LECTURE II.

KANT'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE.

At the close of last lecture I had stated briefly the several elements which, according to Kant, make up the organic unity of Perception or real Cognition. We require now to consider how these elements are subjectively put together, i.e., how cognition arises out of their combination, and what is the objective significance of the connection.

(B.) How the elements are subjectively brought into combination.

For Intuition or apprehension of an object there is necessary not only receptivity, whether material or formal, but conjunction or synthesis of the several facts apprehended. All intuitions consist of parts, combined into a whole or unity. Now this synthesis of apprehension is not given by sense itself, nor by the pure forms of sense, which only render such synthesis possible. To the individual, isolated, or disconnected elements, sup-
plied through special sense, there must be added the functions of Imagination and Understanding. An isolated fact of sensibility, an impression, is by itself incognisable, unperceivable. For cognition we must have difference or plurality, together with consciousness of unity in the act of combining or grasping together this plurality. Every act of perception, then, involving synthesis of apprehension, involves also Imagination.¹ Imagination fills up, as it were, the complete picture, or representation of the object, from the stimulus of special sense, and thus enables the given fact to become matter of knowledge.² But in such filling up or supplementing it is necessary that the represented elements be connected with those presented in sense by unity of consciousness in the act of combining. I must be aware that the whole intuition, partly presented, partly represented or imagined, is mine. Imagination, therefore, cannot work at random, but is so determined as to contribute only what shall be capable of entering into the unity of consciousness. But, as we have already seen, nothing can enter into the unity of consciousness save as determined according to a general rule or in accordance with a category. Thus Imagination fills up or supplements the stimuli of sense with reproductions of elements of possible experience in accordance
with a category, or in such a manner that the whole intuition is determined in relation to a category. Nor is it difficult to see how Imagination, which is in itself sensuous,—dealing with intuition, not with thought—comes to have this power of rendering experience possible. For all our intuitions must, in the first instance, belong to Inner Sense, i.e., be for me, and be under the form of Inner Sense, i.e., Time; consequently, the modes in which unity of consciousness in the manifold of Time is possible, are at the same time the conditions under which experience at all is possible. Now these modes are nothing but the several forms of synthetic unity in the a priori intuition, Time itself. The Imagination, then, determined by the understanding, constructs and must construct figurative syntheses or schemata corresponding in intuition or sensuously to the pure modes of synthesis cogitated in the categories. Not that the two faculties are distinct; "it is one and the same spontaneity which, now under the name of Imagination, now under that of Understanding, introduces connection into the complex of intuition." All empirical intuition, all empirical consciousness, must be subject to the synthetic unity of Imagination, which thus mediates between Understanding and Sense.
Such, very briefly, is the subjective aspect of Kant's theory of perception. Special stimulus of sense requires supplement or completion from Imagination before it can be apprehended; Imagination, in order that its productions may be possible experiences, is necessarily restricted to such constructions as answer to the general forms of combination or categories, which are the acts of Understanding. Sensibility, then, with its synopsis or synthesis; Imagination, with its figurate syntheses or schemata; Understanding, with its pure notions, or laws, or forms, compose the psychological mechanism through which the Ego receives the filling in of experience, or, as we may otherwise express it, through which perception of an object becomes possible.⁵

Valuable as is this exposition in a psychological regard, it has, nevertheless, a tendency to bring into undue prominence the apparently mechanical fashion in which the elements of the Kantian synthesis are combined, and though in special references Kant is extremely careful to point out that the combination is organic or necessary, yet he frequently falls into the error of ascribing to the parts separately functions they only discharge when united with others, and never quite succeeds in freeing his theory from a certain aspect of
externality or artificiality. The Understanding appears to seize upon and work up by arbitrary acts of its own material already formed, and it would seem that each human consciousness is somehow furnished with a psychical mechanism by means of which it depicts for itself, when excited from without, a world of real objects. This tendency to regard the problems of knowledge from the individualist or psychological point of view is, however, rectified when there is taken into consideration what I have called the objective significance of the synthesis.

(C.) The Synthesis objectively regarded.

Here the mode of viewing the problem of perception is in a sense reversed. In the subjective analysis, unity of self-consciousness had appeared as something known by itself and necessary in order to make cognition of objects possible. Now it is requisite to note that self-consciousness is only possible in relation to and through synthetic connection of the manifold in experience, and that such synthetic connection is precisely what we understand by the reference of representations to the object. In other words, Kant is here concerned to demonstrate that self-consciousness is only possible in and through an orderly system of experience, and that the laws or conditions of self-
consciousness are the determinations or general qualities of real existence, so far at least as its form or ultimate intelligibility is concerned. Although, then, his expressions may seem at times to involve the individualist assumption that experience is only the consciousness of the individual, Kant has here raised the problem to a higher stage, and his demonstration concerns not the conditions of this or that intelligence, but the conditions of intelligence as such. The subjectivism of the theory is apparent only.

No connection of representations or ideas—so runs his proof—is possible, unless all of them can be accompanied by the pure logical form of self-consciousness, I think. Consciousness of the unity and identity of Self is necessary for all representations, as otherwise they could not be for me, could not form parts of my experience. But just as unity is not, apart from difference, so consciousness of unity itself is only possible if difference, plurality, or manifold be given. The pure ego, or logical unity of self-consciousness, is itself analytical, mere identity. The manifold or given plurality is a known manifold, i.e., must be subject to those conditions under which alone it can enter into the unity of experience or knowledge. The analytical unity of consciousness therefore implies synthetic
unity of the manifold of experience. The modes of this synthesis are, we already know, the categories or pure notions of the understanding. No element of intuition can be cognised as such, can enter into the context of experience, except when determined in regard to a category or general rule of possible experience. But determination, according to a rule of possible experience, is precisely that in phenomena which we call reference of representations or ideas to the object. Objectivity is conformity of actual experience to the rules of possible experience. The synthetic connection, then, which we call union in an object, or the object simply, is nothing but the condition of the unity of self-consciousness in the manifold of experience. Without object, no unity of self. A judgment which expresses synthetic connection according to the rules of possible experience is an objective judgment, expresses a union of representations necessarily and universally valid. Thus the three facts, unity of self-consciousness as the condition of possible experience, the determination of intuitions according to the categories or pure notions, and the reference of intuitions to the orderly objective context of experience, are not three but one. They are but three aspects or modes of regarding the fundamental synthesis,
which is perception or real cognition. This is the supreme principle of the Kantian theory of knowledge. All empirical consciousness is necessarily subject to the conditions of pure consciousness or possible experience, and these conditions are the pure forms of the thought of object in general, the categories.

From this discussion, abstract in itself, and compressed almost to unintelligibility, there can now be obtained an answer to the question which, as we saw, was placed in the foreground of the *Kritik*. For us intuition is necessarily given, and the material so supplied cannot be cognised *a priori*. But no material whatsoever can enter into the context of experience unless formally determined, *qualified*, according to the conditions of the unity of self-consciousness. These conditions, then, supply the foundation for all the *a priori* knowledge which we can attain. As already indicated, synthesis in knowledge is, according to Kant, possible only through intuitions; for *knowledge*, there is requisite, not merely the thought of object, or pure form of combination of a manifold, but a corresponding intuition which shall prove the object to belong to possible experience. *A priori* knowledge, then, rests upon and expresses the determinations of pure intuition,
according to the categories or ultimate modes of combination. But the universal form of all intuition, inner or outer, is Time. A complete system of the a priori principles of knowledge, will, therefore, be obtained by considering the manner in which productive imagination is necessarily determined with regard to the construction of intuitions and connection of perceptions in Time. As we have already seen, the function of pure imagination is to fill up or supply to the stimuli of sense the elements necessary, before they can be received into the context of possible experience. The forms in which Imagination works Kant calls Schemata, and its procedure Schematism. Only through Schemata do we have a priori cognition, for cognition requires the element of intuition, which is not to be found in the category, and the element of thought, which is not in the intuition. Thought and Intuition are organically united in the schema.

On the special modes of schematism, and on the synthetic principles deduced from them, I cannot now enter, but shall select for consideration the treatment of two crucial questions—the principle of causality and the doctrine of external perception. Before taking them up, it is necessary to note that Kant’s manner of explaining the func-
tions of schematism is extremely apt to be misunderstood, and to mislead. Schemata, according to him, are requisite because intuitions and pure notions are heterogeneous; since the one, therefore, cannot be immediately subsumed under the other. It would appear, then, that intuitions and notions stood apart from one another as finished products, and that their synthesis was a mechanical conjunction, effected by judgment, which subsumed the particular under the general. Such, however, is not rashly to be assumed as Kant's theory. We are not to suppose that the subsumption is mechanical; that the particular is something distinct from the universal. The union is organic; the particular is only the universal under a special form. The same function of synthesis, which in pure abstraction we call category, is, in realisation, the schema, and the intuition is not apart from the schema. The intuition is not cognised, is not for us, apart from the pure notion, but only in and through it. The junction, however, is effected through imagination, which, as we already saw, fills up the complete perception. Combination or synthesis, without which there is no knowledge, is not given in intuition, but the elements of intuition are combined by imagination according to the pure forms of combination. Thus synthetic
combination is the common element in Understanding and Imagination, through which they coalesce in actual perception. In our cognition, where sensibility is purely receptive, the Imagination works in the pure forms of intuition or pure perceptions. Its schemata, therefore, are at once sensuous and general. The sensuous element, in order to be cognised at all, must have the aspect of generality, and this it receives in the schema. But we must on no account regard Notion, Schema, and Intuition, as three parts of perception which would exist in isolation. Only the category, or form of combination in general, Kant appears to say can be thought in pure abstraction.⁸,⁹

The possibility of misunderstanding on this essential matter arises mainly from Kant's over-anxiety to distinguish between Sense and Understanding, from the misleading analogies connected with the term subsume, and, from the extreme laxity with which Intuition is employed. It is worth while recalling the fact that soon after the appearance of the Kritik, Kant's attention was drawn to the possibility of misconception regarding his doctrine through certain difficulties raised by that acute thinker, Salomon Maimon. Maimon asked how it could be shown that sense and understanding, which are quite heterogeneous, must
of necessity harmonise, and how it was possible to think that the pure notions of the understanding should be laws for all objects whatsoever? To this Kant makes the brief but significant reply, that objects are merely phenomena, consequently, in one aspect at least, subjective, as being conditioned by our faculty of representation; while, on the other hand, they have objectivity, since they are united according to the forms of pure consciousness. Moreover, since we can have no experience which is not so constituted, intuitions not harmonising with the pure forms of thought are for us nothing. Of them we can have no knowledge whatsoever. In other words, we may say the harmony is not to be conceived as the uniting of two opposed and completed parts; the parts only exist so in the unity itself. The harmony, or organic union, alone has existence; the parts are merely aspects of the whole. The full import of this remark must be borne in mind when investigating the crucial instance of Kant's method, the explanation of causality.\textsuperscript{10}

The discussion of this question is perhaps the most perplexing in all the \textit{Kritik}, and that mainly from excess of explanation and illustration.\textsuperscript{11} The real thought is overlaid with a mass of detail, under which it is with difficulty discovered. It
seems to me clear that in the treatment of the Second Analogy Kant has throughout a double aim—first, to bring forward in perfect distinctness his conception of objectivity as orderly connectedness of perceptions; and second, to show that determined connectedness of perceptions in the sequence of time is the real counterpart, the realisation of the pure notion, causality. He takes infinite pains to explain and illustrate what he means by objective sequence, sequence in the object; and these illustrations, though entering into the main argument, tend to throw into the background the peculiar proof of the principle itself.

I shall, in the first place, state briefly what appears to me the essence of Kant's reasoning on this subject, and shall then comment on one or two of the difficulties originating in his mode of exposition. We have already seen that nothing can be combined in the experience of the Ego except under notions, the general rules or forms of intellectual unity. We have also seen that for cognition or perception an intuition is requisite in order to realise or give embodiment to the category, an intuition which shall show that the object denoted by the category belongs to possible experience. We saw, finally, that intuitions are
not immediately determined through notions, but through the schemata produced by imagination acting under the rules of understanding, for synthetic unity in productive imagination is understanding. Now among the categories or pure modes of intellectual function, there is one denoting the determined connection of objects in general as dependent, one on the other, the category of causality and dependence. If, then, this notion has validity in cognition, there must be somehow given an intuition which shall render necessary, and shall only be possible through the production by imagination of a schema corresponding to the pure connection of cause and effect. Something quite similar to this we find to be the case in the application of the other categories. Thus, e.g., the pure notion, Quantity, has as its correlate extensive magnitude, or synthetic unity in the construction of intuitions by addition of like parts; (the schema, therefore, is Number). No intuition is possible save through this unity in the addition of like parts, because each intuition must be presented in Time or in Time and Space, and in order to fill a a definite portion of them, to be marked off from others, i.e., to be perceived at all, must be constructed by the same act through which definite portions of time and space are constructed. This
act is the act of Imagination determined by the pure notion Quantity, through which alone intuitions can enter into the experience of the Ego. The double mode of viewing this process—now from the necessity of an intuition to realise the category, now from the necessity of the category and its schema, in order that the intuition should be cognised—must be kept carefully in mind. The errors on the subject of causality generally arise from accenting the one to the exclusion of the other.

Taking, then, the problem of causality, we have, therefore, to ask, what perception can furnish the hint upon which Imagination produces the schema corresponding to the pure notion, or intellectual multiple, Causality and Dependence? Evidently the only perception in question is that of change. Dead uniformity or permanence, if a possible experience, would furnish no element for such a notion. The problem thus becomes, How is the perception of change at all possible? Looking at the matter quite analytically, we see that two conditions, at least, are requisite—(1) sequence of perceptions, for the new perception, to be known as new, must follow and be contrasted with another; (2) possibility of determining the position and relation of perceptions in time. But how
is position in Time fixed? Not through Time itself, for Time is not known per se, nor does it give any fixity or means of determining existence in time. In order that any perception or perceived change should be determined as existing in time, i.e., should be cognised as a change, it must be regarded as determined by previous phenomena in such a manner that, these being given, this must necessarily follow, or have existence. In other words, cognition of an event or change is only possible if the perception is supplemented by the schema of determined order in time according to necessary rule, i.e., the imagination is necessitated to represent an undefined series of previous phenomena from which the present real fact of experience necessarily follows. Now this schema of necessary sequence in time is the sensuous correlate of the pure category, cause and effect. No experience of an event, then, is possible, unless imagination adds to the present intuition the representation of previous events from which this necessarily follows, and the imagination is necessitated to add this conception because in no other manner could perception of change in time enter into the experience of the self-conscious Ego. All changes, then, are subject to the law of cause and effect.
The deeper aspect of Kant's theory of cognition is not at once apparent in this proof of the objective validity of the causal nexus. For here, as in the subjective analysis of perception itself (cf. pp. 48-9), the synthetic unity of consciousness is taken as something given from which to work out, and the inquiry is not directly made whether the connection of the parts of experience in time, according to objective rule, be not the condition of this supreme unity. Yet this is the manner in which we must contemplate Kant's proof. The connection of the parts of experience in the pure form of Time, apart from which consciousness of the unity and identity of self is impossible, is only through the pure notion of cause realised in the mode of determined sequence of existence in Time. Kant is, in truth, pointing, though obscurely, to an element of his theory which is never made quite so prominent as it requires, but recognition of which is indispensable to a consistent view of his activity. The consciousness of self is only in and through cognition of the object, and the object, or unity of experience, means determined existence and relations of existence of phenomena. The mediating fact, then, by which we connect the pure unity of consciousness and the empirical multiplicity of intuition in time and space, is the
possibility of experience, or the complex of conditions within which subject and object arise in mutual opposition. The various processes by which, subjectively, the mediation is effected, are not to be regarded as more than mechanism, still less must they be taken as essential to the transcendental proof. The essential elements are (1) the necessary connection, one may say the identity, of unity in experience with unity of consciousness, (2) the necessity of external intuition, the real in experience, in order that such unity may be found.\textsuperscript{14}

To this brief notice I may add the curious remark made by Kant as to the kind of intuition in which change can be perceived. This, he says, is only the perception of the motion of a body in space, just as the intuition requisite for the synthesis of substance and accident is external perception, intuition in space.\textsuperscript{15} Kant, in making these remarks, appears to have been but dimly conscious of the problem necessarily raised by them, how can inner states, inner intuitions only in Time, be matter of experience? The consequences of the remarks are very significant for more than one doctrine both in Kant and in later writers.

The exposition under the second Analogy (\textit{Kritik}, 173-187) has given rise to much dispute,
originating, as I have above hinted, from the laborious manner in which Kant explains and illustrates what is indeed connected with his proof of causality in phenomena but does not form part of it. He is especially anxious to enforce his doctrine that determination of existence in time is distinguished from construction of an intuition which may or may not correspond to existence, simply by the thought necessity of order in the perceptions themselves. In illustration he contrasts the successive addition of parts in the construction of the intuition of a house, which may be taken in any order, with the sequence of the perceptions in a real change, e.g. the motion of a boat on the river. The first succession then, he appears to say, is reversible, the second irreversible, and it has been thought that in this element is to be found Kant's proof of causality.

Irreversibility has been taken to mean necessary connection of the empirical facts. For instance, when the shining of the sun warms a stone, I am supposed to perceive that this empirical conjunction is irreversible, that the sun by shining must always warm stone, and then I subsume the particular sequence or pair of facts under the category cause. It must be borne in mind, however, that we cannot identify empirical conditions
with conditions for intelligence as such, or for possible experience. Kant's contrasts are never, so far as I am aware, between successions of events which are irreversible and others which are reversible. To ascribe such a view to him would stultify not only his proof, but the very principle which he imagines himself to be proving. Whether or not that proof be satisfactory, we must at least understand Kant to be aiming at a universal principle—
all changes are caused—and it is impossible for a moment to suppose that his demonstration rests on the basis of any number of felt necessities among successive phenomena as contrasted with other sequences which are not necessary. I may add that the argument founded on this ambiguous distinction between reversible and irreversible is not borne out by Kant's examples. In two of these —the motion of the boat and the freezing of water—the irreversibility in question is to be found, but neither is an instance of causal connection between the two phenomena whose sequence is irreversible. The previous position of the boat up the stream is not the cause of its position lower down; the liquid state of water is not the cause of its frozen state. Nay, the intuition which, according to Kant, is the type for perception of change, motion of a body in space, shows with sufficient clearness that the irre-
versibility of the elements of intuition has no application to this or that pair of phenomena, but to the quite general connection of existences determined in time. It is the characteristic of perceptions as opposed to the construction of intuitions. Kant himself deduces irreversibility from causal connection, or rather shows himself perfectly aware that determined sequence in time is only through causal connection. 19

A further confusion is due to the contrast drawn here, as in the discussion on judgments, between the determined sequence of perceptions and the arbitrary play of imagination. Such a contrast is more misleading than helpful. If Kant only means that I can consciously represent to myself particular empirical facts as in any order, he draws attention to a mere peculiarity of reproductive imagination, which is possible only in relation to an order of events already thought as determined in time. The imagined facts are equally subject to the pure law of productive imagination; a remark which is quite borne out by the criterion Kant establishes as distinguishing mere dream-experience from reality. But if he mean that I can represent to myself events as altogether undetermined in time, he contradicts his own fundamental principle that imagination can only work
within the conditions of possible experience; and such contradiction is not rashly to be ascribed to him. In either case the contrast has no bearing on the problem before us, for it can only concern empirical connections of fact, and these are contingent. In no other way than by experience can we discover whether or not the events which I represent to myself as cause or effect of given phenomena really exist. Illustrations drawn from this source must therefore be held as unconnected with the proof of the causal principle. 20

I take next Kant's discussion of External Perception, recalling attention to the fact that in connection with the first Analogy the intuition brought under the schema of permanence in time, is declared to be the external intuition of that which fills space, or resists compression. The only substances known to us are extended resisting things in space; and all change is change in substance or manifestation of substance. 21 Now the idealism which Kant has in view when considering the problem of external perception rests on the principle that subjective states, determinations of my own existence in time, are immediately known, whereas the existence of matter or external things in space, is only an inference, and therefore problematic. 22 We are supposed to reason from existence known in
us to existence of real things without, *i.e.* things in space, not things in themselves. Against this view Kant advances the following argument: The empirical consciousness of my own existence in time (not to be confused with pure consciousness) is only possible in relation to a permanent in time. Now external perception alone can give the intuition corresponding to the schema of permanence in time; consequently the empirical matter of external perception, or the empirical reality of things in space, is the condition for possible consciousness of my own determined existence in time. We have empirical consciousness of our own existence in time only in connection with the consciousness of an external system of things in space. The reality of external things, *i.e.* of matter in space, is just as certain as the reality of our own existence; the one is as immediately known as the other. Kant seems further to say that the arguments against the reality of external perception are altogether puerile. The only difficulty to his mind is the difficulty of explaining why we should have external intuition at all; and this we cannot hope to explain.23

The peculiarity in the above argument, as in the Analogies, is the reference to external sense as the indispensable condition of knowledge, and it
leads us to notice that with regard to inner sense, or the cognition of Self as object, Kant's teaching is far from being clear. He rightly points out that we can only cognise ourselves as objects in connection with the world of things in space; but his reasoning, logically developed, should have led to the conclusion either that we cannot cognise ourselves as objects at all, or that cognition of self is not through the categories of the understanding. On his own showing the determinations of my own existence cannot be cognised as objects, for we cannot apply to them the schema of permanence in time. Incidentally, indeed, Kant himself remarks that we conceive our inner states under the image of a line, and think their succession as the drawing of the line. But these inner states are not substances; their origination, or passing out of being, does not involve any diminution or increase of substance in the universe. As change can only be cognised in substance, these states are not cognisable as changes, for relation to a substance is not precisely the relation of accident to the substance which appears in the accidents. If not cognised as changes, are the inner states to be cognised at all? The truth is that in this special case, and throughout in his treatment of psychology, Kant wavers between the conception of psy-
chology as an empirical science of inner states resembling physics, which he sees to be impossible, and psychology as a speculative science, tracing the subjective processes through which the pure thoughts or categories are realised in consciousness. Empirical psychology he will not admit to the rank of science; no a priori rational principles are attainable in it; we can only describe and classify facts. In short, psychology is for him a species of empirical Anthropology, or general descriptive account of human existence and culture. His principles ought, however, to have led him farther, and we can judge from the critique of the Paralogisms of Psychology (specially as in the first edition) to what conclusion they really tended. The categories of Relation, Substance, Cause, Reciprocity, are entirely inadequate to determine the nature of consciousness. The pure form of all consciousness, the judgment, I think, affords no means of determining the nature of the soul or Ego as Substance, as Simple, as Personal, or as standing in relation to external things. An intuition is requisite if these categories are to be more than mere thoughts, but no intuition of self is given. At the same time the reasoning by which Kant reaches this result enables him to deal successfully with the peculiar form of materialism which would
explain the phenomena of inner sense as results of external things, or as modes of matter. Such explanation, he points out with complete evidence, involves transcendental realism or the assumption that material objects as known are things-in-themselves. External phenomena are simply modes of our external intuition, and it is absurd to suppose that one class of our perceptions can account for the total content of consciousness. (In other words, things are only for intelligence; and intelligence, therefore, cannot be explained as resulting from them.) Whoever admits that material phenomena are only as they are known to be is forever debarred from assuming them as the ground of consciousness itself. If it be supposed that the unknown somewhat which appears to us in the forms of external intuition is really the same as the unknown somewhat which is manifested in thought, and consequently that inner and outer are but the modes of appearance of one essence (for such a theory Kant contemplates), then the answer must be made that such a theory is possibly true, but is absolutely meaningless. Its truth can never be known, for the essence to which all is referred can by hypothesis never be known. To assume it as the identity of which inner and outer are mani-
festations, is a mere apology for incoherence of thought.  

* The true conclusion from this laboured portion of Kant's theory is that briefly stated above. The categories which are supreme where merely external relations are concerned, fail of applicability when the nature of thought is to be determined. Only when we endeavour to determine our own mental existence as object—an impossible feat—does the discrepancy become apparent between the categories of external intuition and the world of self-consciousness. All the facts of experimental psychology (psycho-physics and the like) are to be received without hesitation. They may directly or indirectly throw light upon the manner in which, and the mechanism through which, consciousness expresses itself in man, but they do not in the least explain the supreme fact of consciousness itself. Here we have one well-defined limit to the idea of mechanism.

To sum up, then, Kant's theory of cognition in its positive aspect, knowledge is only possible through and under the conditions of self-consciousness, the laws of which prescribe to experience at least form. The matter of experience is not given by self-consciousness, but is received from without, and is, as contrasted with the formal laws of
understanding, *contingent*. The highest conception in the sphere of cognition is that of a system of extended substances in reciprocal determination. Such substances are for us forces, repulsive and attractive, operating in space, and therefore with only mechanical or external relations. Thus the world of scientific cognition is the world of matter, force, motion, space, and time. The pure notions of the understanding, it is true, are forms of combination not restricted to the manifold of intuition, and by their means we may think objects other than those presented in experience; but unless intuition corresponding to such notions be given, our thought remains empty, and no increase of knowledge is gained. The limit of knowledge, then, is the limit of possible intuition.

Such a summary, though not in itself unjust, and though to all appearance supplying a completely satisfactory foundation for scientific empiricism, fails to bring into due prominence the deeper elements in Kant's doctrine, and robs of all significance his rich developments on the ultimate problems of metaphysic. For with regard to them it would seem to place us in the easy position of Agnosticism. We should be able to say that God, the soul, and immortality, are not possible objects of sense-intuition inner or outer, and consequently,
that all determinations of thought with respect to them must be and remain pure fancy. Constrained by natural desire, or led by constitutional impulse, we may fill the world of the unknown with what forms we please, and such poetic constructions may have value for our life, but they, nevertheless, remain the work of fancy, and without other grounds we could have no other attitude towards them than the poet has towards his own creations. This demonstrated positivism has seemed to many the one and all-important outcome of the Kantian critique, but it is impossible to accept such a view. The statement of the theory of knowledge just given has no significance if severed from the fundamental idea on which it rests; it is but one part of a completed metaphysical conception, and by directing attention to this aspect of it we shall not only discover its deeper meaning, but be able to appreciate its relations to those higher problems to which its results have yet to be applied—problems which, under the first view, could have no existence. At the same time we shall be able to supply an essential element in the critical survey of the pure notions of science, for we shall point out negatively the limits within which they apply, and consequently determine their final value for human thought.

All that is for us is only in self-consciousness.
Beyond the synthesis of self-knowing and things known we cannot go. Self-consciousness is the ultimate unity or identity in reference to which it is possible for multiplicity or plurality to be known. The ultimate aim of all our researches, the discovery of unity of principle, of the general rule of which particulars are but the modifications or specialisations, is prescribed by this final necessity for reduction to the unity of conscious experience. Even in the methods of the empirical sciences we can trace the effects of this effort after completed explanation, for these methods have no other aim than to exhibit the conformity of fact to the ideal forms of completed system.

When we take into consideration knowledge as a whole and its conditions, and note that in it also there must be unity of conception, we are then able to discern the full significance of the categories. They are the modes or forms of unity through which alone particulars can be known as particulars. Self-consciousness is, if we may use the term, the supreme category, the final unity into which all the detail of knowledge must be reduced; the subordinate notions are the content, or filling in, or substance of this supreme form.

Now, the highest conception which Intuition and the categories of the understanding led is one
quite incapable of satisfying the need for absolute unity of consciousness. A world of extended things, substances in reciprocal action, or determining one another, stands, and must stand, in merely mechanical or external relation to the unity of self, and even if internally a coherent conception, cannot be reconciled with the unity of self.\textsuperscript{80} We are still driven to seek for some conceptions which will give harmony to our whole consciousness, and if we call Reason the faculty which, testing the finite notions of understanding, exhibits their partial and limited character, and endeavours to find the unity into which they may be resolved, then we may say that Reason is the faculty of the unconditioned. For the determined world of understanding may be aptly called the conditioned. Each part of it is externally, and through natural necessity, united to every other, and has existence through the others; it is a contingent aggregate. The forms of finite thought cannot explain the system to which they have given rise, cannot fill up the idea of a cognitive system under which Reason acts.\textsuperscript{81} Reason, then, which discloses their inadequacy, is compelled to seek some higher solution.

It is true that Kant's peculiar mode of regarding the elements making up the synthesis of un-
derstanding led him to a statement of the problem in some respects differing from that just given. For, although he had once for all demonstrated the falsity of the individualistic or psychological view which would build up the structure of knowledge by the mechanical juxtaposition of isolated atoms, yet his own theory suffers from a quite similar defect. To him the ultimate synthesis was a purely external one. The Ego, on the one hand, was mere blank abstract identity, with no concrete filling in; the categories, empty forms of thought, with no specialisation of their own; the pure forms of intuition mere possibilities. The only reality, on the other hand, would seem to be furnished by the matter of intuition. Though Kant's theory of knowledge is precisely the proof that in itself ultimate reality is not given in the matter of intuition, yet he continually expresses himself as if this erroneous mode of thought were thoroughly justifiable, and states his doctrine on the assumption of its truth. Thus the inadequacy of the categories of understanding to systematic cognition, and the demand of reason for some higher unity, in which they may be harmonised, at first present themselves to Kant as the distinction between Phenomena and Things-in-themselves, or noumena. In the form or forms given
by Kant no more perplexing distinction was ever drawn. The Thing-in-itself appears at every turn in the three *Kritiken*. The solution of all the higher metaphysical problems turns upon its nature as distinguished from phenomena, and yet it is difficult, if not impossible, to state Kant's precise position in the matter, and to reconcile his various expressions regarding it. Looked at in one way the doctrine of the Thing-in-itself rests on what may be called Kant's mechanical or psychological view of knowledge. External things are merely affections of mind, states of consciousness, disposed in space, which likewise is a form of mind. But these affections are set up by real objects, which naturally are incognizable in themselves, for they only rest upon us, but which nevertheless we must suppose to exist. It is to be remembered, however, when this account is given, that Kant in no way held the vulgar view which would explain or illustrate the distinction by referring to the physiology of the senses, or to the difference between colours and the vibrations of ether. Nor did he hold that behind each sense-intuition there stood a separate individual thing in itself. "It is," he says, "an altogether mistaken idea of the theory of sense-objects as mere phenomena, to which we must add something non-sen-
suous, if one imagines, or tries to make others imagine, this to mean that the supersensuous substratum of matter is divided into monads (or parts) as we divide matter itself; for in this case the monad (which is merely the idea of an unconditioned condition of the compound) would be regarded as in space; when it ceases to be a noumenon, and is itself compound.” 32 It is evident from this that Kant’s hazardous explanation of affection by impression on the senses is so far irreconcilable with his critical or transcendental method, and we can understand Jacobi’s indifferent complaint that without this doctrine one cannot enter into the critical system, and with it one cannot remain in it.33 The manner in which the psychical mechanism brings forth intuitions has no bearing on the problem with regard to their nature as known, and Kant has elsewhere sufficiently explained his application of the category of cause to these things in themselves. The real thing-in-itself is the supersensible substratum of nature, which is certainly the ground of the phenomenal world, but the action of which cannot be known as causal. It is clear, indeed, that what Kant really had in view when he described objects as phenomena, was their essentially finite, limited, and incoherent character, and the question then
becomes, How are we made aware of this limitedness of things of sense? By reflection, says Kant, on the distinction between Understanding and Sense, a reflection which we shall presently find also gives rise to the remarkable doctrine of empirical contingency, and leads to the most important consequences in the Kantian metaphysic. The categories, we have already remarked, are not limited to the combination of elements furnished by sense, but are forms of combination in general, thoughts of objects as such. We are thus irresistibly led, Kant thinks, to regard our world of sense as phenomenal, conditioned, and reason compels us to frame the conception of some unconditioned. This unconditioned, the conception of which is merely problematic, i.e. not in itself contradictory, but incapable of having objective existence demonstrated for it, we call noumenon. Noumena, clearly, cannot be the object of intuition such as we possess, for all such objects are conditioned. In a negative sense, then, they are not objects of intuition, and therefore positively may be described as objects of a non-sensuous intuition. Of the mode of operation of such a non-sensuous intuition we can form no idea, but the conception of noumena is valuable, nay indispensable, as marking the limited conditioned character of all
the faculty of intuition which we possess. In
fine, the conception of noumena, or things-in-thems
elves, is a limiting notion (Grenz-Begriff). We
cannot assume the existence of such objects;
through the mere conception of them we gain no
extension of knowledge, nay, Kant seems some-
times inclined to assert that by the understanding
we cannot think such objects. They are contem-
plated by us as objects of an intuition and under-
standing altogether distinct from our own. In
this last remark, however, Kant has gone beyond
his own theory. We do, and must, think these
noumena, and we think them, through the only
forms of thought given to us, the categories; but
—and this is the real significance of the doctrine—
critical investigation of our thought demonstrates
that the categories are entirely inadequate to these
noumena, and that contradiction is involved when-
ever we apply the finite notions of understanding
to them. 84

In this way I think we are able to see, at least
partially, how the doctrine of things in themselves
arises, and how it is related to the dialectic of
Reason, on which Kant immediately enters. The
faculty which subjectively expresses the demand
of self-consciousness for perfect unity of concep-
tion we call Reason. Reason cannot find satisfac-
tion in the conditioned, and any attempt to demonstrate complete harmony by means of the pure notions of the understanding, which are the categories of the conditioned, inevitably leads to inner contradiction and incoherence. If, then, we still seek an unconditioned which will unite self-consciousness to this world of conditioned objects, we are compelled to recognise, both positively and negatively, that these objects are merely phenomenal, are not things in themselves, are but the modes in which finite intelligence grasps the supreme unity of things. Positive proof for this has been advanced in the Aesthetic and Analytic, which showed that the content of experience was conditioned by, or dependent on, the nature of sensibility and thought. (Intuitions were received only in the forms of Space and Time; objects were cognised only under the categories of understanding.) Negative proof is furnished abundantly in the Dialectic, which shows that the notions of the understanding, competent to phenomena, land us in contradiction whenever we endeavour by their means to gain such a solution as shall satisfy reason. 85

The Thing-in-itself, then, is no excrescence on Kant's system, nor does it play the part of that convenient receptacle for difficulties of thought—the unknown and unknowable. It marks the
transition from understanding to reason, from the categories of relation or external necessity to the category of freedom or internal necessity. The further stages of Kant’s thought are simply the closer determination of the thing-in-itself.\(^{38}\)

At the same time, from the outlines of the positive theory of knowledge already given, one can see what kind of solution was alone open to Kant. Understanding, seizing upon limited aspects of an organic whole, and placing them in sharp opposition to one another, had left as final elements the abstract Ego, or pure form of consciousness, and the world of things in themselves. These two appeared to stand mechanically apart, and the world of phenomena was somehow the result of their reciprocal action. Nor could these elements be characterised otherwise than by merely negative predicates. (They resemble in this Schopenhau-
sen’s will and pure subject of will.) A unity, then, which shall take these up into itself as constituent parts could not but be for Kant something entirely separate from the world of phenomena, placed alongside of it, but not entering into it. So far, then, as we are yet able to judge Kant’s final conception of the unity of reason, it could not rise above the finite category of reciprocity. At times, indeed, he does shadow forth a mere concrete unity, for he
finds ultimate reconciliation in the notion of an intuitive understanding, an understanding in which the synthesis of general, particular, and individual, should be completed by the organic act of thought itself. With the thing-in-itself, of which, indeed, it is the real counterpart, the idea of a perceptive understanding is continually making its appearance throughout the three Critiques, receiving at each stage more exact determination, until it at length appears as the final unity, or supreme Mind, or God, the synthesis of intelligence and its objects, which we indeed are unable to grasp, and the possibility of which we cannot even comprehend. The intuitive understanding is the burden of all the critique of speculative theology, and the principle of the teleological judgment. Upon the idea of it we require to fix attention if we are really to understand Kant's position in metaphysics.\textsuperscript{87}

The detached elements, then, for which reason seeks the unconditioned or possible ground of unity, are, in the first instance, the Ego and the world as determined by thought. To these, however, reason must add the unity of both in order to complete its architectonic idea. We have, therefore, three speculative unities, three transcendental ideas, as Kant calls them—first, the unconditioned
unity of the subject of consciousness, the psychological idea; second, the absolute unity of the series of conditions of the phenomenon or thing known, the cosmological idea; third, the absolute unity of the conditions of the possibility of all objects of thought in general. As is well known, Kant, bringing forward into prominence the subjective function of Reason as discovering the principle from which the conditioned follows, and therefore as being essentially syllogistic in character, arrives at his threefold arrangement of transcendental ideas from a consideration of the three kinds of syllogism—categorical, hypothetical, and disjunctive. Without making any comment on this, which is a parallel to the earlier discovery of the categories from the forms of judgment, I desire specially to call attention to the fact that the three ideas are simply the unconditioned application of the three categories of relation—substance, causality, and reciprocity, i.e. to say, the transference of the forms of scientific cognition to the domain of reason and metaphysic. By keeping this in mind, we shall more readily appreciate the nature and import of the criticism to which they are severally subjected. The result of the investigation is in a twofold sense negative:—1st. It is demonstrated that by means of these categories no final solution
can be given to the problems of reason or metaphysic, and, accordingly, Kant thinks no metaphysic, as system of cognition, is possible; 2d. It is demonstrated that these categories have applicability only to the conditioned, and that no argument based on them can apply either way (either positively or negatively) to the unconditioned. If from other sources indications of an unconditioned are obtained or obtainable, the field is left open for them. To a metaphysic constructed by the employment of these finite categories, criticism is fatal; to a metaphysic otherwise founded, scientific cognition can bring forward no counter argument. As these categories are in particular the fundamental notions of scientific procedure, the results of Kant's criticism are here of peculiar value.

It is unfortunately impossible for me to enter at any adequate length upon the rich material for thought contained in the Dialectic. I must, perforce, content myself with such indications of the course of discussion in the three divisions as are requisite in order to lead up to the final idea of the Kantian system. The three divisions, as you are aware, correspond to the old metaphysical rubrics — Rational Psychology, Rational Cosmology, and Rational Theology.
On the first of these, in which the paralogisms of Reason are pointed out, something has already been said. The conclusions which Rational Psychology believed itself able to draw with regard to the immortality, immateriality, and simplicity of the soul, transcended experience, and consequently could be based upon nothing but the universal element in all inner experience, the unity of self-consciousness, the pure judgment I think. But when it is attempted to use this universal subject of thought as the third term by which to determine synthetically the nature of self as an object of knowledge, then we involve ourselves in paralogism. For synthetical determination through a category can only be given in relation to an intuition. The universal subject of thought is supposed to be, but is not, an intuition; nor is any intuition given in inner experience whereby we could determine the soul as substance. No knowledge then, in a scientific sense, is possible of the nature and future existence of the soul. Equally beyond knowledge, however, is the assertion that the soul cannot be immaterial or immortal. The category substance thus shows itself as entirely inadequate to the determinator of the unconditioned. Spinozism, as a system of cognition, is impossible.\textsuperscript{88}