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By Whom, all things; for Whom, all things.

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*FIFTY-FOURTH YEAR.*

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JULY—DECEMBER.

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NEW YORK  
1878.

## A CRITICISM OF THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY :

A REPLY TO PROFESSOR MAHAFFY.

LOCKE was the most influential metaphysician of last century ; Kant is the most influential metaphysician of this.

Locke's great work, "An Essay on Human Understanding," published in 1690, came into notice immediately. The age was ripe for it. Younger men, rejoicing in the advance of physical science, were becoming wearied of the logical forms of the schoolmen which had kept their hold till the close of the sixteenth century, and of the abstract discussions which still prevailed in the seventeenth century. Locke met the want of his age. His fresh observational spirit, his shrewdness and sagacity, his independence, and his very phraseology, which carefully avoided all hack and technical phrases, recommended him to the rising generation. He called attention to internal facts, even as Bacon and Newton had to external ; and if he did not himself notice and unfold all the delicate operations of our wondrous nature, he showed men where to find them. But philosophy—like faith, as the great Teacher said, like physical science, as Bacon showed—is to be tried by (not valued for) its fruits. The influence exerted by him has been and is of a healthy character. But there were serious oversights and even fatal errors in his principles ; and these came out to view in the systems which claimed to proceed from him—in the idealism of Berkeley, the sensationalism of Condillac, and the scepticism of Hume.

By the second half of the eighteenth century thoughtful minds began to see the need of a reaction against the extreme experientialism which had culminated in the Scottish sceptic,

and there appeared two great defenders of fundamental truth—Reid in Scotland (1764) reaching in his influence over his own country, over France, and over the United States; and Kant in Germany (1781) laying firm hold of his own land, and then passing over into France, Britain, and America, and latterly penetrating into Scandinavia, Greece, Italy, and Spain. Kant's influence, like Locke's, has been on the whole for good. He has established fundamental mental and moral principles, which are seen to be fixed forever. He has taken us up into a region of grand ideals, where poetry, led by Goethe and Schiller, has revelled ever since. But there were mistakes in the philosophy of Kant as well as in that of Locke. These have come out like the dark shadow of an eclipse in the idealism of Fichte, the speculative web woven by Hegel, and in the relativity and nescience elaborated by Hamilton and applied by Herbert Spencer. There is need of a rebellion against his despotic authority, or rather a candid and careful examination of his peculiar tenets, with the view of retaining what is true and expelling what is false. This is the more needed, as all the agnostics and the physiological psychologists when pushed fall back on Kant. Professor Mahaffy acknowledges, "Of late the Darwinists, the great apostles of positivism, and the deadly enemies of metaphysics, have declared that he alone of the philosophers is worthy of study, and to him alone was vouchsafed a fore-glimpse of true science." I believe that we cannot meet the prevailing doctrine of agnostics till we expel Kant's nescient theory of knowledge, and that it is as necessary in this century to be rid of the *Forms* of Kant as it was in the last of the *Ideas* of Locke, both being officious intermeddlers, coming between us and things.

In a late number of this REVIEW (January, 1878) I ventured on a short criticism of Kant. The article was meant to be a challenge. I am glad it has called forth so able a champion as Professor Mahaffy (July, 1878). He is a distinguished member of Dublin University, which, having for nearly a century and a half followed Locke, with a leaning towards its own Berkeley, seems of late to have gone over to the camp of Locke's great rival, Immanuel Kant. Professor Mahaffy has studied Kant profoundly, and has written valuable fragmentary volumes, which

I hope he may complete, and thus give us his full view of the Critical Philosophy. I feel that I have an able opponent, and that I need to brace myself for the contest.

In criticising the great German metaphysician, it is not to be understood that I wish to disparage him. I place him on the same high level as Plato and Aristotle in ancient times, as Bacon and Descartes, Locke and Leibnitz, Reid and Hamilton, in modern times. For the last quarter of a century I have expounded his philosophy, with that of the others referred to, in my advanced classes in Queen's College, Belfast, and Princeton College, America. The professor is so kind as to apologize for me by alleging that I have not turned my mind very seriously to the subject. He mentions, to the credit of his college, that Dr. Tooleken, in 1862, set a paper for a competition for fellowships in Dublin requiring a knowledge of Kant, "which came like thunder out of a clear sky." I am almost tempted to repeat the vulgar joke as to Trinity College being behind the age, as its clock is a quarter of an hour behind the sun and the rest of the world! So early as 1852, on my becoming a teacher of philosophy in Queen's College, Belfast, I set questions on Kant, and ever since, in that college, in the Queen's University, the great Indian competition and that of Ferguson scholarships, open to all the universities of Scotland, I have from year to year put queries implying that those who answer them know somewhat of the Critical Philosophy. In my work on the *Intuitions of the Mind*, if he will condescend to look into it, he will find that in no fewer than forty-eight places I have criticised favorably or unfavorably the system of the German metaphysician.

There is much in Kant that I commend. I like the very end aimed at in his philosophy. It is to give us an inventory of what he calls the *à priori*, but I would rather designate as the intuitive or fundamental, principles of the mind. "For this science is nothing more than an inventory of all that is given by pure reason systematically arranged" (Pref. to K. R. V.). These had constantly been appealed to, but there had been no careful inquiry into their nature and the law of their operation. Kant did great service to philosophy in attempting a systematic arrangement of them, but unfortunately he did so in an exclusively *Critical*,

whereas he should have done so in an enlarged *Inductive* method. He introduced clearness into metaphysics by drawing the distinction between analytic and synthetic judgments, the former simply evolving in the proposition what is involved in the subject, as when we say "an island is surrounded with water," the latter predicating something more as when we say "Sicily is an island in the Mediterranean." He was right in saying that the problem of the existence of metaphysics depends on the circumstance that there are in the mind synthetic principles *à priori*, or as I prefer stating it, perceived by the mind at once on the mind being directed to the objects, as that "every thing that begins to be has a cause." His classification in the Categories of the relations which the mind of man can discover is worthy of being looked at by all who are studying the comparative powers of the mind—only the relations are discovered in the objects, and are not imposed by the mind itself. He has laid a deep and immovable foundation for ethics; and his phrase the Categorical Imperative is the most expressive that has ever been employed to designate the office of the conscience. We should also be grateful to him for his noble defence of the freedom of the will. These are only the chief of the high excellencies I find in the Kantian philosophy.

But I object to three fundamental positions of Kant.

I. *I object to his method.* It seems that in the Leibnitzo-Wolffian school, in which he was trained, he was led to favor the Dogmatic method of Descartes and Leibnitz. But the inquiring spirit of the times and his own reflection convinced him that this method was very unsatisfactory, as each man or school had set out with his or its own dogma, and people were now unwilling to accept, on any authority, dogmas which had not been sifted by an accredited test. Following the manner of the matter-of-fact age, he then turned to the "empiricism," as he calls it, of the "celebrated Locke." But he drew back when he saw what consequences were drawn from it by Hume. Dissatisfied with these methods, he elaborated, expounded, and illustrated a method of his own—the Critical Method.

There may be a legitimate use of each of these methods if it is kept within proper limits. All inquirers have to assume



something, which may be called a dogma ; but they must be ready to show grounds for making the assumption. A narrow empiricism may miss, as certainly Locke did, some of the deepest principles of the mind—may not notice first or intuitive principles. There is need of a criticism to distinguish things which are apt to be confounded in hasty assumptions and generalizations. But surely the true method in all sciences which have to do with facts, as I hold that all the mental sciences have, is the inductive, care being taken to understand and properly use it.

The agent, the instrument, the eye, the sense employed in the induction of the facts, is self-consciousness. By it we notice the operations of the mind, directly those of our own minds, and indirectly those of others as exhibited in their words, writings, and deeds. What we thus notice is singular and concrete, like the facts perceived by the senses. But we may proceed to abstract and generalize upon what we observe, and in this way discover laws which are to be regarded as the laws of our mental nature. In pursuing the methods we find laws or principles which are fundamental and necessary. Aristotle called them first truths ; others have called them by other names ; Kant designates them *à priori* principles, and represents them as pronouncing synthetic judgments *à priori*. I hold that they perceive objects and truths directly and immediately, and hence may be called intuitions. They act prior to our observation of them ; they act whether we observe them or not. It is the business of the metaphysician to look at their working, to determine their exact nature, their rule of action ; and the authority which they claim. His inspection of them does not make them operate, or determine their mode of operation. He can watch them because they act and as they act, and his special business is to determine their laws. When he has done so he has found a metaphysical, what indeed may be regarded as a philosophical, principle. A system or systematized arrangement of such principles constitutes metaphysics or mental philosophy.

Kant was altogether right in saying that the end aimed at in metaphysics is to furnish an "inventory" or "compendium" of *à priori* principles. But he proceeded to attain this end in a wrong way—by the method of Criticism. Surely criticism must

proceed on acknowledged rules or tests. On what principles does Kant's criticism proceed? Kant answers, "Pure speculative reason has this peculiarity, that in choosing the various objects of thought it is able to define the limits of its own faculties, and even to give a complete enumeration of the possible modes of proposing problems to itself, and thus to stretch out the entire system of metaphysics" (Preface to Second Edition; Meiklejohn's translation). But must there not in that case be a prior criticism of reason to find out whether it can do this? And must not this criticism imply a previous one from higher principles *ad infinitum*? Certain it is that from the time of Kant we have had a succession of critical philosophies, each professing to go deeper down than its predecessors, or to overtop them. Fortunately—I should rather say wisely—Kant takes the forms of common logic, which are so well founded, as his criticising principles, and has thus secured valuable truth and much systematic consistency; only, these forms have helped to keep him from realities.

But Professor Mahaffy asks with amazement whether we are to accept without criticism the saws of the common people, or the dogmas of speculators, no one of whom agrees with his neighbor. To this I reply that it has always been understood that there is criticism in the inductive method. Bacon would have us begin induction with the "necessary rejections and exclusions." Whately and logicians generally speak of the necessity of "analysis," and Whewell enjoins "the decomposition of facts." But this analysis, or criticism, if you choose to call it so, must be applied to facts, in the case of mental science as made known by internal observation. It must aim at separating the complexity of facts as they present themselves, and this in order to discover the law of each of the elements, and to keep us from making assertions of one of these which are true only of another, and of the whole what are true only of some of the parts. Our aim in metaphysics is to discover what truths are intuitively known, and for this purpose we must distinguish them from their concomitants, in particular from all mere contingent or empirical truths. All professed metaphysical principles are attempted generalizations of our intuitive perceptions and judgments. But these generalizations are in

the first instance apt to be crude, by reason of mixing up other things with primitive intuitions. Even in more advanced stages of philosophy metaphysicians are apt to lay down imperfect and mutilated principles to support their theories. There is therefore need of a criticism to distinguish things that differ, but which are mixed together in experience, or are put in one category by system builders. But in our examination we are not to put ourselves above the facts. We must be at special pains not to override or mutilate them, still less to twist or torture them. Our single aim should be to apprehend and express them accurately, and apply them legitimately, that is, only to the objects on which they bear. Kant speaks (Preface to Second Edition) of "purifying the *à priori* principles by criticism;" whereas the proper office of the metaphysician is simply to discover what they are, and to formulate them without addition or diminution.

It is not to be understood that our observation of these principles gives them their being, and still less that it gives them their authority. Our notice of them does not give them existence. We notice them because they exist. By observation we can discover that they exist, and find the extent and limits of their jurisdiction and authority. Truth is truth, whether we observe it or not. Still, observation has its place, and without a very careful induction, metaphysics are sure to be nothing else than a system of arbitrary dogmas. The induction does not give them their title. They have their authority in themselves, but observation makes their title known to us. Kant is constantly asserting that metaphysics are independent of the teaching of experience, and that they must not call in experience. They are independent of experience as that mountain is independent of my eye. Still it is only by my eye that I can see the mountain.

A metaphysical philosophy can be constructed only by the induction of the operations of our intuitions. We can give the marks and tests of our intuitions. Their primary and essential character is not necessity, as Leibnitz held; nor necessity and universality, as Kant maintained; but self-evidence: they look immediately on things, and contain their evidence within themselves. Being so, they become necessary, that is, have a



necessity of conviction, which is the secondary test, and universal, that is, entertained by all men, which is their tertiary corroboration. Professor Mahaffy thinks that in holding these principles I am in company with Mill and Bain: "Surely Dr. McCosh is not going to prove another Bain to mental philosophy." I am sure that I can meet Mr. Bain far more effectively on my principles than Mahaffy can on the nescient principles of Kant, which Bain and his whole school are most willing to adopt.

After, but not till after, having discovered and co-ordinated intuitive principles, we may then, if we are determined, inquire whether they are to be trusted. Such an investigation cannot, I fear, be very fruit-bearing; the result must be mainly negative. It is an attempt to dig beneath the ground on which the building rests, to fly above the air. Still by such a process we may be able to show that our intuitions confirm each other, and thus yield not a primary, but a secondary or reflected, evidence of their trustworthiness. It can also be shown that they do not contradict each other; that there is nothing in them to countenance the alleged antinomies of Kant, Hegel, Hamilton, or Spencer, all of which are contradictions, not in things or our intuitive convictions, but simply in the mutilated propositions drawn out by these men. But in the first and last resort we are to rest on the circumstance that these first principles are of the nature of intuitions looking directly on things.

II. *I object to Kant's Phenomenal theory of knowledge.* Hume opens his "Treatise of Human Nature:" "All the perceptions of the human mind resolve themselves into two distinct kinds, which I call impressions and ideas." The difference between these consists in the greater liveliness of the impressions. Under impressions he includes such heterogeneous mental states as sensations, perceptions, emotions, and I should suppose resolutions. Under ideas he has memory, imagination (often as lively as sensation), judgment, reasoning, moral convictions, all massed together. There is no evidence that Kant ever read the "Treatise of Human Nature," in which Hume's whole theory is developed; and it is certain that he had never studied it carefully. He seems to have got his views of Hume's doctrine from his Essays, into which for popular effect he broke up his elaborate work, and he sought more particularly to

meet Hume's doctrine of causation. Now, Kant's aim was to meet the great sceptic. In doing so he wished to make as few assumptions as possible. Let us assume what no one can deny. Hume had said, "As long as we confine our speculations to the *appearances* of objects to our senses, without entering into disquisitions concerning their real nature and operations, we are safe from all difficulties." At this point Kant starts: Let us assume the existence of an *appearance*—Hume's very word.

Now, Kant, as it appears to me, should have met Hume's very first positions. The mind does not begin with *impressions*. The word is vague, and in every way objectionable. It signifies a mark made by a harder body, say a seal, upon a softer body, say wax. Taken literally, it implies two bodies—one impressing, the other impressed; applied metaphorically, it indicates a body to impress and a mind impressed. As applied to our perceptions by consciousness, say of self as thinking, and our purely mental acts, as our idea of moral good, it has and can have no meaning; for there is nothing external impressing, and the operation has nothing whatever of the nature of an impression. Kant should have met these primary positions. But he concedes them. In doing so he has broken down his walls of defence, and admitted the horse fashioned by the deceit of the enemy, and is never able to expel him or counteract the evil which he works.

An impression, if it means any thing, implies a thing impressed. An appearance, if we understand it, means a thing appearing, and it seems to imply a being to whom it appears. An impression without a thing impressed is an abstraction from the thing impressed. An appearance is an abstraction from a thing appearing. As all abstractions imply a concrete thing from which they are taken, so all appearances imply a thing known as appearing.

It has been commonly allowed, since the days of Locke, that man's two original inlets of knowledge are sensation or sense-perception, and reflection or self-consciousness. Kant speaks everywhere of an outer and an inner sense. Now, I hold that by both of these we know things. By sense-perception we know our bodies and bodies beyond them; and Kant

says correctly, "Extension and impenetrability together constitute our conception of matter" (K. R. V., Translation, p. 379). There may be disputes difficult to settle—as what are our original and what our acquired sense-perceptions, whether of our bodily frame or of it with objects affecting it; but our acquired imply original perceptions, and both in the first instance or in the last resort contemplate objects as extended, and exercising some sort of energy. It is, if possible, still more emphatically true that self-consciousness reveals not mere appearance, but self as a thing, say as thinking or feeling.

But what, it may be asked, is the proof of this? To this I answer, first, as an *argumentum ad hominem*, that we have the same proof of it as we have of the impression, of the presentation, of the phenomenon. Whatever those who hold these slippery theories appeal to, I also appeal to; and I am sure that the tribunal must decide in my behalf. I have the same evidence of the existence of a thing impressed as I have of the impression, of the thing appearing as I have of the appearance. But secondly, and positively, the position I hold can stand the tests of intuition. It is self-evident; we perceive the very things, say the nostrils as affected, or self as reasoning. We do not need mediate proof; we have immediate. It is also necessary: I cannot be made to believe otherwise that I do not exist, or that there is no body resisting my energy. It is, farther, universal, as admitting no exceptions, and as being held by all men, young and old, savage and civilized. It can thus stand the tests used by Kant, which are the two last.

Let us now turn to the account given by Kant. According to him, we know mere appearance; and his definition is, "the undetermined object of an empirical intuition is called an appearance or phenomenon." Speaking of the rainbow, "not only are the rain-drops mere phenomena, but even their circular form, nay, the space itself through which they fall, is nothing in itself, but both are mere modifications or fundamental dispositions of our sensuous intuition, while the transcendental object remains for us utterly unknown" (Translation, p. 38). This is his account not merely of material objects, but of space, time, and self. "Time and space, with all phenomena therein, are not in themselves things. They are nothing but

representations, and cannot exist out of and apart from the mind. Nay, the sensuous internal intuition of the mind (as the object of consciousness), the determination of which is represented by the successive states in time, is not the real proper self as it exists in itself, nor the transcendental subject, but only a phenomenon which is presented to the sensibility of this to us unknown thing" Translation, p. 307).

Professor Mahaffy calls on me to define what I mean by thing. I answer that it is one of those simple objects which according to all logicians cannot be logically defined; not because we do not know it, but because we know it at once, and cannot find anything simpler or clearer by which to explain it. All that we can do positively is to say that it is what we know it to be; or to express it in synonymous phrases, and call it a being or an existence. But we may, as logicians allow in such cases, lay down some negative propositions to face misapprehensions, and to distinguish it from other things with which it may be confounded. 1. It is not an abstract or general knowledge, say of *το ον* or essence or being; or of a quality, say form or thought; or of a maxim, say that a property implies a substance. Our primary knowledge is in no sense a science which is knowledge systematized. But the knowledge thus arranged is real knowledge, and because it is so science is to be regarded as dealing with realities, and gives no sanction to agnostics or nihilism. 2. This thing is not a mere appearance. What appears may be known very vaguely—it may be a cloud, a shadow, or image of a tree in a river. Still it is a reality—that is, a real thing; it consists of drops of moisture, of a surface deprived of light, or of a reflection. 3. Man's primary perception is not of a relation between objects, but of objects themselves. When I see a round body I see it as a round body. I may also be conscious of myself as perceiving it. Having these two objects, I may discover a relation between them, and find that the round body affects me. But I first know the round body and the self, and as existing independent of each other. The round body may be seen by others as well as me, and the self may next instant be contemplating a square body. Holding by these positions we are delivered from both the phenomenal and relative theories of

knowledge of body and mind, and find that we have real things, between which we may discover relations which are also real. A relation without things has always appeared to me to be like a bridge with nothing to lean on at either end.

The thing which I thus posit is, I admit, not the same as that of which Kant speaks. We are told that Kant had two kinds of sensible knowledge—things as phenomena, and things *per se*. I have been asserting that we know more than phenomena. I allow that what I assume is not the thing in itself—the *Ding an sich*, as Kant expresses it; the thing *per se*, as Mahaffy translates it. I confess that I do not understand what is meant to be denoted by this phrase, which seems to me to be of a misleading character, as seeming to have a profound meaning when it has no meaning at all. If I have the thing I do not care about having the *in itself*, as an addition—if, indeed, it be an addition. It is enough for me that I know the thing, the very thing, and I may wish to know more of the thing; and this I may be able to do, but only by making additions in the same way as I have acquired my primary knowledge. As to *the thing in itself*, it always reminds me of the whale that swallowed itself.

I do believe that Kant, like Locke, wished to be a realist, but both had great difficulty in getting a footing on *terra firma*; Locke by making the mind perceive only ideas, and Kant because he made it perceive phenomena, which are only a more fugitive form of ideas. He opposes idealism, and maintains that the internal implies the existence of the external—a very doubtful argument, as it appears to me, unless we give the internal the power of knowing the external. He is quite sure that there is a *thing*, a *Ding an sich*. But then he admits that we can never reach it, can never catch it. The thing does exist, but then it is a thing unknown and unknowable, and we land ourselves in contradiction if we suppose that we know it. Kant is thus the true founder and Hamilton the supporter (both without meaning it), and Spencer the builder of the doctrine of nescience or agnostics, underlying so much of the philosophic and physical speculation of the present day.

We can avoid these consequences only by making the mind begin with a reality. If we do not begin with it we cannot



end with it. If we do not assume it we cannot infer it. "How can we reason but from what we know?" and if there be not knowledge and fact in the premiss assumed, we cannot, as Kant knew well, have it in the conclusion without a gross paralogism.

I am now in a position to expose, I do not say the perversion, but the extraordinary misunderstanding, of my views in Professor Mahaffy's article (233-4). Has he, like some other Kantians, had his head so dizzied by the windings of the labyrinth through which he has been led that he is not capable of steadily looking at the opinions of those who take a different view of knowledge? He represents me as "offended at Kant's rejection of any pretended knowledge of the Ding an sich," whereas I have been seeking to drive away the *an sich* as a phantom. He says of me that I think "human knowledge not to be confined to phenomenal objects," whereas I hold that we know objects as appearing. I am bound, he argues, "to follow and discover the absolute nature of things apart from their manifestation and our faculties," whereas I carefully avoid the word absolute, applying it only to God; and I hold that our faculties are organized so as to know things, but only in part. He says my theory looks like Hegelianism, whereas I seek to undermine Hegelianism by undermining Kantism; and I arrive at a genuine, while Hegel caught only an ideal, reality. Then my doctrine "is more like old Reid's than any thing else." My remark here is that Reid is not much older than Kant; and I do not reckon it a valid objection that my doctrine is the same with Reid's. I verily believe that Reid meant to express the same doctrine as I have done, but that he did not do so; and that we are now able to formulate our statement more accurately because Kant has compelled us to do so. Hamilton, I may add, was kept from giving the exact expression because he was turned aside by Kant to a doctrine of relative knowledge. Then he charges me with maintaining that "our knowledge consists in comparing and classifying our impressions; whereas I hold that we compare and classify not impressions, but things, and that we may compare and classify our intuitions and thus attain philosophic truth. He alleges that I have come back, at the point referred to, to Kantism, and ad-

mitted that we know nothing but appearance, while I have cast away the safeguard of our science, and have sunk to the position of Mill and Bain, and made all our knowledge empirical, and made up of the generalizations from experience. Now, I hold the very opposite of all this, and maintain resolutely that we know things, that we know them immediately, that we have intuitive knowledge, and that this knowledge is not empirical, but native, primitive, and necessary. Finally, he charges me with holding that "mathematical truths are inductions," and that "it is repeated observations which have taught us that two right lines cannot inclose a space." In opposition to all this, I have taught that we see at once, on the bare contemplation of right lines, that they cannot inclose a space, and that mathematical axioms are generalizations not of outward facts, but of our intuitive perceptions. Having thus put the two views, the Kantian and my own, in juxtaposition, I must allow those who are competent to judge to decide which is in most accordance with consciousness.

III. *I object to Kant's doctrine of the mind imposing Forms on things appearing.* This error connects itself with the previous ones. Man is supposed to perceive not things, but appearances, and he calls in forms to give unity to scattered appearances. These forms are void in themselves, they need a content, and they are applicable to objects of possible experience, but to nothing else. The language is meant to express a truth, but it fails to do so. Would it be correct to represent the law of gravitation, as a form, void in itself, and capable of being applied to matter and its molecules? The correct statement is that gravitation is a property of matter. In like manner, the original endowments of mind are powers in the mind itself, enabling us to know things. Kant maintains that it must either be the external that determines the internal, or the internal that determines the external. The experientialist makes the external determine the internal, makes the mind simply reflect what passes before it. Kant maintains in opposition that the internal determines the external, and he would thus raise a breakwater in the mind itself against materialism and scepticism. But surely the natural and rational supposition is that the internal *perceives* the external, and it should be added

the internal also. The primitive intellectual exercises of the mind are perceptions looking at things. By sense-perception we perceive external objects in our body or beyond it as they are presented to us, and we know them as extended and resisting our energy. By self-consciousness we know self as thinking, imagining, hating, or loving. These exercises are all singular, but we can generalize them and thus discover the laws of our perceptions—be it observed, perceptions of things, and not impressions or appearances—and these form an important department of metaphysic, which becomes a positive department of true science, and not a mere police, as Kant would make it, to preserve us from error. We have here in the mind principles which, looking to things, give us fundamental truths.

But Kant gives to these principles not a mere perceptive, but a formative power. Our intuitions are not perceptions, looking at things and the relations of things, but moulds imposing on objects what is not in the objects. Our primary knowledge thus consists of two elements, one *à posteriori* from experience, the other *à priori* from the stores of the mind. I have had great difficulty in finding exactly what is the *à posteriori* matter furnished by the senses. In the Introduction he seems to tell us what belongs to sensuous experience—"color, hardness or softness, weight, impenetrability;" and in the opening of the Transcendental *Æsthetic* he gives us as belonging to sensation, "impenetrability, hardness, color, etc." It is rather strange to find impenetrability here, as it implies both force and extension, which I suppose he ascribed to the forms of the mind. It shows what difficulty he is in when he would thus refer some elements to sensation or experience, and other elements to the forms in the mind. We free ourselves from all these when we simply assume that in sense-perception we know things as having extension and impenetrability. But Kant, while he allows that we get so much from sensation and experience, derives other things from the mind itself, and these are imposed on objects. When I look on a rose I have merely scattered phenomena, such as colors, odors, shapes, and the mind combines them in space by its own forms. I have in the mind scattered impressions and ideas, and the formative intuition connects them in time. We have now knowledge, and

knowledge of objects, but the main element is contributed by the mind ; and it is this element which like a rock beats back the waves of scepticism. But it has in fact allowed the entrance of a more subtle scepticism than that of Hume. In all cases the subjective element joins on to the objective and adds to it, and we cannot tell what is the object as a thing as distinguished from the subject. For if the formative mind may add one thing, why not ten or twenty, till we know not what we have? We may now look at the various kinds of *à priori* elements specified by Kant : (1) Our sense intuitions contribute space and time to the phenomena. (2) Our understanding imposes certain categories on our intuitions. (3) Our reason supplies ideas which unite the judgments.

*The Æsthetic.*—Kant says, “ Our nature is so constituted that intuition with us never can be other than sensuous.” The word “ sensuous ” is apt to leave a bad impression, and has in fact left such an impression, as it seems to represent all intuition as being of the external senses. But he evidently means to include in the phrase our internal sense or self-consciousness. Both these senses perceive only phenomena. Even self-consciousness gives us nothing more. “ The subject intuits itself, not as it would represent itself immediately and spontaneously, but according to the manner in which the mind is internally affected, consequently as it appears, and not as it is ” (K. R. V., Translation, p. 41). I may give another passage or two as translated by Mr. Mahaffy (Critical Phil. for English Readers) : “ The internal sense by which the mind intuits its own internal states gives us no intuition of the soul as an object.” “ Our self-consciousness does not present to us the ego any more distinctly than our external intuition does to us foreign bodies ; we know both only as phenomena.” He does not seem to ascribe much to this internal intuition. “ The notion of personality though *à priori* is not an intuition at all,” but “ a logical supposition of thought.” At this point, that is, at his account of our internal intuition, our higher British and American metaphysicians are most inclined to leave him.

The forms of sense are, space of the external and time of the internal. I may remark in passing, that I do not see why time should be confined to the internal sense, as external



events as well as internal experiences are all in time—indeed in some places Kant speaks of time as a form of both senses. But it is of more importance to remark that both space and time are given to phenomena by the mind. But is this in accordance with our consciousness or spontaneous beliefs? Intuitively and necessarily all men look on these as objective, and existing independent of our contemplation of them. If it is asked what they are, we can answer negatively that they are not substances or relations, but that they are what we intuitively perceive them to be. We may put a hundred questions about them which we cannot answer; but our ignorance on these subjects should not keep us from holding by their objective reality.<sup>1</sup>

Professor Mahaffy maintains that Kant holds the reality of space and time. There is truth in this statement. He believed space and time to be as real as the things perceived in them. But the reality of all three was of a most unsatisfactory character. He did not allow that the mind intuits or envisages real objects. That fatal seed has sent a stem upward, idealism, which has risen into emptiness, and a root downward, which has

<sup>1</sup> The Kantians labor to show that they can explain by their forms the certainty and the necessity of mathematical truths, which are just the evolution of what the mind imposes on appearances. "Kant found that he could not trace out and learn the properties of an isosceles triangle from what he saw in it, or from mere thinking about it, but rather from what he had added to the figure in his own mind *à priori*, and had them represented by a construction. He also found that all the safe *à priori* knowledge he could obtain about it was merely the necessary consequence of what he had introduced into it according to his own concepts."—*Crit. Phil. for English Readers*, p. 12. But surely this leaves it utterly uncertain whether what we thus bring out of our minds can be asserted of veritable things; whether, so far as things are concerned, we can say that the angles of a triangle must be equal to two right angles; or whether parallel lines cannot meet. We have a much simpler and more rational way of accounting for the apodictic certainty of mathematics. We perceive lines and surfaces as realities; we agree to look solely to the length of lines and the length and breadth of surfaces; and as we do so we discover that they have certain properties involved in their very nature, and that the three angles of a triangle are together equal to two right angles, and that parallel lines cannot meet. The properties of the ellipse, as demonstrated by Apollonius, were ready to be applied to the planetary orbits when Kepler showed that they moved in elliptic orbits. As to the difficulty that if space and time be real there must be two infinities, see *Intuitions of the Mind*, p. ii. b. ii. c. 3, and for mathematics p. iii. b. ii. c. 3.



landed in nihilism. Kant labored in vain to save his philosophy from both these consequences, especially from the former, in his Second Preface, but utterly failed. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel, dissatisfied, as well they might, with his negations, were bent on having higher realities, and raised beautifully formed and gilded clouds. The positivists, and all who have ramified from Comte, all fall back on the nescience of Kant.

*The Analytic.*—Kant was Professor of Logic and Metaphysics at Königsberg. He uses logic to give him metaphysics. He has now by the understanding (*der Verstand*) to combine the results got by sense, and get judgments and propositions. He adopts the classification of propositions common in his day. Judgments may be pronounced in

#### QUANTITY, QUALITY, RELATION, MODALITY.

I do not mean to criticise this division, which is not the received one in the present day. The notions are combined by what he calls categories, being, as all his critics have remarked, different in their end from the categories of Aristotle. Each of the four divisions has three subdivisions, making in all twelve, with which every reader of Kant is familiar. I am not to examine them individually. I am simply to look at the functions allotted to them.

Equally with space and time they are Forms. They have their seat and power in the mind. The forms of sense were imposed by the mind on appearances. The forms of the understanding—that is, the categories—are imposed on, and give the intuitions of sense their unity. The question with me, What is the reality implied in the judgments of the understanding? Already the reality has very much disappeared. In the intuitions of the senses there had been so much of a reality as is implied in the appearances which, however, have always *à priori* forms imposed on them. Now, the judgment is pronounced on this complex of appearance and intuition, and the reality has all but vanished. The categories are “nothing but mere forms of thought, which contain only the logical faculty of uniting *à priori* in consciousness the manifold given in intuition. Apart from the only intuition possible for us, they have still less meaning than the pure sensuous forms space and time; for

through them an object is at least given, while a mode of connection of the manifold, when the intuition which alone gives the manifold is wanting, has no meaning at all."

This is not, as it appears to me, the natural or the true account. I hold that the mind, first by its cognitive power of sense, external and internal, knows things, and then by the understanding or comparative powers discovers various kinds of relations between things. Of course, if the things be imaginary the relations may also be imaginary. Thus we may say that Venus was more beautiful than Minerva, and both the terms and the propositions are unreal. But when the intuitions are of realities, when I am speaking of Demosthenes and Cicero, and declare Demosthenes to be a greater orator than Cicero, there is a reality both in the terms and the propositions.

Here it will be necessary to correct an error into which the whole school of Kant has fallen. They deny that the understanding has any power of intuition: *der Verstand* cannot intuite. I maintain, on the contrary, that it has, the statement being properly explained and understood. The comparative powers presuppose a previous knowledge of things by the senses and consciousness, and they give us no new things. But having such a knowledge, the mind, by barely looking at the things apprehended, may discover a relation between them, and this intuitively by bare inspection, without any derivative, mediate, or discursive process. Thus understood, we may have intuitive or primitive judgments as well as perceptions. These constitute an important part of the original furniture of the mind, and should be included in our inventory.

Taking the category of cause and effect as an example, let me exhibit the difference between the view elaborated by Kant and that which I take. We affirm that the cause of that rick of hay taking fire was a lucifer-match applied to it. What have we here? According to Kant, a rick or an appearance, partly *à posteriori* with a certain color, and partly *à priori* with a form given it. We have also a lucifer-match with a like double character, *à priori* and *à posteriori*. We unite the two by means of an *à priori* category, that of cause and effect, and declare the lucifer-match to be the cause of the conflagration. Is this the real mental process? Let me give in contrast what

I believe to be the true account. We have first the rick as a reality, and then the match as a reality, both known by the senses and information we have had about them. On looking at the rick and discovering a change, we intuitively look for a cause, and on considering the properties of the lucifer-match, we decide that it is fit to be the cause. We have thus realities throughout, both in the original objects and the relations between them.

It is not necessary for the purpose I have in view, which is simply to criticise Kant as he is commonly, and I believe correctly understood, to enter upon a discussion as to disputed points. In treating of the categories, he brings in an *à priori* "I think" as running through all our judgments and imparting a unity to them. There is truth here, but it is not correctly unfolded. The correct expression is: By self-consciousness we know self in its present state—say as thinking, and this knowledge of self goes with all our states, and among others our acts of judgment. I am still less called on to enter upon his *à priori* use of the imagination and of the schematismus. Both are meant to bridge over gaps in his system. It is true that if an object be absent and we have to think of it, we must have what Aristotle calls a phantasm of it. Kant calls in an *à priori* imagination to represent to the judgment the manifold of the senses in unity. I regard it as the proper function of the phantasy to represent absent objects to the understanding that it may judge of them. The function of the schematism is to show how the categories which are *à priori* forms are applicable to the empirical intuitions of sense. I do not need such an intermediary, as I hold that the mind can at once know things and the relations of things.

*Dialectic.*—Kant is nothing if not logical. He has now with logicians to rise from judgment to reasoning, from der Verstand to die Vernunft, which gives a unity to the judgments. This is done also by mental forms, which he calls ideas. I need not dwell on what almost all his critics have noticed—his confounding the reason and reasoning, the first of which sees certain truths immediately, whereas the other needs a process. Reasoning takes three forms, which give us three ideas: "All

human cognition begins with intuitions, proceeds from thence to conceptions, and ends with ideas."

REASONING.—Categorical, Conditional, Disjunctive,  
*Ideas.*—Substance, Interdependence of Phenomena, God.

I enter not on the inquiry whether there are three kinds of reasoning, or whether reasoning is not always one and the same. But I must state that I have a difficulty in apprehending how the ideas as forms give the reasoning, or how the ideas result from reasoning, how God results from disjunctive reasoning. But my search is after the reality supposed to be in these ideas. What reality remains, except indeed a subjective reality implying an objective existence? Is it not virtually gone? It has been reflected from mirror to mirror till now nothing definable is left. There was a sort of reality, phenomenal and subjective, in the intuition; this had still an attached reality in the judgment. But it is difficult to detect it, and impossible to determine what it is in the third transformation—a reality or an illusion, a something or a nothing, a shadow or a reflection of a shadow. Kant acknowledges, "The categories never mislead us, objects being always in perfect harmony therewith, whereas ideas are the parents of irresistible illusions" (Translation, p. 394). These illusions are like the concave shape we give the sky; like the rising rounded form we give the ocean when we stand on the shore; like the foam made by the waters, which we may wipe away, but will speedily gather again. Kant is still pursuing the reality, the *Ding an sich*, but it is as the boy pursues the rainbow, without ever catching it. He argues powerfully that if we suppose these ideas to be realities we fall into logical fallacies.

*Substance.*—If we suppose substance to be real we have a paralogism. Kant examines the *cogito ergo sum* of Descartes. If the *ego* is in the *cogito* we have no inference but simply an assumption. If the *ego* is not in the *cogito*, the conclusion does not follow; we have merely an impression or idea. I am of opinion that we should not try to prove the existence of self by mediate reasoning; we should assume the existence of *ego cogitans* as made known by self-consciousness.

*Interdependence of Phenomena.*—At this point he maintains that we are landed in contradictions or antinomies—that is,



provided we look on the ideas as things. He resolves the antinomies by showing that we are not to imagine that what we affirm and can prove of phenomena is necessarily true of things. Those of us who hold that the mind can know things have to meet these contradictions. This we do by showing that the counter propositions are not proven—are in fact about things of which we have no knowledge; for example, as to whether the world is or is not limited in time and space. In other cases, the alleged contradictions are merely in our own mutilated statements, and not in the things themselves or our native convictions about them.

*The Theistic Arguments.*—He has a well-known threefold classification of them: the ontological, the cosmological, and the physico-theological. I have no partiality for the first two. So far as the first is concerned—that from the idea of the perfect in the mind—I am not sure that the idea of the perfect implies the existence of a corresponding being, though it may prepare us for receiving the evidence, and enable us to clothe the Divine Being, shown on other grounds to exist, with perfection. In regard to the second, I am not prepared from the bare existence of an object, say a lump of clay, to argue that it must have had a Divine cause. But I hold that the third argument—that from design—is conclusive if properly stated. Kant cannot acknowledge its apodictic validity, simply because it implies the principle of cause and effect, which he regards as having merely a subjective value. When we hold that the things in the world are real, then are we called to argue a real cause in a designer, which the idea of the perfect in the mind enables us to clothe with infinity.

*The Practical Reason.*—The part of the Kantian philosophy which is the strongest and healthiest is the ethical. No writer in ancient or modern times has stood up so resolutely for an independent morality which, it should be observed, is perceived not as a phenomenon or by artificial forms, but at once and directly by the practical reason. There may, he thinks, be legitimate disputes as to what things are, and the speculative reason may lead us into illusions, and even darkness and scepticism, but the moral power comes in to save and to reveal a categorical imperative, which lays down a law



binding on all intelligent beings. According to this law, men are responsible, have to appear at a judgment day, which implies a future existence and God to guarantee the whole. Morality, immortality, and God are thus indissolubly bound together.

I believe that Kant has substantially established his moral positions. They cannot be assailed, except on grounds which Kant himself unfortunately furnished. Kant admitted, indeed argued, that the speculative reason led to illusions, indeed to contradictions, on the supposition that we know things, and then brought in the moral reason to bring us back to truth and certainty. The risk in all such procedure is, that those led into the slough may be caught there and go no farther. For if the speculative reason may gender illusions, what reason have we for thinking that the practical reason gives us only truth? I do not admire the wisdom of those who first make men infidels in order to shut them up into truth as they feel the blankness of nihilism.

It was in mockery that Hume, after showing that reason leads into contradictions, allowed religious men to appeal to faith. There was far less shrewdness shown by those philosophers in the age following, who, after allowing that the intellect leads to scepticism, fell back with Jacobi and Rousseau on an ill-defined faith or feeling. The pursuing hound which had caught and torn to pieces the understanding, having tasted blood, became more infuriated, and went on to attack and devour the belief or sentiment. It is of vast moment, both logically and practically, to uphold the reason in discovering truth, if we would defend the reason in discovering the good. I deny that the reason ever lands us in contradictions or leads into error or even illusion. In the antinomies the mistakes are all in our own statements, and not in the dictates of our nature. The intellect does not lead to all truth, but if properly guided it conducts to a certain amount of truth, clear, well established, and sure. Beginning with realities, it adds to these indefinitely by induction and by thought. The speculative reason properly employed, so far from conflicting with and weakening moral reason, confirms and strengthens it.

Proceeding in our inductive method, with criticism merely as a subordinate means, we keep clear of that heresy into which

the Kantians have fallen of making a schism in the body, which in this case is not the church, but the mind. I cannot allow that one part or organ of our nature leads to error, and another to truth. I hope we have done with that style of sentiment, so common an age or two ago, which lamented in so weakly a manner, often with a vast amount of affectation, that reason led to scepticism, from which we are saved by faith, and which was greatly strengthened by Kant's doctrine of the practical reason coming in to counteract the illusion of the speculative reason. The account I have given above makes every part of our nature correspond to and conspire with every other. It does more—it makes every faculty of the mind yield its testimony to its Divine author. The understanding collating the facts in nature and the collocations therein, and proceeding on its own inherent law of cause and effect, which I represent as having an objective value, furnishes the argument from design. Then our moral nature comes in, and reveals a law above us and binding on us, and clothes the intelligence which we have discovered with love. I admit that the finite works of God do not prove God to be infinite. I believe no one ever said that they did. But this circumstance has made Kant and his school insist that thereby the theistic argument is made invalid. But as we call in our moral nature to clothe God with rectitude, so we call in that idea of the infinite, the perfect, which the mind has, and which was fondly dwelt on by Anselm, Descartes, and Leibnitz, to clothe him with infinity. Our nature is thus a harmoniously constructed instrument, raising a hymn to its Creator.

I cannot agree with Mr. Mahaffy in thinking that all philosophy was proceeding in the wrong road till Kant set it out on the right. On the contrary, I hold that the critical method, the phenomenology, and the *à priori* forms of Kant were all a departure from the genuine catholic philosophy which has been expounded by the profound and wise thinkers of all ages and nations. I should never think of charging the philosophy of Kant with producing the lethal influence of the scepticism of Hume. It has many and great redeeming qualities in its evolution of the high capacities and ideas of the human soul, and in the deep foundation it gives to morality. But it has

errors which, after lying latent for a time, have come out in that agnosticism which is at present laying an arrest on all high philosophic and religious truth.

I am quite aware that a large body of speculators will look down with contempt on the sober views I have been expounding, and not think it worth their while to examine them. Metaphysical youths from Britain and America, who have passed a year or two at a German university, and have there been listening to lectures in which the speaker has been passing along so easily, and without allowing a word of cross-examination, such phrases as subject and object, form and matter, *à priori* and *à posteriori*, real and ideal, phenomenon and noumenon, will wonder that any one should keep on such solid ground as I have done while they themselves are on such elevated heights. But I can bear their superciliousness without losing my temper, and I make no other retort than that of Kant on one occasion, "that their master is milking the he-goat while they are holding the sieve." I am sure that the agnostics, whether of the philosophical or physiological schools, will resent my attempt to give knowledge so firm a foundation. I may not have influence myself to stop the crowd which is moving on so exultingly; I may be thrown down by the advancing cavalcade; but I am sure I see the right road to which men will have to return sooner or latter; and I am satisfied if only I have opened a gate ready for those who come to discover that the end of their present broad path is darkness and nihilism.

I have ventured to suggest that there should be an understood unity of action among those who wish to oppose the prevailing philosophic tendency which combines in an incongruous manner materialism and agnosticism. I do not project the formation of a Solemn League and Covenant like my Scottish forefathers, or a Bund like the Swiss cantons, or a joint-stock company like our merchants. But as there is evidently an understanding and a co-operation and a determination to laud each other on the part of those who reject all positive truth, so there should be an attempt on the part of those who oppose them to combine in principle and in action. I will be glad if Scotland, provided she is not become altogether ashamed of

her old philosophy take a lead in this campaign.<sup>1</sup> I should rejoice to find Professor Mahaffy, with or (better) without the assistance of Kant, continuing to oppose Mill and Bain and Spencer. France has never followed Darwin as England has done, and there must be descendants of the schools of Descartes, Jouffroy, and Cousin ready to defend a spiritual philosophy. We might get Italian aid from Mamiani and Ferri, editors of the *La Filosofia delle Scuole Italiane*. There may be some in Germany, wearied of Hegelianism and pessimism on the one hand, and of Haeckel and materialism on the other, willing to have a philosophy derived from consciousness. But in this REVIEW I would address myself specially to the young men of America. The United States in their four hundred colleges have a greater number of professors of mental science than any other country, I believe than in all other countries, and some of these

<sup>1</sup> "As regards Hamilton," says Professor Mahaffy (Art. p. 213), "it seems ungracious to bring up against him another case of inconsistency, seeing he has received such severe justice at the hands of the present generation in philosophy. His teaching may be called extinct, and it will be difficult in the history of philosophy to find a man more overrated while he lived and despised as soon as he was unable to defend his own opinions." Is there any thing here of the old jealousy of Edinburgh on the part of Dublin? It is certainly humiliating and unpleasant to reflect that while Hamilton called forth a greater number of distinguished pupils than any metaphysician of his age, no one of these has made any effort to defend him. I was one of the first to criticise him, which I did when his pupils regarded him as infallible. Were I ten years younger than I am I would be strongly inclined to say a word in behalf of this philosophy, which was injured mainly by his so far departing from the inductive spirit of Reid to go over to the critical method of Kant. I am tempted to add that I might be inclined, did other pressing duties admit, to say a word in behalf of Mr. Mill's Inductive Logic in opposition to the attack of Mr. Jevons. Mr. Mahaffy adds: "Mansel is another instance, like Hamilton's, of an enormous but ephemeral reputation. He is never so much as now named among philosophers nowadays." Is not this because Oxford is going over to Hegelianism, which I venture to predict will not have so long a reign as Hamilton and Mill have had in that university? I am glad that Professor Mahaffy has had the courage to state how much a materialistic psychology has been promoted by Mr. Bain by the influence of his school in London being so often appointed examiner in the Indian Civil Service competitions, and thus guiding in a very exclusive way the reading and studies of young men. I notice that Professor Flint, in the papers in 1877 set for the Ferguson Scholarship, puts queries requiring some knowledge of Hobbes, Hume, Comte, Kant, Fichte, and Hegel, but never refers to Hutcheson, Reid, Stewart, or Hamilton.

have large numbers (I know one who has two hundred) studying philosophy under them. Surely this country has a duty to do in beating back the fatal tides. I do not recommend that American youth should, on the one hand, as Professor Mahaffy seems to fear, neglect the philosophy of the past, including that of Kant, or that on the other hand they should overlook physiological research ; but whatever they call in to aid, let them rear the American philosophy by a careful inductive method on the facts of our mental constitution.

JAMES MCCOSH.