy was to be overcome.

Developing originally from the pure rationalism of Leibnitz and Wolff, Kant, with special reference to the theory of knowledge, had come to a standstill in regard to *real* cognition. With Leibnitz he had held that pure thinking was in ultimate resort analytical, but such a view satisfied the requirements neither of mathematics nor of empirical cognition. In a somewhat confused fashion Kant for a time satisfied himself regarding mathematics, though on that point the expression of his doctrine is by no means precise. Occasionally he seems to approximate to the theory of hypothetical certainty, with which we are familiar in later uncritical empiricists, and which Kant himself rejected. But he appears never to have been able to reconcile himself heartily to Leibnitz’s deduction of truths of fact; above all, he could not identify real connection, connection of fact, with
connection in thought. Reason and consequent he could not regard as identical with cause and effect.\textsuperscript{33} The continuous pressure of this difficulty, the difficulty of accounting for real synthetical knowledge from the individualist point of view, is manifest throughout all the pre-critical writings; and in the remarkable letter of 1772 to M. Herz,\textsuperscript{34} one can see that the starting-point of the new critical investigation was given in and by the definite formulation of the perplexity. Sketching to Herz the divisions of the proposed work on the \textit{Limits of Sensibility and Reason}, Kant says:—

"While reflecting upon the theoretical portion as a whole, and on the mutual relation of its parts, I noted that something essential was wanting, something which I myself, in my long metaphysical researches, and all others had left out of account, and which, in fact, gives the key to all the mysteries of metaphysic; for, I asked myself, on what rests the reference to the object of that which we call ideas in us?" In other words, we may say, Kant here asks himself, How can the subject \textit{know} anything? Previously he had been under the impression that the subject by pure thought could construct a whole system of analytical truths, and that experience itself \textit{gave} synthetic connection of facts. But so soon as the critical question was
put, it must have become apparent that all analysis rests upon and presupposes synthesis, and that experience, as a mere succession of given facts (granting such to be possible), could never yield connection or synthesis, i.e. to say, reference to object. Pure empiricism and pure rationalism, he goes on to point out in the same letter, are equally inadequate as explanations of real knowledge. The one, we may so put it, gives no reality; the other gives no knowledge. Though Kant does not indicate the ground of this failure on either side, it is sufficiently clear that, out of the individual alone, whether individual state of consciousness or individual self-contained spirit, no multiplicity or difference can be obtained, and therefore no knowledge of real relations.

It is naturally of some historic interest to know how this question came to be suggested to Kant, and we have his own reiterated and well-known assertion that Hume was the occasioning cause of his new departure in philosophy. The fact that Hume's doubt with regard to the synthetic connection called cause and effect was the first means of rousing Kant from his earlier opinions with respect to synthesis in general, we must, of course, accept on Kant's own evidence, but it is abundantly plain that the course of his own reflections
had led him to a stage at which perception of Hume's difficulty became possible. We are not to suppose that the change in Kant's mode of thinking was due to the historic accident of coming in contact with Hume's writings. These had long been known to him, but up to the period when the critical method first begins to make its appearance, say 1769-71, they had exercised no particular influence on his thinking. At that period, however, his earlier theory of knowledge had shown itself incapable of solving a quite general problem, a particular case of which he found stated with full consciousness by Hume.35

In opposition, then, to Hume, Kant had to show that the theory of receptivity as the one function of mind—a theory in essence identical with what was noted above as the principle of the psychological method—omitted the factor which alone rendered cognition of phenomena possible. A stream of conscious states, which to Hume makes up the substance of mind and experience, is to Kant pure abstraction, arrived at by thrusting out of sight the nature and significance of consciousness itself.36 It may be possible to speak of such a stream, but it is impossible to regard it as matter of knowledge; it is not to be known on any terms by any intelligence. Thus, with regard to Hume's
empiricism, the Kantian problem becomes the quite general question as to the conditions necessarily involved in knowledge as such. With Hume, Kant recognises the distinction between the individual fleeting elements contained in experience and the general thoughts which unite with them in order to form a coherent context; as against Hume he has to show that these universal elements are neither abstracted from the particulars nor surreptitiously added to them, but are necessarily implicated in the particulars, which, apart from them, become pure abstractions, things in themselves, empty husks of thought. It would have added much to the intelligibility of the *Kritik* had this general aspect of the problem remained ever in the foreground, for, as opposed to the rationalism of Leibnitz, Kant's expressions assume another and more limited form.

The metaphysical doctrines of Leibnitz rested upon a peculiar theory of knowledge. The insoluble contradictions in the metaphysical conception of the world of monads, each developing in perfect isolation from the others, yet in strict harmony with them, and united into system by the *Monas Monadum*, were inextricably interwoven with the erroneous theory of knowledge essential to pure or abstract Rationalism. The intellectual
consideration of things, or the treatment of them by pure understanding, was regarded as the source of all metaphysical determinations in their regard, and understanding to Leibnitz was purely analytical. Sense, which seems to supply elements of difference for the blank identity of pure thought, was simply confused understanding, and its determinations were gradually cleared up or intellectualised by process of analysis.\textsuperscript{37} Against this view Kant continuously advances the necessity of synthesis, the absolute distinction between Sense and Understanding, and the impossibility of knowledge apart from the external system in and along with which human consciousness develops. Much that is perplexing in Kant, much that is at first sight irreconcilable with his completed theory, arises from the persistent opposition to the Leibnitzian metaphysic and theory of knowledge. The distinction between Sense and Understanding, to take but one instance, is emphasised so strongly as to make it at times appear as if each was regarded by Kant as the source of a specific \textit{kind} of knowledge; yet his general theory and his express declarations prevent us ascribing such a view to him.\textsuperscript{38}

The question, then, How are synthetic \textit{a priori} judgments possible? is but a special mode of ex-
pressing the quite general problem, How is knowledge itself possible? and the remark may here be permitted that much confusion is caused by Kant's apparent identification of the two modes of expression. It seems to imply a distinction in knowledge, as if synthetic a priori judgments form a special portion of cognition requiring special examination. In fact, the ground of the possibility of such judgments is the ground of the possibility of knowledge at all, and any contrast between the kinds of judgment must be regarded as, in the first instance, merely preliminary, a stage from which advance may be made to the complete solution. Such contrasts are extremely numerous in Kant, and they have given rise to almost incredible confusion. He contrasts, e.g., the objectivity of judgments of experience, which rest upon the principle of a priori synthesis, with the connection of elements of experience which we may represent to ourselves through imagination. Such a contrast is more misleading than helpful, for we cannot become aware of the distinction otherwise than through consciousness of objectivity itself. And it is a serious error in method to suppose that the general consciousness of objectivity arises through contrast to supposed subjective connection of ideas. The objectivity in a causal connection,
where the supposed consequent is actually realised in experience, as contrasted with the subjective imagination of a consequent which is not realised, is not in any sense the objectivity, which it is the business of the *Kritik* to investigate. So also, we require to keep in mind the absolute universality of the *a priori* element in knowledge, otherwise we are apt to find an extreme contradiction in the severance made by Kant between judgments of perception and judgments of experience. His language with regard to the first of these is very distracting, but it only requires attention to discover that the difference is between two classes of empirical connections, connections between this and that fact in experience, and does not apply to knowledge as such. A judgment of perception is only possible in relation to an object already determined as such by thought, and the predicate expresses a certain subjective state associated with the perception of the object. Each is determined, and consequently stands, under the general conditions of knowledge, but the connection between them is not thought according to the rules of possible experience. That it should not be so is quite in accordance with Kant’s doctrine of the contingency of facts. No real occurrence can be cognised save as an effect, but it is not necessary
that $a$ and $b$, two given facts, should be regarded as severally cause and effect. If, from empirical grounds, I am led to conclude that $a$ is the antecedent which $b$ necessarily involves, then I may raise the empirical connection into a connection according to the category of cause. All this, however, already presupposes the determination of objects of knowledge, and lies beyond the question which Kant has in the first instance to consider.\textsuperscript{40}

It is so essential, however, that no misunderstanding should exist regarding the preliminary distinctions with which Kant makes his first approach to the problem of cognition, that it will be well to note here, though briefly, the official explanations of analytic and synthetic, of synthetic a priori and synthetic a posteriori judgments. In the analytic judgment the predicate merely explicates that which is implicitly contained in the conception (notion) of the subject. For such judgments nothing is requisite beyond the definite notion or sum of attributes with which we start. In all synthetic judgments, on the other hand, the predicate adds something not contained in the notion of the subject, and, on Kant's view, such addition cannot be given by understanding alone—which he seems at times to regard as purely analytic, mere identity—but by intuition bringing
us in contact with real experience. If the intuition which serves as medium for connecting subject and predicate be empirical, given matter of experience, which may or may not be again so presented, then our judgment is synthetic *a posteriori*. Such judgments are really equivalent to the so-called judgments of perception. But if the intuition or element of real experience be in itself *a priori*, or pure form, *i.e.* be such as must always be presented, then the judgment is synthetic *a priori*, and expresses a connection of subject and predicate always and necessarily valid, an objective connection.\(^{41}\)

It is plain that divisions such as those just given must occasion much confusion and ambiguity, for they tend to put out of sight the inner connection of the various modes of judging. One difficulty raised regarding them we may at once dismiss. Schleiermacher, with others, has maintained that the distinction of Analytic and Synthetic is merely relative, what is now synthetic may afterwards become analytic.\(^{42}\) This is quite correct, and is admitted in so many words by Kant himself.\(^{43}\) He was perfectly aware that with empirical concepts as the subjects, it depended on the formation of the concept whether the judgment were synthetic or not; in fact, the distinction
cannot with any profit be applied to judgments expressive of empirical connections. It has relevancy only in reference to judgment as the primitive act of all cognition, or to the method of forming judgments at all; and, when so regarded, is at once seen to express a true and important distinction. But it requires to be noted (a) that on Kant's own showing, analysis as such, analysis in ultimate abstraction, is only possible through and after synthesis. The original act of all cognition is synthesis or combination. Only under condition of primitive synthesis can we have subjective analysis.44 (b.) Synthetic *a posteriori* judgments are only possible through, and in conformity with, the conditions of *a priori* synthesis. It is true that when I say—to take Kant's own illustration—*This body is heavy*, I do not imply that the predicate heavy must always attach to it. In this sense the judgment has no universality or necessity. But I do imply that the predicate is connected objectively with the subject; connected according to the rules of a possible *a priori* synthesis, that of substance and accident or property.45 The relation of these *a posteriori* judgments to cognition is never satisfactorily handled by Kant; it is, indeed, but one aspect of his curious view as to empirical contingency; but we must absolutely accept the
fundamental proposition of his theory of knowledge, that empirical consciousness is only possible in relation to and under the conditions of pure transcendental consciousness. 46

(c.) Synthetic a priori judgments in the highest sense are not in truth judgments that present themselves to us in experience. They are general formulae, expressive of those conditions under which experience is possible. In actual experience I judge that this change or event has a cause, and Kant desires to show (how, will appear later) that cognition of an event or change, as such, is impossible, except under the condition of causal connection, i.e. the simple judgment involves the general condition formulated in the synthetic principle, all changes are caused.

With these preliminaries we may now proceed to the theory of knowledge. To Kant the essential fact in all cognition is synthesis; every judgment of experience contains synthesis. 47 Now the mere notion of synthesis involves of necessity (1) a manifold or multiplicity, which is combined; (2) a unity, to which, or by reference to which, it is combined; (3) the mode, process, or form of combination. 48 In the special synthesis of knowledge, each of these elements must be able to be present in consciousness. The manifold here is the complex
of sense presentations; the unity is the Ego or Self; the modes or forms of combination are the pure forms or rules of Understanding. In this synthesis, according to Kant, we shall find explained the peculiar note of experience, viz., connectedness of perceptions, or reference of individual presentations of sense to the unity of object or thing known; for the modes of the synthesis by which the given manifold of sense is reduced to the unity of self-consciousness are at the same time the modes of objective existence. Self-consciousness, in other words, is impossible apart from the orderly, systematic connection of phenomena which we call experience.

Taking in more detail this theory of knowledge, we shall note, without following the order in the Kritik, the ultimate elements in the synthesis; the subjective processes by which the synthesis is realised in our consciousness; and, finally, the objective significance of the synthesis.

(A.) The elements in the synthesis.

These are, briefly, the following:—1°, the manifold or multiplicity of special sense, the several sensations, mere stimuli, in themselves incognizable, not even blurs or confused representations of things; 2°, the forms or general modes in which this manifold is received; 3°, the forms under
which the manifold so received is *cognised*; 4°, the unity of consciousness itself. Any single *perception*, cognition of an object, is possible only through the combination of these elements, and requires nothing beyond their combination.

It adds considerably to the difficulty of the *Kritik* that these elements, which have for our cognition no separate existence, should be handled separately; the *Æsthetic* dealing with the matter and form of sense or intuition, the first part of the *Analytic* with the forms of thought. Only in the deduction of the categories do we come fairly in sight of the full import of the Kantian theory of knowledge, and understand the nature and relations of the parts which are there put together. Kant himself more than once seems to forget that the parts, as parts, have no real or individual existence, and uses expressions with respect to them which fuller developments show to be absurd and impossible. Thus, to select one noteworthy instance, he speaks of the peculiar difficulty of showing how the categories are conditions of objectivity, seeing that *objects* can be given in intuition apart from them. Such a remark is only made in order to be contradicted; but it illustrates the caution with which the doctrines of the *Kritik* must be stated. 49
Taking the elements in isolation, however, we have, first, the manifold of special sense or receptivity, and the conditions under which it can enter into the synthesis of consciousness. So far as synthesis is concerned, it is not imperative that the manifold should be furnished by sense or by senses like ours; but supposing it to be given only through sense, then, says Kant, it cannot be received save in the general forms, Space and Time. Space and Time cannot be abstracted from the facts of intuition, for no intuition is possible without them; they are therefore necessary, and prior to experience. They alone render possible the combination of the manifold of sense into the unity of object. Space and Time, further, though general, are not Notions, for they do not contain special spaces and times under them but in them; and they are given as infinite in quantity, a property belonging from its nature only to intuition, not to conceptions, which are always definite and partial representations (i.e. contain a defined sum of attributes common to many individuals). They are, therefore, pure a priori perceptions or intuitions, and render a priori synthesis in our consciousness at least possible.

Before proceeding further, it is needful to remark (a) that Kant is not here dealing with
the psychology of space and time representations. The psychical elements involved in localisation are to his theory matter of indifference. The problem is purely general, or transcendental, or logical. Under what conditions can the manifold of special sense be received into the synthesis of consciousness, and woven into the context of experience? It will afterwards appear that the a priori character of Space and Time might be inferred from the part played by productive imagination in the construction of intuitions; and in a more detailed exposition it would be requisite to enter somewhat fully into the special relations between Imagination and Intuition. The elements in the Kantian synthesis are so intimately connected that, for completeness of understanding, the exposition ought to start from each of them in turn, and demonstrate how the others are involved. (b) Though Time and Space are here spoken of as pure perceptions, as forms lying ready in mind prior to experience, it is to be carefully noted that in themselves they are simply conditions of the possibility of perception, that they are not originally perceptions, but only become so through synthesis or combination. Space, as an original perception, is per se impossible. It is only known as object through construction in it,
i.e., by combination of its manifold according to the general principles of synthesis. Apart from perceived objects or matter, space itself is not perceived. It only renders synthesis of intuition possible, while unity of consciousness is required in order to render it real. 61

So far one aspect of the synthesis. But the stimuli of special sense, even in the forms of Space and Time, are not yet objects known. The senses give no representations of objects. Only through synthesis or combination of the manifold presented in sense, moreover, only through conscious synthesis, can we refer the scattered elements furnished by intuition to the unity of the object or thing. Now the act of synthetically uniting intuitions is, according to Kant, Judgment—and all judgment is the determination or qualification of an intuition through a general conception or notion. This, which appears somewhat abruptly in the early part of the Analytik, is one of the remarkable portions of the Kantian analysis of knowledge. We may express it in other words, thus:—Only through a general notion can the particulars of experience enter into the unity of self-consciousness (the universal is that which turns the many into one). The Ego, or logical unity, can receive content or filling in only under
general forms—rules for possible experience. The essence of the act of cognition is the reduction of the manifold, or multiplicity, to the unity of consciousness through general notions. At present we do not ask how this reduction is effected, or what is its ultimate significance, but add, to complete the survey of the elements, that Kant, to his own satisfaction, discovers in the schemes of logical judgment the forms of these pure notions of the understanding, and is thus enabled to give an apparently exhaustive table or list of the possible modes in which the unity of self-consciousness is realised in the manifold of experience. These forms of combination or synthetic unity are the categories.\textsuperscript{52}

The last of the elements which we have to notice is the supreme unity itself, or Logical Ego, the indispensable factor in all cognition, and consequently in itself, according to Kant, incognisable. It cannot be presented in intuition, cannot therefore be determined in relation to any category, is not an object of possible experience.