

THE  
CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY OF  
IMMANUEL KANT

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## CHAPTER XII.

THE ANTITHETIC OF PURE REASON, AND THE CRITICISM OF  
RATIONAL COSMOLOGY.

**R**ATIONAL Cosmology deals with the idea of the world as a totality of phenomena in one time and space. In this world, as transcendental Logic has shown, every phenomenon is determined in relation to other phenomena. It is determined in time, by relation to preceding and coexisting phenomena; in space, by relation to coexisting phenomena; and except through such relations it could not be determined as an object at all. Yet such determination of phenomenon by phenomenon is never complete and final; for the determining phenomenon requires to be determined by another phenomenon, and that by another, and so on *ad infinitum*. If, then, reason demands a complete and final determination of objects in the phenomenal world, it demands something which, in this region of knowledge at least, can never be attained. For here every answer gives birth to a new question, and no conclusive answer can ever be given. Now, that reason does make such a demand, has already been shown. The hypothetical syllogism of formal Logic puts us on the track of an idea of reason which should express the completion of the empirical regress, and so enable us to comprehend the world of phenomena as a whole, bounded and limited only by itself.

Connexion of the idea of the world with the hypothetical syllogism.

Now, the peculiarity of the problems of reason which are

This idea gives rise to a dilemma.

connected with this idea is, that they immediately take the form of dilemmas. They offer us a choice of alternatives, in one or other of which, according to the law of excluded middle, truth must lie. The 'unconditioned totality of phenomenal synthesis' must consist either in a finite or infinite series, in a series which has, or one which has not, a beginning. In the former case, we can reach totality only by discovering the unconditioned condition which forms the first member of the series; in the latter case, we can reach totality only by summing up the series of conditions, which, as infinite, is unconditioned.

Dilemma as to the finitude or infinity of the world in space and time.

Let us, then, taking those in each class of categories that give rise to a series, consider what are the different forms of dilemma that arise when we follow the regressive movement of reason from the conditioned to the unconditioned. In the first place, phenomena are extensive magnitudes, whether we regard them as in space or as in time. Now, phenomena as in time constitute a series; for a time is determined as such only by relation to a preceding time; and (as time is not perceived by itself) a phenomenon in time is determined as such only by relation to a preceding phenomenon. But totality in the synthesis of phenomena in time cannot be attained, except by tracing them back to a first phenomenon, which is determined in time in relation to no previous phenomenon; or, if this is impossible, by summing up the infinite series of times and phenomena in them. And the same, *mutatis mutandis*, holds good of objects in space; for though space itself is not serial, the synthesis, by which we determine phenomena in space, *is* serial. We can determine one space only by relation to another space, and that again by relation to another beyond it; and so also (as space is not perceived by itself), we can determine a phenomenon as in space only by reference to another, and so on *ad infinitum*. For totality of synthesis, therefore, we must be able either to reach a last phenomenon in space, or else to sum up the infinite series of spaces and phenomena in them.

In the second place, matter, or the object of external perception has intensive quantity ; in other words, it is never simple or indivisible ; for every space is made up of spaces, and every spatial phenomenon, therefore, must be regarded as made up of parts, which are the conditions of its existence as a whole. Hence, we cannot complete our knowledge of any external object unless we divide it into its ultimate parts, and enumerate them all. But to do this would imply that we are able, either to reach simple and indivisible parts, or to sum up an infinite series of parts within parts.

Dilemma as to the simplicity or complexity of objects.

In the third place, under the head of Relation, all phenomena, as objects in time, are determined as effects of causes, which, in their turn, are effects of other causes ; and the totality of synthesis, according to the category of causality, cannot be attained unless we are able either to reach a cause which is not an effect, a *causa sui*, or to sum up an infinite series of causes.

Dilemma as to the series of causes.

Lastly, under the head of Modality, we have seen that all phenomena, as objects, are in themselves contingent, or only hypothetically necessary, *i.e.*, necessary on the presupposition of the existence of something else : we cannot, therefore, reach the unconditioned totality of synthesis, unless we are able either to discover an existence which contains the conditions of its possibility in itself, *i.e.*, an absolutely necessary Being, or to sum up an infinite series of phenomena, which are contingent in themselves, but necessary in relation to each other.<sup>1</sup>

Dilemma as to the necessity or contingency of things.

In all these cases we start with given phenomena, and seek for the complete conditions of their possibility ; and in all, reason may be satisfied, either with an absolute beginning, or a completed infinite series. " In the latter case, the series is without limit *a parte priori* (without beginning), *i.e.*, it is infinite, yet given as a whole, though the regress in it is never completed, and can only be called *potentially* infinite. In the former case, there is a *first* in the series ; and, if we consider the

The Dilemmas of Reason.

<sup>1</sup> A. 415 ; B. 442.

time that has passed, that first is a *world-beginning* ; if we consider space, it is a *world-limit* ; if we consider the parts of a limited given whole, it is that which is *simple* ; if we look to causes, it is the absolute *self-activity* (freedom) ; if we consider the existence of changeable things, it is the absolute *necessity of nature*." <sup>1</sup>

Now these problems are not *arbitrary* ; they are forced upon us by the nature of reason itself. If there is an illusion in the dilemmas upon which they drive us, it is at least a natural illusion. We cannot avoid asking the questions, for on our asking them depends all the movement of our reason ; and when we ask them, we seem inevitably to be forced to accept one or other of the alternative answers.

The sceptical and the critical methods of dealing with them.

Yet even prior to any minute examination of the reasoning by which they are supported, we may see that both the alternative solutions of the problems of reason *must* be illusory. For the questions asked by reason must be answered, if answered at all, by the understanding, which alone enables us to determine any object as such ; and yet no synthesis of the manifold by the principles of the understanding can possibly be adequate to the absolute unity and totality of reason. There is a hopeless *see-saw* between the two faculties ; for if we adopt such a conception of the Unconditioned as alone is adequate to the idea of reason, we find it is too great for the synthesis of the understanding ; and if we adopt such a conception of it as can be definitely apprehended by understanding, we find that it is too small for reason. The understanding cannot determine an object absolutely but only by relation to another object : hence it is impossible for it to rest in the conception of an absolute beginning ; yet it is equally unable to embrace in its synthesis a series which has no beginning. The consequence, therefore, is that, in all metaphysical conflict, the victory remains with the attacking party ; and reason fluctuates between two alternatives so

<sup>1</sup> A. 418 ; B. 446.

related, that the negation of the one seems necessarily to involve the assertion of the other, while yet either, taken by itself, involves an absurdity. The strength of Scepticism has always lain in the exhibition of this apparent self-contradiction of reason, according to which everything, which can be asserted, can, with equal reason, be denied; its weakness has lain in its incapacity for explaining the meaning of this self-contradiction. Yet if it be not explained, Scepticism destroys itself; for, like every other rational system or doctrine, Scepticism presupposes the general competence of that intelligence, whose deliverances in certain specific instance it refutes. If reason were utterly incompetent, it could not determine even its own incompetence. Criticism, on the other hand, while it shows the origin and necessity of the problems of Metaphysics, seeks to vindicate the trustworthiness of reason and at the same time to limit it: or, in other words, to prove the subjective, at the same time that it denies the objective, validity of the Ideas of reason. In order to do so much as this, however, it must solve three problems. In the *first* place, it must discover the nature and extent of the antinomies of reason, and must show that they are *dogmatically insoluble*; or, in other words, that, whichever of the alternative solutions we adopt, we are led into absurdity and contradiction. In the *second* place, it must account for these antinomies, from the nature and relations of our faculties. And, *lastly*, it must show what is the use of the ideas of reason, supposing it to be proved that they do not enable us to determine any object that is beyond the limits of experience. For we cannot vindicate the intelligence or avoid the absurdity of absolute scepticism, if we find nothing but illusion in those ideas to which we are driven by the necessity of reason itself. No satisfactory result, therefore, will be achieved till we discover the positive meaning and value of these ideas—if not as adding to the amount of human knowledge, then at least as necessary to give aim and direction to its progress and systematic unity to its results.<sup>1</sup>

The three  
problems of  
the *Dialectic*

<sup>1</sup> A. 421; B. 449.

Proof that the  
antinomies  
cannot be  
solved  
dogmatically.

The first of these problems has already been partially solved. For we have shown that antinomies arise in connexion with the extension, or elevation to the unconditioned, of those categories which produce a series; and we have indicated in general what are the problems of rational Cosmology that spring out of this process. All that remains under this head is, to show in detail the nature of the arguments by which the thesis and antithesis of each of these antinomies are supported.

The first  
antinomy.

The *first Antinomy* relates to the limitation of the world in time and space. The thesis is, that "the world had a beginning in time, and is also limited in space." For this it may be argued, in regard to time, that, if there were no beginning of the world, then, at any given point of time, we must say that an eternity has passed, *i.e.*, that an infinite series, which, *ex vi termini*, cannot be completed, has actually been completed. Again, if the world has no limits in space, it must be an infinite given whole. But a quantum can only be given by the successive synthesis of its parts; and if the whole is infinite, as in the case supposed, the synthesis cannot be completed except in an infinite time, *i.e.*, it can never be completed. Hence the denial of either member of the thesis involves an absurdity.

For the antithesis, that 'the world had no beginning in time, and is unlimited in space,' it may be argued that, if the world had a beginning, there must have been a time when it was not. But nothing can begin to be in empty time; for "no moment of empty time has in it a distinctive condition, by reason of which a thing should be rather than not be." In other words, a relation of an event to empty time, by which its date should be determined, is impossible; for the time of one event can only be determined in relation to the time of another that precedes it. In like manner, to say that the world is limited in space, is to say that there is empty space beyond it by which its limit is determined. But a spatial relation, which is not a relation of objects *in* space, but a

relation of objects *to* space, is impossible. Space, in fact, is nothing but 'the possibility of external phenomena.' 'Empirical perception is not compounded of phenomena and space' as *separate* elements; for space is a mere form of the relations of possible objects, and not itself an object to which other objects are related. Hence *the denial of either member of the antithesis involves an absurdity.*

Here, then, is an absolute Antinomy of reason, demonstrated apagogically on both sides. On the one side it is argued, that if the world is determined as having no limits in time or space, it must be so determined by an endless synthesis, which yet is completed; and, on the other side, that if the world is determined as having limits, then empty space and empty time must be regarded as actual existences, which limit other objects, and not as mere forms of the perception of objects. In other words, phenomenal objects in time and space are always related to a 'beyond,' which itself must consist of phenomenal objects; yet an endless series of phenomenal objects is impossible. Reduced to its essentials, therefore, the reasoning is, that we necessarily determine the world in space and time as limited in extension, yet with equal necessity we remove the limit, and relate it to something beyond, which, in its turn, must be determined as limited, and related to something beyond, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

The *second Antinomy* relates to the divisibility of matter. The second antinomy. For the thesis, that 'every composite substance in the world consists of simple parts, and that there exists nothing which is not either itself simple, or composed of simple parts,' it may be argued, that, if there be no simple parts, then you cannot annihilate all composition even in thought. But composition is, by the very idea of it, an accidental relation—a relation which you *can* annihilate without annihilating the substances compounded. Infinite dividedness, therefore, or composition which is not of simple parts, cannot be admitted by any one who holds that there is a substantial reality in things beneath



their accidents. Therefore, *the denial of the thesis involves an absurdity.*<sup>1</sup>

For the antithesis, 'that no composite thing consists of simple parts, and that there does not exist in the world any simple substance,' it may be argued, that simple parts could not exist in space, for every space is made up, not of simple parts, but of spaces. As, therefore, we cannot get rid of composition in space, so we cannot get rid of it in any external object. Nay, we cannot get rid of it in any object at all, either external or internal; for such an object would have to be presented to us in a perception that does not contain a manifold; and this is impossible. The supposition that the *Ego* is such an object has been sufficiently refuted in the preceding chapter. Hence *the denial of the antithesis involves an absurdity.*

Here, then, is a second Antinomy of reason proved apagogically. The sum of the argument for the thesis is, that an infinitely composite substance is a contradiction: for it would be a substance entirely made up of external and accidental relations. And the sum of the argument for the antithesis is, that no object of experience, as such, can be simple. It is noticeable that the argument for the thesis is not, in this case, derived from the impossibility of completing an infinite series by division (as in the first Antinomy it was derived from the impossibility of completing an infinite series by composition), but from the metaphysical conception of the individual substance or monad, which Kant had inherited from the school of Leibniz. This inconsistency is another proof how deeply the mind of Kant had been impressed with the Individualism of his predecessors. If Kant, in dealing with the second Antinomy, had gone on the same principle as in dealing with the first Antinomy, the essentials of the reasoning would have been,

<sup>1</sup> Kant's statement of this argument is very obscure. It is unravelled by Hegel (*Werke*, III. 208). Hegel remarks that the word 'composite' is not in its proper place here: for it is merely tautology to say that the composite, as such, is made up of simple parts. What Kant means is rather the 'continuous.'

that we necessarily determine the object in space as limited in division, and therefore as simple, yet with equal necessity we remove this limit, and regard it again as complex, and so on *ad infinitum*.

The *third Antinomy* relates to the possibility of a first, or free, causality. The thesis is, that "causality according to the laws of nature is not the sole causality from which the phenomena of the world as a whole are deducible, but that it is necessary for their explanation also to assume a causality by freedom." For this assertion, it may be argued, that, according to the laws of nature, we must seek for the cause of a change in some change that has gone before it; for if a cause were not a change, but something permanent, then the effect likewise would be always in existence, or would not be a change. According to the same principle, we must seek the cause of the causal change in another change, and so on *ad infinitum*. If, therefore, all happens according to the laws of nature, a cause of phenomena is always a subaltern, and never a first cause: or there is never a sufficient cause for the events that happen. And this contradicts the law of causality itself. There must, therefore, be a cause not according to the laws of nature, but according to freedom, if the law of causality is absolute: or, *the denial of the thesis involves an absurdity*.

For the antithesis, that "there is no such thing as freedom, but that everything happens purely according to the laws of nature," it is argued that, if a free causality exists, it must be conceived, not only as beginning the series of causes and effects, but also as determining itself to begin it, *i.e.*, "it must make an absolute beginning, and nothing must precede it or determine its action according to permanent laws. But every beginning to act presupposes a state of the not yet acting cause, and a dynamic first beginning of action presupposes a state which has no connexion of causality with the previous state of the same cause, *i.e.*, follows in no way from it." But this is inconsistent with the law of causality; it would, in fact, be the

negation of the very idea of nature; for "nature and transcendental freedom are related to each other as law and lawlessness."

*The denial of the antithesis, therefore, involves an absurdity.*

The sum of the argument for the thesis, then, is, that there is a spontaneity or free causality, because without it the law of causality comes into contradiction with itself, since, in that case, no sufficient cause can ever be given for anything; and the sum of the argument for the antithesis is, that there is no free causality, because, if it existed, it would be uncaused, and so would contradict the law of causality. Thus the principle of causality at once posits an absolute beginning, and yet negatives an absolute beginning, and the alternate position and negation leads to an infinite series.

The fourth  
antinomy.

The *fourth Antinomy* relates to the possibility of a necessary Being. For the thesis, which declares that "there is a necessary being belonging to the world, either as its part or its cause," it is argued, that the world of experience, being a world in time, contains a series of changes, each of which is hypothetically necessary, or, in other words, made necessary by a condition that precedes it. Whatever is thus conditioned, however, presupposes a complete series of conditions up to that which is unconditioned or absolutely necessary. There is, therefore, an absolutely necessary being implied in all change. And this necessary being belongs to the world of experience, and is not outside of it. For the beginning of a series of changes in time cannot be determined, except in relation to something that has preceded it in time, or has existed in the world of experience at a time when it did not exist. To go out of the world of experience would involve a *μετάβασις εἰς ἄλλο γένος*, and would lead to a different kind of necessity from that which is wanted. For our argument is from the *contingent* to the necessary. Now, the contingent, in the sense in which that word is applied to objects of experience, means that which has a cause in something other than itself, something which existed previously. But the contingent in the

pure conception of it (which, of course, abstracts from the conditions of experience) is that of which the opposite is not self-contradictory. And we can never say that what is contingent in the one sense is contingent in the other. Hence, when we argue from the contingent of experience to the necessary, we must argue to a being who is necessary in an empirical sense, a necessary being in the world, and not out of it. *The denial of the thesis, therefore, involves an absurdity.*

For the antithesis, that "there is no necessary being either in the world or out of it," it is argued that, in the first place, such a necessary being cannot be *in the world*. For if so, then there must be an unconditionally necessary, *i.e.*, an uncaused, beginning of the series of cosmical changes; or, if not, then the infinite series of changes, each of which is contingent, must, as a whole, be absolutely necessary. But the former supposition is inconsistent with the dynamic law of the determination of all phenomena in time, and the latter is absurd in itself; for a multitude of things taken together cannot be necessary, if no one of them possesses necessary existence in itself. In the second place, the necessary being cannot be *out of the world*; for, as the first member of the series of causes of phenomena, the causality of the necessary being must lie in time. *The denial of the antithesis, therefore, involves an absurdity.*

The parallelism between thesis and antithesis would have been more complete, if Kant had not introduced under the former the proof that the necessary being must be in the world. Overlooking this irregularity, the sum of the argument for the thesis is, that there must be a necessary being either *in* or *out* of the world, because the contingent presupposes the necessary; and the sum of the argument for the antithesis is, that there can be a necessary being neither *in* nor *out* of the world: not in the world, because no being in the world can be absolutely necessary; and not out of the world, because no necessary being out of the world could be causally related to the contingent in the world. In short, we necessarily explain the

contingent by the necessary, but every necessity we can reach is only hypothetical, *i.e.*, contingent.

The collected theses form one system of philosophy, and the collected antitheses an opposite system.

These, then, are the four antinomies of rational cosmology. They are no more and no fewer, because the number of the categories which give rise to a series are just so many. It is noticeable, however, that the solutions given of these different problems are not unconnected, but that all the theses naturally gather themselves into one system of philosophy, and all the antitheses into another and opposite system. The same tone of mind, the same general interests, speculative and practical, which lead us to accept the thesis or the antithesis respectively in one case, lead us to accept it in all the other cases. In this way there arises, on the one side, a system of 'Dogmatism of pure reason,' and, on the other side, a system of Empiricism, which often slides into a dogmatic Materialism. And, if for the moment we abstract from the question of the truth of these rival systems, it is easy to see that, for the maintenance of both, there are powerful motives, springing out of the most pressing needs and tendencies of our moral and intellectual nature. To believe that the world is not eternal and infinite, but that it had a beginning and has a limit to its extension in space; that everything is not divisible and transitory, but that there exists an indissoluble unity of substance, if nowhere else, at least in the self-conscious intelligence; that a spiritual being is a free causality, and not like other things bound in the chains of nature and fate; and that the order of nature is not the ultimate fact to which our thoughts are limited, but that beyond the contingent world there is a necessary Being, who is its first cause—all this gives support to our moral and religious life, as well as satisfaction to our highest intellectual cravings. If our view were limited to the phenomena of sensible experience, we could not believe in a God, or a higher destiny for ourselves: if we conceived the law of nature to be the ultimate truth of things, we could not hold to the absoluteness of the imperative of duty; our deepest moral experiences of repentance

and change of character would have to be regarded as illusory, and, at the same time, the architectonic impulse of reason, which seeks to refer all science to one principle, would necessarily remain unsatisfied. On the other hand, Empiricism, when it bids us seek empirical conditions for every conditioned event or existence, when it refuses to admit the conceptions of an indivisible existence, a free causality, and a necessary Being, has this great recommendation, that it "keeps the understanding to its own sphere, the sphere of possible experience, by the discovery of whose laws alone it can extend without limit its certain and definite knowledge." So long as Empiricism takes its principles in this sense, as warnings not to quit the region within which definite knowledge is possible, it is strong and, indeed, unassailable. Its danger lies in this, that it is apt to become dogmatic in its turn, and to assert that no other region exists. And, when it does so, it not only sets itself in opposition to the moral and religious consciousness of men, but also lays itself open to the same objections which it brings against its adversary. For, as we have seen, the assertions, that the world is without beginning or limit, and that there is no simple substance, no free causality, and no necessary being, are not less groundless and self-contradictory than the counter-assertions of the dogmatism of pure reason.<sup>1</sup>

We seem then to stand in this peculiar position that there are certain questions, which we are driven by our very nature to ask, and to answer in one of two ways. But if we answer them in one way, we come into collision with the principles which underlie our moral and religious life, and even with that highest ideal of knowledge which springs out of the very nature of our intelligence; and if we answer them in the other way, we confuse our understanding by mixing dreams with realities, things which we cannot, with things which we can, verify; and we are diverted from investigations that can be pursued indefinitely with ever-increasing profit, to a fruitless

The source of  
the antinomies  
must be  
discoverable.

<sup>1</sup> A. 462 seq.; B. 490 seq.

effort after that which always eludes us. Since, then, interests which we cannot surrender are ranged on each side of this necessary but insoluble problem, it behoves us to consider, whether we cannot throw light upon it by a discovery of the very source of the problem in the nature of our intellectual faculties.

Now, in the first place, it may safely be asserted *a priori* that it is not impossible in this case to discover the cause of the difficulty. For this is one of those departments of knowledge in which we must be able to answer every question we are able to ask. The answer must come from the same sources out of which the question itself arose. In the explanation of the phenomena of nature, this is not the case; there our knowledge is often insufficient to solve the problems suggested by the phenomena we have observed. But in Ethics no problem can be insoluble; we *must* be able to discern what is right and wrong, for right and wrong involve responsibility, and there can be no responsibility except where there is knowledge. And so also in transcendental philosophy, "the same conception, which makes it possible to ask the question, must enable us to answer it," seeing that the object is presented *only* through that very conception.<sup>1</sup> The idea which reason gives us of the object is in fact our only reason for saying that the object exists, and therefore all possible questions as to the nature of the object are merely questions as to the contents of the idea. Hence there is no presumption in our pretending to solve the problem, nor can we escape from the obligation of solving it by alleging the limits of our intelligence.

And it must be found in the nature of our 'faculty of Ideas.'

To the questions of Rational Psychology we gave no answer, for no answer *was* the answer. The problem was to determine the transcendental subject as an object or thing in itself, and all that could be said by way of solution was that the transcendental subject cannot be determined as an object at all.

<sup>1</sup> A. 477; B. 505.

But the case is different with the questions of Rational Cosmology; for here we have to do with ideas, of which both the object and the empirical synthesis required for its conception are given; and the questions which the reason suggests relate only to the continuation and completion of this synthesis so as to embrace an absolute totality. In other words, the ideas in question do not relate to a thing in itself, which, as such, cannot be known at all, but to the objects of experience, which can be and are known. Only we must observe that the question is not, what can be given *in concreto* in experience, but only what lies in the idea itself; for the empirical synthesis can only approximate to the idea (but never enable us to "envisage" it in an object). "All the questions of rational Cosmology, in short, must be capable of being answered out of the idea alone; for that idea is a mere product of reason, which consequently cannot disclaim the obligation to answer questions about it, or throw the difficulty over upon the unknown object."<sup>1</sup> In other words, understanding presents us with an object in relation to other objects, through the synthesis of the empirically given manifold, and reason suggests the idea of a world, an absolute totality of objects, determined by such synthesis. And as this idea relates to experience alone, and yet no object adequate to it can be given in experience, reason must determine out of itself alone its objective meaning and value. We cannot, therefore, take refuge in assertions of our ignorance, as if the idea had an object independent of itself. The object can be presented to us, if at all, only through the idea; and if it be found that the idea is inadequate to determine the object, then it is also inadequate to tell us that there *is* any object at all. Thus the question will be solved *critically*, by the discovery that the idea has only a subjective value, if it cannot be solved *dogmatically*, by the determination of the object in question. But in any case, critically or dogmatically, reason must answer all its own questions.

<sup>1</sup> A. 479; B. 507.



Impossibility  
of a *dogmatic*  
solution of the  
Antinomies.

Now the consideration of the Antinomies has shown the impossibility of a *dogmatic* answer: it has shown us in all the cases that, if we suppose the question settled in one way, the empirical regress necessary to realise the idea of the unconditioned is *too large* to be accomplished by the understanding in its empirical synthesis; and that if we determine it in the other way, the empirical regress accomplished by the understanding is *too small* for the idea of reason. In other words, when we determined the question one way, we were obliged to think of an infinite series as completely given, *i.e.*, of a finite infinite; and when we determined it the other way, we were obliged to think of a finite beyond which nothing could be given, *i.e.*, of an infinite finite. If, then, experience, which alone can give reality to any conception, altogether fails to realise this idea, it follows that it is nothing *but* an idea, *i.e.*, a thought without an object; and we must seek for its meaning and value somewhere else than in such an object.<sup>1</sup>

Possibility of  
a *critical* solu-  
tion of them.

On the other hand, Transcendental Idealism offers us a clear *critical* solution of the difficulty, enabling us to detect the illusion, which has led to the objective interpretation of the cosmological ideas, and at the same time to see their real subjective value. For it directs our attention to the fact, that the objects which we know in experience, are merely phenomenal, *i.e.*, that they have no existence in themselves, apart from our empirical knowledge of them. If this be true, it is obviously absurd to speak of *such* objects as having attributes, which, by their very nature, cannot be experienced. Space and time are mere forms of our perception, and we can say nothing whatever as to the presence or absence, in objects in space and time, of qualities that could not possibly be perceived. The questions of rational Cosmology cannot be answered, because they cannot rationally be asked. Thus, *e.g.*, it is only in a confusion between phenomena and things in themselves, that any one can ever raise, or discuss, the problem,

<sup>1</sup> A. 490; B. 518.

whether the world is finite or infinite in extension. Properly speaking, it is neither the one nor the other ; for the world, as an object of experience, can never be determined either way. We speak, indeed, of a phenomenon as having attributes of its own : but this does not mean that it has any predicates in itself apart from our perceptions of it ; it means merely, that we (and all beings like us) under certain conditions have certain experiences. "That there may be inhabitants in the moon, though no man has ever observed them, must certainly be admitted, but this means only that in the possible progress of experience we might come upon them : for everything is real that stands in one context with a perception, according to the laws by which in experience we proceed from one perception to another." But to say that a thing is real in the sense that it might be perceived, and to say that it exists apart from all perception, are quite different things. "To call a phenomenon a real thing before it is perceived, either means that, in the progress of experience, we must come upon such a perception, or it means nothing at all." It may indeed be said that our sensibility is a receptivity, and that, when it gives us ideas, we must explain those ideas by a non-sensuous or intelligible cause that affects us ; but of this cause we know nothing. We cannot perceive it as an object, and when we call it the *transcendental object*, this is merely "that we may have something that corresponds (as an activity) to the sensibility as a receptivity." To this transcendental object we may, if we will, ascribe all the content of our possible perceptions, and we may speak of it as given in itself before all experience. "Thus, we may say that the real things of past time are given in the transcendental object of experience ; but for us they are objects and realities of past time only in so far as we represent to ourselves, that a regressive series of perceptions would lead to them as conditions of the perceptions of the present moment." And in like manner, when we speak of things existing, which we have not perceived, we can only mean that they are con-

tained in a part of experience to which we may advance from the point we have already reached. "It is all one to say that, in empirical progress through space, I would come upon stars which are a hundred times farther off than the farthest I see, and to say that such stars may exist in the spaces of the universe, though no man has perceived or ever will perceive them."<sup>1</sup>

Both the rival systems of rational Cosmology rest on a confusion of phenomena with things in themselves.

Now, as this is the case, and as the objects of experience exist only *in* our experience of them, it is easy to see that *both* the rival systems of rational Cosmology rest upon an illusion. For they both proceed upon the principle that, the conditioned being given, the whole series of conditions up to the unconditioned is given; and therefore they seek by means of the conditioned, to determine what the unconditioned is. Now this would be a correct procedure, if the things of experience had a nature, which was independent of our experience of them; for, in that case, we, who apprehend the conditioned as such, must necessarily apprehend that by which it is conditioned. But a phenomenon is nothing, apart from the perception of it. When we apprehend it as conditioned, this only means that, as an empirical object, it is connected, according to necessary laws of the understanding, with other perceptions. Nor can we know with *what* other perceptions it is connected, except in so far as these perceptions are actually given in sense. When, therefore, we have determined an empirical object as conditioned, (and of necessity we must thus determine it), all that we know by this means is a phenomenon, and the law of its connexion with other phenomena. But while we are thus enabled to seek out these other phenomena, and have, moreover, in the Analogies of Experience a criterion, by which we may recognise them when we find them, we cannot determine *a priori* what they are. On the other hand, we do know *a priori*, that in this process of connecting phenomenon with phenomenon, we never

<sup>1</sup> A. 491 *seq.* ; B. 520 *seq.*

can come to an ultimate object, an object which has no further relation or condition. Consequently, so long as we speak of phenomena, we cannot say that the conditioned being given, the unconditioned is given with it; but only that the conditioned being given, the unconditioned is set before us as a *problem to be solved*. The illusion of rational Cosmology is that it takes the problem for its own solution. It is true that the mere conceptions of the conditioned and the unconditioned are necessarily related to each other, and we cannot have the one without suggestion of the other; but this does not by any means imply that, when we know the conditioned, we immediately know the whole series of its conditions, and so the unconditioned. For here the conditioned, as an object of knowledge, is not a mere conception, but an experience; *i.e.*, a perception determined by a conception. If then we argue from the conditioned, which is given empirically, to the unconditioned, which is not so given, we are committing a *sophisma figuræ dictionis*; we are taking the conditioned in two senses. In the major, when we say: 'The conditioned implies the unconditioned,' we mean the mere conception of the conditioned; but in the minor, when we say: 'This phenomenon is conditioned,' we mean the conception as applied to an empirically given matter. The merely formal or logical principle, that the premises are presupposed in the conclusion, in which abstraction is made of all time-conditions, is thus changed into the material principle that one phenomenon *in time* being given, the totality of the regressive synthesis of phenomena is given along with it.<sup>1</sup>

We see, then, that the real solution of the Antinomies of rational Cosmology is, that the quarrel is about nothing; <sup>Hence neither of them can solve the problem.</sup> for it is about the objects of experience, viewed as if they were altogether independent of experience. In spite of the apparent contradiction of the thesis and antithesis, they may be, and indeed are, both untrue; for the condition is absent, under which alone either predicate can be applied to the

<sup>1</sup> A. 497; B. 525.

subject. If it be said that either a body smells well, or it does not smell well, it may be answered that there is a third possibility, viz., that it does not smell at all. So here; when it is said that the world is either finitely or infinitely extended in space, it may be answered that it is neither the one nor the other; for both alternatives presuppose that the phenomenal world exists as a thing in itself, independent of our perception. But the phenomenal world is nothing in itself; it is neither finitely nor infinitely extended, for it exists only in an experience which never is completed. At any point the regress is finite, but at no point is it terminated.<sup>1</sup>

The Ideas furnish *regulative* principles.

We have now answered two of the questions which we proposed to ourselves; we have discussed the nature and extent of the Antinomies of Reason, and we have traced them back to their origin in the nature of our faculties. It remains for us to consider the third question,—what is the function of the transcendental Ideas out of which the Antinomies spring, or what particular purpose do they fulfil in the organisation of knowledge,—seeing that they do not enable us to determine the nature either of phenomena, or of things in themselves. And to this, after what has been said, the answer is not difficult. “The principle of reason, properly speaking, is merely a rule which commands a continual regress in the series of the conditions of given phenomena, and never allows that regress to stop at any point, as if it had there reached the unconditioned.” It is no *constitutive* but only a *regulative* principle. It does not enable us to anticipate what will be discovered in experience, but merely directs us continually to widen and extend our experience to the utmost. It does not tell us “what the object is, but simply how the empirical regress is to be carried out so as to arrive at the complete conception of the object.”

Critical solution of the Antinomies.

We now proceed in the light of what has been said to solve

<sup>1</sup> This however does not, as we shall immediately see, exclude a somewhat different view in regard to the dynamical antinomies.

the Antinomies of Reason. As regards the first two Antinomies, which relate to ideas of a Mathematical Transcendent, we need only repeat that *both alternatives are false*. The world has not a limit in time or space, nor is it given as unlimited; but the empirical regress finds at no point an absolute terminus. In other words, space and time, and the world in space and time, are to be regarded not as infinitely or finitely *extended*, but as infinitely (or, as Kant puts it, indefinitely<sup>1</sup>) *extensible*. Again, space and matter in it are not to be regarded as actually *divided* into a finite or infinite number of parts, but as infinitely *divisible*. As regards the last two Antinomies, which deal with a Dynamical Transcendent, we may also say that *both alternatives are false, if they be taken as relating to the world of experience*. For it is certain that a free cause and a necessary being cannot be given in experience, and it is equally certain that an infinite series of causes or hypothetical necessities cannot be so given. In this sense, therefore, the solution of these Antinomies must be the same as that of the others; the series of conditions is infinitely extensible, but not infinitely extended. But there is a peculiarity of the dynamical principles which distinguishes them, in this reference, from the mathematical principles.<sup>2</sup> The peculiarity is, that they express a synthesis of elements, which are not necessarily homogeneous. The mathematical synthesis necessarily proceeds

The Dynamical Antinomies admit of a two-fold solution.

<sup>1</sup> In the eighth section of the chapter on the *Antinomy of Reason*, Kant considers the use of the terms *ad infinitum* and *ad indefinitum*. The former, he says, may always be used in case of *progress*, as in producing a straight line; because in progress it is not required that the members should be given, but only capable of being given. In the case of regress he makes a distinction; we may say that a piece of matter is divisible *ad infinitum*, for here the whole to be divided is given; but of the regress to a beginning of the world in time, or a limit of it in space, we should say that it is *ad indefinitum*, for though another member of the series is always possible, and, therefore, we are entitled to *seek* for it, we cannot say that we must be able to *find* it. This distinction does not seem to have any rational basis, for, on Kant's theory of experience, the parts of a definite space are not *actually* in it as parts prior to division, any more than all previous times are *actually* in the present. And the *potential* existence is the same in both cases.

<sup>2</sup> A peculiarity discussed above, p. 453 *seq.*, 516 *seq.*

from parts in space to parts in space, from events in time to events in time. Hence, when, by the aid of such synthesis, we seek to pass from the conditioned to the unconditioned, we must take the unconditioned as homogeneous with the conditioned. We must explain a quantitative finite by a quantitative infinite. And thus we are entangled in an insoluble contradiction; for we are driven to put under the conditions of experience that which cannot be made an object of experience. In this case it is evident that every possible answer to the questions of the reason must be equally false. But in the case of the dynamical principles, we may escape from such a dilemma, because the terms connected by these principles may be heterogeneous. The elements related as cause and effect, necessary and contingent, need not, so far as they are determined by these categories, have any similarity. Hence, when we pass by the aid of these categories from the conditioned to the unconditioned, we do not necessarily regard the former as in any way *like* the latter. While, therefore, in the former case, we had to look for the unconditioned in the sphere and under the conditions of experience, and were, therefore, necessarily forced to contradict ourselves; here we have an alternative, for we may look for the unconditioned either *within* or *without* the world of experience. And thus it becomes possible to suppose that the thesis and antithesis are both true in different senses: the one as referring to the relations of phenomena *within* the world of experience, and the other as referring to the relation of the phenomenal to the noumenal or intelligible world. Here, therefore, we may regard both thesis and antithesis as true. The antithesis, that there is no free cause, and no necessary Being, is true of the phenomenal world, in the sense that the empirical regress can never bring us to a cause which is not an effect, or a necessity which is more than hypothetical. And yet the thesis, that there is a free causality and a necessary Being, may also be true, in the sense that the phenomenal world is a result of the activity of one or

more free causalities in the intelligible world, and that beneath the play of contingency in the former, there is an absolutely necessary Being in the latter. It is to be observed, however, that we do not here attempt to *prove* the existence of a necessary Being or of a free causality, but merely to leave room for them in case they should be otherwise proved. If it can be demonstrated or made probable on other, as, for example, on moral grounds, that there is an intelligible world, a world of absolute freedom or of absolute necessity, we have shown that no objection to its existence can be based on the principles of causality and necessity. For these principles, in the sense in which they are inconsistent with such forms of the unconditioned, apply only to the world of experience. They are principles, whereby phenomena are related to each other, but they cannot be used in the same sense to determine the relation of the phenomenal to the intelligible world. And it may quite well be the case, that the phenomena of the sensible world, which, as phenomena, form part of the context of experience, and have to be explained in one way in their relation to each other, may have to be explained in a quite different way, when we consider their relation to the intelligible world. The principle of causality may, therefore, be used in two senses; in one sense, as applied to phenomena, and as determining the relations of these phenomena in time; and in another sense, as applied to the connexion of phenomena with things in themselves, which are not in time at all. For the positive proof of such a connexion we must, however, refer to another place. Here it is sufficient to have pointed out the possibility of it, or, in other words, the possibility that phenomena, and especially the phenomena produced by the action of moral beings, have an intelligible, as well as an empirical, character.

The general result of this chapter on the Cosmological Ideas is:—that, as ideas of the totality of the world of phenomena,

Summary of  
Kant's criti-  
cism of  
Rational  
Cosmology.

<sup>1</sup> A. 432 *seq.*; B. 558 *seq.*



they have no objective value, because the phenomenal world exists only in a sensible experience in which totality can never be given or realised ; that both the opposite systems of philosophy, which attempt to construe this totality, end in contradiction, because they both regard objects, which have only an empirical reality, as things in themselves ; that, in the case of the Mathematical Ideas, there is no escape from contradiction except in this insight into the falsity of both alternatives ; while, in the case of the dynamical Ideas, it is possible to reach a somewhat more satisfactory result, by referring the predicates of the Thesis to the object, as noumenon, and those of the Antithesis to the same object, as phenomenon ; and, lastly, that in relation to our knowledge of the world of experience, all four Ideas have merely a regulative, and not a constitutive, value ; that is, they enable us to set up certain subjective rules, by which the greatest possible extension may be given to our empirical knowledge, but they do not supply objective principles, by which the nature, either of the objects of experience, or of things in themselves, may be determined.

The problem  
of Rational  
Psychology.

In dealing with the Paralogisms of Rational Psychology Kant's main effort was to show that, if we detach the consciousness of self from its relation to the consciousness of objects, or, in other words, try to determine the self otherwise than through the activity by which *it* determines the matter of sense in relation to objects, the self reduces itself to an abstract unity of which nothing can be said. Hence, even the analytic judgment of self-consciousness is impossible, except as it expresses the consciousness of the unity of the subject with itself in all determination of objects. The attempt to determine the self *in* itself and without reference to any object, empties it of all significance and withdraws the ground for the reduplication of the ego in the apparently tautological judgment "I am I." And, apart from this reduplication, the "I" means no more than "He" or "It." It follows, then, that Kant's question,

how by a synthetic judgment we are to get *out of* ourselves to objects, or how we are to get beyond the analytic judgment of self-consciousness, might on his own showing, be met by another apparently absurd, but really equally reasonable, question, how we are to get *into* ourselves, or, in other words, how that analytic judgment itself is possible.<sup>1</sup> But Kant himself has shown that the two processes are "correlative." Self-consciousness is essentially a return upon self, which implies a going out of self to an object; yet these must not be regarded as two separate stages of experience, of which one is over before the other begins, for the object is fully determined only in the return from it. The defect of Kant's view lay only in his conceiving the activity of the ego by which it determines objects as a reaction upon a manifold given from without, and hence, as a consequence, in his representing the return itself as a negative return, which gives rise to a merely analytic judgment of self-consciousness. In reality, as has been shown, the judgment of self-consciousness is not analytic, and not merely *exclusive* of the object. For if in it the self is at first opposed to the object, yet as this negative relation is still a relation, and even a necessary relation, the truer view is that self-consciousness *includes* the consciousness of objects while it goes beyond it.

In the chapter on the Antinomies, Kant is dealing with a problem which is the counterpart of that just mentioned. For, while in Rational Psychology the attempt was made to complete the circle, or, as we may express it, the syllogism of self-consciousness, and to determine the self as a *res completa*, a self-determined and self-contained whole, without taking account of its relation to the objective world; in Rational Cosmology, on the other hand, the converse attempt is made to complete the circle or syllogism of the objective conscious-

It is the  
opposite  
counterpart of  
the problem of  
Rational  
Cosmology.

<sup>1</sup> It will be remembered that the synthetic judgment has two aspects: the transition from the subjective to the objective, and the enrichment of our consciousness of objects with new determinations. Cf. above p. 267.

ness and to determine the objective world as a *res completa*, without taking any account of its relation to the self. Hence, also, the obstacles which defeat these two different attempts to extend knowledge beyond experience, are of an opposite character. In the former case, the bare unity of the mind is found to want that difference, in virtue of which alone it could furnish a complete object for thought, or realise the idea of knowledge as a syllogism. In the latter case, thought is supposed to be brought into contact with a difference in the given matter of sense, which it is able to combine synthetically by means of the conception of an object, but which it can never completely overcome, or subordinate to its own unity. In the former case, the syllogism of knowledge fails for want of material, thus lapsing into an analytic judgment or tautology; nay, even the tautology is found to be too "synthetic" for it, when separated from all given matter. In the latter case, the matter is there, but it resists the form so much that thought can never return from it upon its own unity. Hence, the attempt to determine the object in conformity with the idea gives rise to an endless series of prosyllogisms, which, so to speak, can never be completed in one perfect syllogism of reason. The straight line of proof upon proof extends itself indefinitely, so that the ends can never be brought together in a circle. Hence, the idea of reason appears only as the demand for a completeness of knowledge which, owing to the nature of the subject-matter, can never be realised.

Hegel corrects Kant by denying (1) that pure thought is simply analytic; (2) that applied thought is only externally synthetic.

The two doctrines, that thought in itself is analytic and even tautological, and that thought, as applied to the matter of sense through its forms, gives rise to contradictions which cannot be solved, are necessarily connected with each other. For, if Kant had treated thought as synthetic in itself (*i.e.*, if its unity had been taken by him as self-determining or self-differentiating), he would not have regarded it as incapable of overcoming any division between itself and its object. But tautology on the one side answers to irreconcilable contradic-

tion on the other. It is impossible to criticise Kant in this aspect without reference to Hegel, whose doctrine of the unity of opposites was, and was intended to be, a solution of the exact difficulty which here presents itself. Perhaps Hegel's somewhat epigrammatic way of expressing his principles, which has given rise to so much misunderstanding, is due to his effort at once to contrast, and to connect, it with the doctrine of Kant. Briefly stated, the doctrine of Hegel, as opposed to that of Kant, consists, on the one hand, in the denial that thought *in itself* is ever merely analytical or tautological; and, on the other hand, in the denial that thought, *as applied to the matter of sense*, is ever merely synthetical,<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, that in this application it is so drawn out of its unity that it cannot return to it. In the former point of view, Hegel is continually repeating that contradiction is so far from being confined to the four Antinomies of Rational Cosmology that it is found in every object or idea that can be thought. For in every object or idea there is difference as well as unity, and when this difference is made explicit, it necessarily gives rise to an antinomy, which we must solve either by excluding one of the elements, or by finding some deeper conception which will maintain both the opposed elements in their unity. However simple or complex the object may be—be it mind or matter, be it an atom or a world, be it the conception of cause or substance, or even of bare unity or being—Hegel points out that each such object, each such conception, has at least two sides to it, and implies something else than itself. Taken in its utmost simplicity, it conceals a difference which further consideration enables us to recognise. The object of thought is always the one *in the many*, being *in unity with*, or *in relation to*, not-being. And wherever there is a difference, there is an implicit contradiction, which must be made explicit ere it can be overcome. Thought, then, is essentially *synthetic*; and that means that it is *anti-thetic*. The apparent simplicity of its first form, therefore,

<sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, externally synthetical.

masks an unsolved riddle, which must be stated *as* a riddle ere it can be solved. The ordinary consciousness, indeed, *seems* to be in harmony with itself; for each thing is taken by it as a unit without difference, each idea as a simple identity on which difference is reflected only from the outside: and thus each of its assertions seems to be made without reference to any qualifying negation. Really at every step it is walking over *ignes suppositos cineri doloso*, over the ashes of controversies which have died out for the moment, but are always ready to be lighted up again. A little reflexion is all that is necessary to make us realise that our simplest ideas are double-edged tools, which cut into the hand that uses them as much as into the object to which they are applied. Even the very "I am I," which, in one point of view, is the simplest of all tautologies, is found to hold in solution the deepest of all contradictions, the contradiction which it is hardest of all to reconcile. And Kant himself, indeed, practically confesses as much when he tells us at one time that the judgment of self-consciousness is purely analytic, and at another time that in it thought is brought into a more "awkward pass" (*Unbequemlichkeit*) than in relation to any other object, by reason of the fact that the self there appears both as object and as subject. For what is this but to acknowledge that the purest unity of thought with itself involves at the same time the hardest of all the oppositions which thought has to overcome?

Necessity of contradiction.  
How common sense ignores it.

In this sense, then, we may say with Hegel that all things are full of contradiction; all perception and all conception involve difference, and every difference is an *implicit* contradiction, which in the progress of thought sooner or later must become an *explicit* contradiction. But this explicit contradiction must, on penalty of universal scepticism, be solved or reconciled by the discovery of a more comprehensive principle; for if thought cannot make itself self-consistent, it must ultimately fall into despair of itself and of truth. In our ordinary consciousness of the world, indeed, this necessity is hidden; many differences of

thought sleep together in unbroken harmony without ever coming into active collision. Common sense cuts many a knot without even being conscious of it. In morality, *e.g.*, it sees no difficulty in admitting different commands: *e.g.* 'Thou shalt not kill,' and 'Thou shalt not steal,' as equally absolute; and it avoids any practical collision between the two simply by applying one principle at one time, and another at another. Thus, while it solves the problem of ethics, it often conceals from itself even the fact that there was a problem to be solved; like the judge, who professes to be a mere interpreter of the law, while he is really adding to it. Were it not, indeed, for this healthful unconsciousness with which, at first, we take different aspects of things into our minds without being aware of the contradictions or difficulties involved in them, the first steps of knowledge would be embarrassed by an anticipation of its ultimate problems. But, on the other hand, it is certain that the problems are there, that with time and reflexion the contradictions must ripen, and that in one way or other they must be solved. And the whole history of intellectual progress is just the history of the development of a consciousness of difference into a consciousness of contradiction, and again of the consciousness of contradiction into a consciousness of the higher principle in the light of which the contradiction disappears.

If this be true, it follows, that Antinomy is not merely the accidental product of a false negative dialectic, as has been generally supposed; nor is it, as is supposed by Kant, an essential phenomenon of the intelligence merely in its application to one set of problems. On the contrary, it is the necessary law of thought in itself, from which it cannot in any region escape. The first stage of intelligence, the stage of common sense, is one in which there is an undeveloped consciousness of the unity of thought with itself through all the diversity of its application, and an equally undeveloped consciousness of the discordance and opposition of the different aspects of things

First stage of  
thought, before  
reflexion  
awakes the con-  
sciousness of  
contradiction.

which are gathered together in knowledge. The contradiction of objects with each other and with the thought that apprehends them, is not yet perceived, and hence no reconciliation is wanted. The identity is felt through the diversity, the diversity through the identity, and no more is required. At times, indeed, one aspect of things is more prominent than another. Religious emotion lifts man above the divided and fragmentary existence in which, in his secular life, he usually dwells, and makes vividly present to him a unity, which in general is but shadowy and uncertain. But he passes through the one state of consciousness after the other, without bringing them into contact or considering whether they are consistent or inconsistent.<sup>1</sup> For many, indeed, there never is any conscious discord, and hence there never is any effort after inward harmony. But even where the intellectual impulse is feeble, the moral difficulties of life are constantly tending to awake in us a sense of the differences and oppositions that exist in thought and things. And as the mind cannot abjure its faith in itself, it is forced by the necessity of its own development upon a choice between different elements of its life, which seem at first to contradict and exclude each other.

Kant regards contradiction as an accident due not to the nature of thought, but of the matter to which it is applied.

Kant, then, in so far as he supposes the law of thought in itself to be a law of identity, is really taking up the position of the ordinary consciousness for which identity and difference, unity and multiplicity, affirmation and negation, appear as quite independent ideas, and by which each object is regarded as a simple identity, or at least a unity of elements or qualities that stand side by side in it without affecting each other. In other words, he attributes to thought, as its absolute nature and law, that simplicity which it has only for the unsophisticated, unreflective consciousness.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Spinoza, *Eth.* II. 40, Schol. "Thus, while men are contemplating finite things they think of nothing less than of the divine nature; and again, when they turn to consider the divine nature, they think of nothing less than of the fictions, on which they have formerly built up the knowledge of finite things. . . . Hence it is not wonderful that they are always contradicting themselves."

Hence, he is obliged to regard the synthetic or antithetic aspect of thought as due to the intrusion upon it of a foreign matter. This view is especially prominent in the chapter on what Kant calls the *Amphiboly of the Conceptions of Reflection*, where we find him maintaining that the system of Leibniz would be true, if the objects of our experience were things in themselves, as objects of pure understanding. If this were the case, then he thinks that, as Leibniz maintained, real opposition, *i.e.*, opposition between realities, would have been impossible. For in pure thought opposition is conceivable only between a thing and its negation, the negation being merely the absence of the thing in question. But, Kant argues, this does not hold good in regard to the phenomenal objects of our experience; for these, as objects of perception in space and time, can be conceived as opposing and counteracting each other. So also he argues that, if the objects of our experience were things in themselves, objects of pure thought, the Leibnizian principle of the "Identity of Indiscernibles" would hold good in regard to them. But the spatial conditions of phenomena as objects of perception, make it possible to distinguish, as in different places in space, objects which for pure thought would have been indistinguishable. On the same principle Kant admits that Leibniz had good ground to attribute "perception" to all monads, seeing that, as distinct substances, they must have an inner nature independent of their relation to each other; for pure thought is obliged to determine every object which it asserts to be real as having an existence in itself. And this, again, makes necessary the Leibnizian theory of pre-established harmony to explain the apparent real connexion of things, which, as percipient,<sup>1</sup> have merely an ideal relation to each other. Finally, the Leibnizian view of space and time, as formal relations of things, which presuppose the existence of things as the matter determined by these forms, would hold good if the objects of our experience were objects of pure thought: but, as

<sup>1</sup> Every monad being a *vis representativa Universi*.



they are phenomena, the relations of form and matter are reversed; for space and time, though mere forms of relation, are presupposed in all particular objects which are perceived under these forms. Hence, from all this we arrive at the general result that, *if* by pure thought alone we could determine objects, and *if*, as would then be the case, the objects of our experience were things in themselves, the Leibnizian system would be true. Reality would be absolutely held apart from negation, unity from difference; the inner being of things would be independent of their relations, and their matter would be prior to their form. It is, therefore, only because the objects of our knowledge are given to us through sense, and therefore under its forms, that *negation, difference, external relation, and form* are made co-ordinate with, or even prior to, *affirmation, unity, internal being, and matter*. In other words, in each of these cases, thought is regarded as asserting itself in relation to something which is externally given, and in which it cannot find *itself*. Hence, the objects, which it thus determines by reaction against what is externally given, cannot have the character which they would have had if they had been determined purely by thought itself. For thought in itself is analytic, and it is only the intrusion of something foreign upon thought which brings difference, negation, relation, in short, *antithesis* into it; though in relation to each antithesis it is supposed to be able partially to reassert its unity and to determine the manifold as an object in relation to itself.

Hence also the contradiction thus externally introduced into thought cannot be solved.

But, just because of the pure identity of thought in itself, the Antithetic, which thus is borne in upon it through perception, is incapable of any final solution or reconciliation. And here we come upon the second point in which Hegel sets himself in opposition to Kant. For, while Hegel finds difference and contradiction everywhere, not merely in thought as applied to perception, but even in pure thought itself, he nowhere finds a final and unconquerable difference, or a contradiction which is incapable of reconciliation. This is the

side of Hegel's doctrine which is oftenest neglected or misunderstood; but it is that which really gives importance in his own eyes to this doctrine of contradiction. For it is just because he discerns difference and contradiction everywhere that he finds nowhere an absolute contradiction. And especially, it is because he finds such difference and contradiction even in pure thought, that he believes thought to be capable of coping with all the oppositions which it meets with in its determination of perception, and indeed regards all these oppositions as steps on the way to its full development, its complete self-consciousness, and its final reconciliation with itself. Kant, on the other hand, starting with the analytic view of thought, finds no possibility of reconciling the unity of thought with the difference of perception, which by its forms of space and time seems to be marked out as the direct opposite of self-consciousness with its transparent unity. Thought, as it admits no antithetic or self-differentiating movement, is thus set over against sense with its pure forms of difference, space, and time. At its highest, therefore, it is only the source of a demand for the realisation of unity in our knowledge of the world given under these forms, a demand which by the nature of the case must remain unsatisfied.

The Mathematical Antinomies are the expression of this <sup>The</sup> contradiction. These antinomies arise out of the conception of <sup>Mathematical</sup> <sup>Antinomies.</sup> the world in time and space as an object; and they are due to the contradictory nature of the elements involved in the ideas of time and space themselves. Thus space is necessarily conceived as a unity—as in continuity with itself; yet, on the other hand, it involves externality, and must therefore be conceived as manifold or discrete. In other words, a space, when we conceive it as a unit, has no other attribute except that of being external to another space; it is essentially a relation. One space would be an absurdity, for it would be a *relation without terms*. Yet, on the other hand, all space must be conceived as one: for two separate spaces, not included in one

universal space, would be *terms without a relation*. Space, in short, as the abstraction of externality, *cannot* be a unity; while yet, when conceived as an object in relation to the unity of apperception, it *must* be a unity. And the two moments of continuity and discretion, which are equally necessary, seem to contradict or exclude each other.

Kant's solution of them.

Kant's solution of this difficulty is, that objects in space are merely objects of experience, and that, therefore, we cannot speak either of them, or even of space, as *actually* having in them any qualities, which are not given in experience. Now, space and the world in space, as they are given in experience, are only *finitely* extended, and *finitely* divided; yet, at the same time, by reason of the necessity of reason, which forces us to determine all things in relation to the unconditioned, they are conceived both as infinitely extensible, and infinitely divisible. But, while there would be a contradiction between infinite and finite extent, or infinite and finite dividedness, there is no contradiction between finite extent and infinite extensibleness, or between finite division and infinite divisibility.

Criticism of this solution; (1) in reference to Space;

Now, with a slight alteration, we may admit this solution as valid. Space in itself, and the external world in itself, is only the abstraction of an element in experience; and contradictions must arise whenever we treat abstractions, or, in other words, elements of reality, as *res completæ* or whole realities. Now, when we think of a spatial world as unrelated to thought, we are obliged to conceive it as complete and whole in itself, and therefore as infinite in extension and division. But the truth of the matter is that this abstraction is false, and that the world in space, as that which is essentially self-external, finds its necessary counterpart in the unity of mind, as that which is essentially *in itself*.<sup>1</sup> The antinomy of space proves that space is necessarily related to something else than itself, and cannot be made intelligible except in this relation. To put the same thing in another way:—The world, in our first im-

<sup>1</sup> Cf. above, p. 406 *seq.*

perfect conception of it, is merely a collection of individual things and beings; and each of these, as individual, is a whole in itself; yet each again is externally related to all the others, and so constitutes one whole with them. Space is itself but the utmost abstraction of this way of viewing things, in which their individuality and their community or relativity are put side by side, without any mediation or connexion. Both elements of the idea are essential, yet the one seems to contradict the other. The reconciliation of the seeming contradiction, however, is to be found not in the idea of space itself, but in the further development of the opposite and necessarily related conceptions of individuality, and community, which here appear in their simplest, therefore apparently irreconcilable, forms. It is, indeed, true, as Kant says, that, at first, we necessarily think things as in space; but, though we begin with space, we do not end there: and the solution of the difficulties that belong to this first 'form of perception' is to be found by a deeper comprehension of the elements that are contained in it, and their relations to each other; for it is quite false to suppose, with Kant, that we must take space merely as a form of perception, and that it cannot be resolved into its elements, and brought into a higher unity of thought. It is a perception only so long as we are content to perceive and imagine, without thinking or knowing it.

The same remarks, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to the antinomy <sup>(2) in reference to Time.</sup> of Time. Has the world in time, or time itself, a beginning, or has it not? Kant answers as before, that the empirical regress is always finite in extent, yet indefinitely extensible, and that any question as to time or things in time, apart from this regress, is meaningless. Time is only a form of perception, or of phenomena as given in perception, and, in terms of it, we cannot answer any question about things in themselves, simply because the question itself is irrational. This answer might be taken in a higher sense than Kant intended, as meaning that things, regarded simply as in time, are not seen in their

truth. Space is the abstraction of self-externality, and, therefore, gives rise to a contradiction between the independence of things in it, and their essential relativity, or continuity; and time only contains the same elements, viewed as passing into each other. 'Time,' says Hegel, 'is the first negation of space':<sup>1</sup> by which is meant that, while the externality of things is not denied when we conceive them as in time, their indifference or permanence in this externality is denied. Finite things are first represented as indifferent to each other, and so as in space; but they are not so indifferent. Their existence is but the process, whereby, as separate or limited substances, they cease to be, or pass out of themselves; and time is but the abstraction of this process. Hence arise the Antinomies of Time, that already drew the attention of the Zeno, who may be called the founder of Dialectic. 'The flying arrow rests': it at once is, and is not, in the place through which it passes. The moments of time are external to each other, yet they exist only as they pass into each other; and thus time contains the two moments of continuous self-identity, and absolute change. Moreover, these moments appear in abstract, and therefore apparently irreconcilable, opposition to each other; and, as is always the result in such cases, they give rise to an infinite series. Hence, we no sooner consider a time as one, than we are obliged to relate it to a time before or after it, and again we are obliged to regard these two times as one, and so on *ad infinitum*. No solution of this antinomy can be found in terms of time itself, or without reducing time to a moment in a higher conception, in which the elements of self-identity and relativity find a better reconciliation than they do in time.

The antinomy  
of mind and  
matter in  
Descartes.

I have said that when we conceive the world as existing in space and time, and when we try to determine such a world as either limited or unlimited in itself, we are treating an abstraction as a *res completa*. This means that in such abstraction we forget that, as in space and time, the world exists only for

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopädie*, §§ 257 S.

a conscious self. Descartes already took a step towards this view when he pointed out the direct contrast between the extended and the thinking substance, each of which, taken in itself, has just the characteristics which are excluded from the other. Matter is defined as that which is infinitely extended and infinitely divided, essentially inert and dependent on external force for its movement; while consciousness is an unextended and indivisible unity, absolutely active, and incapable of being determined from without. Having thus set the two in abstract opposition, he then seeks for a *Deus ex machina* to unite them. But a deeper reflexion would have shown him that the two worlds thus set apart are opposite counterparts of each other, and that, as so determined, they can exist only for a subject which relates to each other the terms which it distinguishes. In truth, we have in the opposition, as it is expressed by Descartes, only a provisional determination of the mind and the object in relation to each other—a first expression of the unity of the consciousness of objects with self-consciousness. But, as Descartes himself shows us, the consciousness which makes this determination of subject and object in relation to each other, is not necessarily aware of the relation it thus establishes between the opposed terms. It may, therefore, be unable to bring in their unity, except by a *tour de force*. Kant, however, looking at the difficulty from the transcendental point of view, calls our attention to the abstraction implied in conceiving the self and its object in space as two independent “things in themselves”; and he shows that, on the one hand, the self, apart from its relation to the object, shrinks into an abstract unit which cannot be conscious of itself, and that, on the other hand, matter, if taken as that which is infinitely extended and divided, involves a manifest contradiction—the contradiction of an infinitely large or small quantum, *i.e.*, a quantum which is the very negative of the idea of quantity, as that which can be increased or diminished *ad infinitum*. What we have, therefore, in each of the two

terms is only a half thought, which contradicts itself whenever we examine it closely, or develop the consequences of our abstraction. We can, however, restore its meaning, though with some modification, by recognising the element which it neglects. For, whenever we discover the correlativity of the determination of mind and matter, as Descartes conceived them, we see that his conception of both is imperfect. When we recognise that self-consciousness, as the return of thought upon itself, is possible only for a mind which determines the object as an external object in space, and thus characterises it as its own opposite, we are immediately led to form a new conception of each of these terms. We no longer conceive object and subject as existing apart from each other—the former as that which is essentially out of itself, constituted by *partes extra partes*, and purely passive, and the latter as that which is essentially in itself, and purely active (confined to an analytic judgment which is no judgment at all). On the contrary, we are now made to think of the self-determination of the self as involving a going out of itself to determine that which is other than itself; as involving, in Kant's words, a synthetic judgment, or, to speak more definitely, an antithetic movement of thought, which does not stop short of the determination of the object as in space and therefore in direct contrast with the unity of the self, and which, indeed, must go the length of this absolute antithesis ere it can return upon the unity of self in the so-called analytic judgment of self-consciousness. On the other hand, the object in space cannot, from this point of view, be any longer characterised as purely inert and extended, as subsisting by itself in pure self-externality. On the contrary, in our determination of the world of objects, we must recognise a principle of unity; a principle which manifests itself even in the movement of material bodies in reference to each other, as held together in spite of their diversity by a universal law of gravitation; but which is more clearly revealed in the way in which the material

world becomes subordinated to the life of organised beings; and which finds its complete expression only in the relation of the process of nature to the self-consciousness which is developed in man.

The necessity of getting beyond the abstract antagonism of mind and matter, as expressed in the philosophy of Descartes, was already recognised by his immediate successors, though they took the one-sided method of simply denying or throwing into the back-ground one of the opposites. Spinoza, indeed, seemed to lay emphasis rather upon the *unity* of mind and matter, which he regards as only the parallel attributes of one substance. But he shows an inclination to interpret this parallelism in a sense which gives the preponderance to mind, when in one of his letters he opposes the Cartesian view of the absolute passivity of matter. Leibniz, following out the same line of thought, maintains that all real substances are active and self-determined; and thus he is ultimately led to deny that there are any but percipient substances, *i.e.*, substances which are either minds or analogous to minds: Locke adopts the opposite course of assimilating mind to matter, and he often shows a tendency to explain the movement of thought in knowledge, like the motions of matter, by an external determination—a tendency which is shown still more clearly in some of his followers, and especially in the French Materialists.

The former course necessarily ended in an Atomism of mind the so-called Monadism—which had to be supplemented by the fiction of a pre-established harmony; while the latter ended in an Atomism of matter, which had to seek for a principle of movement outside of itself. The conception of the universal attraction of matter, which was established by Newton, was at war with this atomic Materialism almost from its first appearance; though Newton refused to commit himself to any real *actio in distans*, and spoke of the attractive force as merely a name for the unknown cause of certain phenomena which could not directly be explained by the immediate action of material

Its one-sided solution in Leibniz and Locke.

Kant's advance towards a better solution.



bodies upon each other. So powerful was the prejudice which maintained the idea of the inertia of matter, except as externally determined by a power which is not in matter itself, that it for long maintained (and still maintains itself) in Newton's school, and has led to a number of subsidiary theories (such as that of Le Sage) having for their object to explain the Newtonian law of attraction without any *actio in distans*. On the other hand, Kant, who tried to mediate between the Lockian and Leibnizian schools in his view of mind, regarding knowledge as the result of the determination of passively received data of sense by the activity of thought, maintained also, in his *Metaphysical Rudiments of Physics*, that matter is inconceivable except as the subject of an attractive force (which he conceives as an *actio in distans*) as well as of a repulsive force (which presupposes contact). He thus brings matter and mind, which with Descartes were abstract opposites, into close analogy with each other; while, at the same time, by regarding matter as a phenomenon, and by treating it as *the* phenomenon in opposition, yet in relation, to which mind comes to a consciousness of itself, he makes a step towards the recognition of the spiritual, as not merely negatively related to the material world, but at once implying and transcending it.

Criticism of it.

We may now see that Kant's solution of the Antinomies which arise in relation to objects determined as in space and time, a solution which consists simply in pointing out that these objects are phenomena, may be understood as expressing a truth. For the determination of things as in space and time is not a final determination of them, and the attempt to treat it as such must end in contradiction. This it must do, because, as Kant argues, things can be determined as in space and time only by relation to each other, and not directly by relation to space and time. In other words, time and space do not determine things in relation to each other; but things, through their relation to each other, determine their respective places and times. But this implies that, when we treat things as simply

having spatial or temporal relations to each other, we are treating them abstractly. Thus we may, if we please, leave out of account all other relations of objects, except that they coexist in different places, or occupy different parts of space, and that they exist in the same or different times; but this neglect of other determinations, whether it be the result of the deliberate abstraction of science or of the unreflecting attitude of the ordinary consciousness, necessarily hides from us the real nature of the object. And a thought that does not determine objects as they really are, is always at variance with itself. The Antinomies which arise when we attempt to give a final and complete determination of the world of objects,—while yet treating them merely as objects in space and time, and leaving out of account their necessary relations to each other and to the self,—merely show that an abstraction, when treated as the whole truth, necessarily comes into collision with itself. So long as we remain within the sphere of such an abstraction, we cannot solve the difficulties that arise out of it. We can solve them only when we take into account all the elements which are essential to the complete determination of things.

In this sense, then, we may adopt the language of Kant and say that the reason for the appearance of the Antinomy lies in the fact that we have been treating phenomena as if they were things in themselves, *i.e.*, we have been treating objects abstractly without regard to certain of the determinations which, from the transcendental point of view, are seen to be necessary to them. Now, what are the special determinations which are left out of account when we determine objects as mere *quanta*, existing or coming into existence under conditions of space and time? The first answer is that objects so treated, as standing merely in relations of externality to each other in space and of coexistence or succession in time, are represented as indifferent to each other. They are connected, as Kant points out, only as homogeneous units which “do not require each other”; *i.e.*,

Sense in which Kant's solution is satisfactory.

their relation is one of pure externality, which seems to involve no *necessity* of relation. That they are found together or after each other, seems to be an accident which does not affect their nature, and without which they might be just what they are. They are parts of the experience of the same self, but this seems to be all their connexion.

Second stage  
of reflection,  
shown by the  
use of the  
Analogies of  
Experience as  
principles of  
investigation.

When we reflect, however, on what is meant by this fact that they are elements in one experience, or the experience of one self, we are carried beyond this first determination of them. We are taught by Kant to see that they can be connected in one experience only through the Analogies of Experience, which determine each element as existing in necessary relation to all the others. If we follow the guidance of these Analogies, we have to represent the world as a system of permanent substances, which are in thorough reciprocity with each other, and have their successive phases determined in relation to each other by necessary laws of causation. For Kant, moreover, this new determination underlies the determination of objects as existent in space and as having their coexistent and successive phenomena determined in time in relation to each other. For, according to the transcendental Deduction, the former determination is presupposed in the latter, and may be seen to be so presupposed by any one who considers the conditions under which objects can be known as such in our experience. Our first determination of things, as simply co-existent and successive in space and time, is thus to be corrected by the recognition of a second determination of them as standing in necessary relations to each other in one world, *i.e.*, in a world knowable as one by a conscious subject. Thus the world, formerly conceived as a mere aggregate of unrelated or contingently related objects, is now seen to be a connected system in which each element implies all the others; and this change of view is seen at the same time to be not a mere substitution of one idea for another, but a necessary development of our intelligence, which inevitably gains a better understand-

ing of its objects as it progresses to a deeper consciousness of itself.

But if, in thus passing from a consciousness of the world as a contingent aggregate of isolated phenomena, related only as in space and time, to a consciousness of it as a system of objects connected according to universal laws of coexistence and succession, we have reached a truer and more consistent view of things, can it yet be said that we have thus reached a view that is in all points satisfactory? Is this the last word of science, or is it simply a stage on the way to a still higher synthesis? Does it set things before us in their complete determination, or does it after all set them before us in a point of view which is still abstract, and which, therefore, in the end breaks down in contradiction? The answer manifestly is that we are still in the region of abstraction, in so far as we simply regard the connexion of objects with each other without considering what is involved in the fact that they are objects for a self. But, so long as we take the world as a series of related objects, each of which therefore finds its explanation in the others, we can never reach any self-sustaining point to which the series may be attached. We still stand between the opposite alternatives of an infinite series and an unconditioned member of the series, just because we have left out of view the principle in relation to which the series has its meaning. In Kantian language, we may be said to be confusing phenomena with things in themselves, because we are treating these phenomena as if they had an existence unrelated to the self.

It would not be difficult to show that from this cause antinomies arise in connexion with all the reflective categories. Kant, however, confines his view to the conceptions of causality and hypothetical necessity, which in their application to experience give rise to a regressive series, and so place us between the same alternatives of an unconditioned beginning and an infinite series of conditions, which gave rise to the mathematical antinomies. In attempting to solve

The necessity of a third stage of reflexion as shown by the dynamical antinomies.

Kant's double solution of these antinomies.

these dynamical antinomies, however, Kant mentions an important difference between them and the mathematical antinomies. In seeking the unconditioned for a quantitative conditioned, we had to confine ourselves to the region of quantity. Hence, there was an absolute contradiction between the thing sought and the subject-matter *in* which it was sought. A quantitative unconditioned is an obvious absurdity, it is a quantum which is not a quantum, and, therefore, both thesis and antithesis had to be pronounced false. But in seeking the unconditioned for the conditioned according to the dynamical principles, we are not confined to an unconditioned which is homogeneous with the conditioned. Thus, the category of causality is the conception of a relation according to which the position of one thing is the ground of the position of another thing different from it.<sup>1</sup> We may, therefore, use it not only to connect a conditioned phenomenon with the phenomenon which conditions it, but also to connect phenomena with noumena. And, however little we may be able to determine positively what this unconditioned is, there will at least be no contradiction involved in the bare conception of it. Hence, in this case the thesis and the antithesis may be taken as both true, the one expressing the endless reference of every phenomenon to a phenomenon before it as its cause, while the latter expresses the one conclusive reference of all phenomena to the noumenon.

In this remark Kant calls attention to a peculiarity which belongs to the reflective categories, namely, that they not only carry us from phenomenon to phenomenon within the sphere of experience, but suggest a transition from that sphere to another and higher sphere. In other words, the contradiction

Reason for  
this peculiar-  
ity of the  
dynamical  
antinomies.

<sup>1</sup> It may, of course, be said that here we have to interpret the category of causality simply as the relation of reason and consequent, and that that is a merely formal or analytic relation. But Kant here conceives it as a relation of different elements, in spite of it being a relation of pure thought. We have to remember, in explanation of this, what has been already said of his view of pure thought as determining objects (cf. above, Vol. I. 445). At the same time, we must regard this as one of the points in which Kant becomes inconsistent with himself in his view of pure thought as merely analytic.

of treating the phenomenal (or, as I would rather say, the abstract) as a *res completa*, which was latent in the mathematical principles, becomes explicit in the dynamical principles. In the former case, this shows itself in the fact that quantity refers to quantity *ad infinitum*, and a whole of quantity cannot be attained. The reason why it cannot be attained is that to attain it would be to determine the finite as infinite, or, in other words, to characterise that which is only as it is related to another, as if it were complete in itself. But this reason is not explicit; so long as things are regarded simply as *quanta*, their essential relativity is not yet taken into account. But it is different when we determine things under the reflective categories, or, to confine ourselves to Kant's own instance, under the category of causality. For, to say that a thing is an effect, is to say that it exists only in reference to something else than itself; that it has not existence, so to speak, in its own right, but only as determined to exist by something else. Under this category, therefore, the negative aspect of phenomena, as finite things which have their existence in relation to things other than themselves, is made prominent. While, therefore, the principle of causality makes us bind phenomena together as each referring beyond itself to the others, it also suggests the necessity of uniting the whole series of them to something not in the series, something that does not again refer us beyond itself to another, but is completely determined in itself. Thus the idea of what is only as it is determined by another, immediately suggests the idea of that which is determined by itself. The very category, therefore, which leads us to bind the successive phenomena of the world together as parts in one series—so that each successive state of it, undetermined in itself, finds its explanation in that which went before—awakens in us also a consciousness of the imperfection of such explanation, and makes us attach the whole series to a principle which is not a link in it. For the cause of a thing is that which fully explains it, and the only complete

explanation, beyond which no further explanation is required, must be found in that which is *causa sui*. Causality is thus a category which when universalised contains a contradiction: for it forces us to refer each phenomenon to another as its sufficient reason, and this again to another, and thereby precludes our ever finding a sufficient reason for anything. Hence, the ultimate truth of causality is that by its inner contradiction it carries us beyond itself to a higher category. And as this contradiction lies in the fact that the effect is set up as a separate existence while yet it is referred to something else than itself, it cannot find a solution except in that which is at once cause and effect, that which in its effect or manifestation yet remains one with itself.

How the dialectical character of the category of causality leads to the idea of a *causa sui*.

This "immanent dialectic" of the category of causality may be further illustrated, if we consider the actual use of it in experience. In carrying back one phenomenon to another as effect to cause, we are not satisfied (as Kant himself had remarked in regard to the explanation of thought by motion) if we entirely "lose the guiding thread of the causes in the effects,"<sup>1</sup> *i.e.*, we are not satisfied unless we can see in the latter the continuation of the former. We seek the effect in the cause, and are not content till we have found it there in its completeness. It is not enough for us to say motion is the cause of heat, until we can show that heat<sup>2</sup> is motion, and until we can resolve the difference of the two kinds of motion—the motion which is heat and the motion which is not heat—into a difference of circumstances in the two cases. In this sense the cause, as the sum of all the conditions of a phenomenon, *is* the effect, or, as Lewes puts it, the effect is the procession of the cause. But the moment we discern the identity, which maintains itself through the difference, we are again forced

<sup>1</sup> A. 387.

<sup>2</sup> Not, of course, the *sensation* of heat as such, which cannot be explained apart from the living organism.

to ask, what is the reason or cause of the difference. Having shown that heat is an insensible motion, which is produced by the impact of different material substances upon each other and which continues the motion by which they were brought together, we have to ask what brings them together, *i.e.*, we again are driven to seek for an identity which maintains itself in *this* difference. Thus we are forced to refer back the cause to previous causes, because none of the elements of the cause explains why they are brought together in the effect. Obviously, however, such a search for cause upon cause cannot terminate, unless we can reach an identity which is self-differentiating, which is the source of the difference of elements brought together in the effect, and which remains one with itself through the whole process of differentiation and integration. Our search for causes is thus in its ultimate meaning a search for a self-determining principle, which does not pass away to make room for its effect, but which manifests and maintains itself in the whole process of change. For, while in referring an effect to a cause we discover an identity that continues to subsist through change, we do not thereby explain the change itself. This we can explain only when we have shown that there is an identity which the change itself manifests and realises.

When, therefore, Kant suggests that both sides of the Antinomy can be taken as expressing truth, only that the one will then express the relation of phenomena to each other, while the other will express the relation of phenomena to the noumenon, we are prepared to accept his statement, but only after its meaning has been slightly modified. Causality is a category which points beyond itself, or implies a relation beyond that which it expresses. The reference of each phenomenon to another, which we make in accordance with the principle of causality, enables us to bind all phenomena together as parts of one experience; but the unity

Kant's view of  
this transition.



of phenomenal experience is not a self-sustaining whole, and the same principle which made us give such unity to the world of experience makes us also look beyond it for *its* cause. The negative aspect of each object in the phenomenal world, as changing and existing only while it changes, is equally the negative aspect of the whole series of phenomenal objects, which forces us to look beyond them for a positive principle which, as self-sustaining, can serve as an ultimate support for them. As it is a general law implied in the very possibility of experience that all that happens has a cause, it follows that the causality of the cause, which itself is an event or something that has *come into existence* (and did not exist always), "must itself have a cause. By this reflexion the whole field of experience, however far it may extend, is turned into a collective whole of the mere natural world. But as in this way no absolute totality of conditions in causal relation can be attained, reason creates for itself the idea of a spontaneity which can begin to act of itself without any other cause needing to be presupposed as determining it to action."<sup>1</sup> But how, we may ask, can the chain of phenomena hang upon a cause which is not in that chain or connected with it as one link of it is with the others? This difficulty Kant escapes by maintaining that, though the transition from the phenomenal to the noumenal is, in a sense, mediated by the category of causality, yet it is a transition which takes us beyond the region in which this or any other category can be applied so as to produce knowledge. We are thus led to *think* a relation, which cannot possibly be an object of *knowledge*, a relation not of phenomena to each other in space and time, but of phenomena in space and time to that which is neither in the one nor in the other. But as such a relation cannot possibly be schematised, the category, as thus used, reduces itself to the bare form of thought (the

<sup>1</sup>A. 533; B. 561.

bare conception of reason and consequent), which is not sufficient for knowledge. Hence, after we have made the transition, we find that we are left in the dark as to the noumenon to which transition is made. We have characterised the phenomena negatively, but that does not enable us to characterise the noumenon positively; for the conception of the noumenon is merely the conception of a limit to empirical knowledge, but not of a reality present to us in any other way.

Now, the defect of this view of Kant, and the measure of truth which it contains in spite of that defect, will become manifest, if we invert his method of abstraction. For then it will be seen that the transition from phenomena to noumena, which is supposed to be made necessary by the category of causality (when that category is universalised or carried up to the unconditioned), is really a transition from that category to one that expresses a higher or more comprehensive truth. In other words, the category of causality is one in which we can find a satisfactory explanation of phenomena only so long as we take these phenomena as completely determined by their relations to each other, without reference to the self for which they are, a self which is not itself one of the phenomena so determined. When we take into account this relation, however, we have not, as Kant supposes, simply a negative qualification of the objects so determined as mere phenomena. We learn, it is true, that our former view of these objects was imperfect, so that the objects, as so determined, were not *res completæ*, but abstractions. But we learn at the same time what is the element required to lift us above such abstraction and to determine the objects as they really are. We learn, in other words, that the conception of objects as standing to each other in such relations as the relation of causality, requires to be modified by taking into account their character as elements in a world which is,

Criticism of  
that view.

so to speak, bounded by self-consciousness. Thus, the relations of objects as external to each other and externally determining each other, and of events as happening after each other and successively conditioning each other in time, which are expressed in the Analogies of Experience, are relations which do not exhaust the facts; for, as related to the self, these objects and events have a unity and community in spite of their difference and externality, of which no account is taken in such determination of them.

Such criticism  
forces us to  
take into  
account the  
unity of things  
with the  
thought for  
which they  
are :

Now, when we think of the world in this new point of view, we find the conception of it, as a congeries of things externally determined and externally determining each other, changing upon us in many important ways. In the first place, that difference in objects as perceived under the form of space, by reason of which they could, in the first instance, be only *externally* referred to each other, gains a new meaning when we see that it is only in relation to such difference that the consciousness of the unity of the self is possible. When the consciousness of things as thus external to each other, is seen to be necessary to the consciousness of the self for which they are, the result is not merely (as Kant supposes) to make us reflect that in spite of their externality they are necessarily related to each other. It further suggested to us that the externality itself is not absolute. Thus, it is not sufficient that we should learn from Kant that existence in space is not an externality *to* consciousness, but an externality *for* consciousness. We have to recognise further that the externality of things *to* each other is a form which is necessary to the manifestation of their unity *with* each other. For, as it is only in overcoming the utmost difference that the deepest inward unity can reveal itself, so that difference may be regarded as itself a part of the manifestation of the unity. The fact that we come to ourselves through the consciousness of an external world, makes us regard the consciousness of the externality of things as itself an element in the process of self-consciousness. Mind

is thus not only the opposite counterpart of matter, but it includes the process of matter as part of its own process. Hence, we do not reach a final determination of the object when we regard the parts of the material or external world as, in spite of their externality, necessarily related to each other; it is necessary for us also to recognise that the nature of these external objects lies just in their relations to each other; and this implies that, as external to each other, they are only different phases of one principle. Thus their unity underlies their externality, manifests itself in it as a principle of necessary connexion between them, and so finally overcomes it or subordinates it to itself. And the same principle may be applied to our consciousness of phenomena as successive in time. Their unity with each other, as combined in one consciousness in spite of their difference and the difference of times in which they present themselves, may at first seem to be sufficiently expressed when we treat them as necessarily connected according to the law of causality. But, in so far as their process, *i.e.*, the process of objects as changing in time, is part of the process of self-consciousness, we must regard the change as not merely subordinate to a law according to which the successive phenomena are necessarily connected with each other, but as itself the manifestation of a principle which shows its unity with itself just in the process of change.

What, then, is the effect of this alteration of our point of view? We may describe it generally by saying that, in relation to objects in space, it involves the substitution of the idea of organic connexion of objects as the different correlated expressions of one principle, for the idea of necessary determination of one object by another; and that, in relation to objects as in time, it involves the substitution of the idea of organic development of one life through different phases, for the idea of a causal series of necessarily connected phenomena. We thus learn not merely to refer the chain of causality to a *causa sui* as its highest link, but to reinterpret the necessity of

and, therefore,  
their organic  
unity with  
each other.

nature as itself an element in the process of freedom, an element which, for certain purposes of science, it may be convenient to isolate, but which cannot legitimately be regarded as a *res completa*. In this way the Kantian conception of nature as that which exists *for* spirit will lead us directly to the Hegelian view that it exists only as the manifestation *of* spirit.

This idea has to be applied even to the inorganic world when we regard it in relation to the organic.

What light does such a view cast upon the Dynamical Antinomies and upon Kant's solution of them? Kant is satisfied, as we have already seen, with saying that the causal law may be true, in one sense, if phenomena are relative to each other, and, in another sense, if phenomena are relative to noumena. Instead of this, we now say that the causal law holds good as a law of necessity for phenomena, so long as we contemplate them in relation to each other as elements in a natural system, but that it falls to the ground whenever we regard that natural system as an element in a spiritual system which includes and transcends it. The first step in the correction of the view of the world as a mechanical or necessary system may, indeed, be made without bringing in the idea of a spiritual system, by simply considering the process of the inorganic as an element in the process of the organic world. For the inorganic world, when we rise above the abstraction in which physical science considers it, must be regarded as the environment or medium in which the process of life realises itself. So considered, the serial process of the former becomes subordinated to what we may call the cyclical process of the latter. For life cannot properly be regarded merely as a succession of changes in which one phenomenon yields to another, which is its necessary consequent and equivalent; it is a process in which the identity of an individual maintains itself in change, and maintains itself just by means of the external medium or environment which makes the change necessary. The Darwinian theory has directed our attention almost wholly to the continuous process of adaptation to the environment by which animal and vegetable life is maintained and developed:

it has laid less emphasis on the other and higher aspect of the facts, according to which the process is one of *self*-adaptation, which has self-maintenance and self-development for its end.<sup>1</sup> But, just in this latter aspect lies that which is the distinctive characteristic of organic, as opposed to inorganic change. The external environment cannot, from this point of view, be conceived merely as a limit or external determinant of the living being, but must rather be regarded as a factor in the process of its life. And we may add that, in so regarding the inorganic, we cast a higher light upon its nature than when we take it as what it is in the abstraction of physical science, which looks merely to the relation of inorganic parts or elements to each other. It was essential to the progress of physical science that final causes should be excluded; and this meant primarily the exclusion of any reference of the inorganic to the organic, as an end to itself which subordinates other things to itself as its means. Nay, the same abstraction is necessary in regard to the organic being itself, which science often treats as the resultant of the action and reaction of inorganic parts, not as if this were the whole truth, but in order by this abstraction to take the first step in the difficult task of explaining the complex reality. But this necessary simplification of the problem in both cases is to be regarded as merely provisional; and to regard it as the whole truth is, as we might express it in the language of Kant, to mistake phenomena for things in themselves, *i.e.*, to take an element or factor of the real for the real itself. In the language of another philosophy, we have to recognise that "the truth" of the inorganic is the organic; or, in other words, that we do not see the ultimate meaning of the inorganic, unless we regard it as a factor in the process of life.

But this first correction of the abstraction of the physical view of the universe is not a complete solution of the anti-

The final application of it to the world viewed in relation to the intelligence.

<sup>1</sup> This, no doubt, is partially, though only partially, corrected in Mr. Spence's restatement of it.

nomies which arise out of that view. If we universalised it, we should arrive at the conception of the world as an organic system, the principle of which was some *anima mundi*. Such a view would to a certain extent free us from the difficulties of the conception of an endless external determination of one object by another in space and time; for it would set before us the idea of a self-limited or self-determined unity, which manifests itself in the outward process in which one thing seems to be merely determined by another. Such a unity, however, does not exist for itself but only for us, *i.e.*, it is not one with the thought for which it is. Hence we can call it a self only by a kind of metaphor; and it is only subject to this qualification that we can say that it is identical with itself through the changes of its existence, or that its environment is not an external limit to it but an element in its own life, because it makes that environment into a means for the maintenance of itself and its kind. It is only a self-conscious being, which "is *for itself* in all that is *for it*." It alone separates the principle of the unity of its life, *i.e.*, the self, from its own individual being and from the particular circumstances which condition it; and *therefore* it is it alone that can find in both the manifestation of that principle. In self-consciousness, therefore, we find the only principle in relation to which, or as part of the life of which, the whole objective world can be regarded as organically connected. For, in relation to it, all the separate objects of the external world, which, from the mechanical point of view, seem to be confined to a reciprocal and external determination of each other, can, and indeed must, be regarded as the correlated manifestations of one self-determining principle; and in relation to it, the serial succession of changing phenomena, which appear as causes and effects of each other, can, and must be regarded as phases in the development of one life. Thus, the externality of the outer world as existing in space, and the continuous change of its states in time are, so to speak, brought back to an

absolute unity and identity in the life of a self. The endlessness of space and time is reduced into an element in the cyclical movement of a self-centred existence. Yet, we are not to understand this as meaning that time and space are, as Kant says, merely ideal; but only that they have no reality except as elements in the process of the life of a conscious being, which cannot return to itself except as it opposes itself to an objective world in space and time, and which, therefore, must presuppose such a world as the correlate of the self. Now it is just this idea,—the idea that the world that exists for us is essentially related to the unity of self of which we become conscious only in opposition to the world,—that lifts us above the difficulties and antinomies which meet us whenever we take the world we know as a world of things in themselves, *i.e.*, as a world which has a complete or independent existence apart from the self.

Here we reach the highest point to which Hegel was led by the two corrections which, as we have seen, he made in the thought of Kant. Recognising the correlativity of the opposite qualification of the self and the world as in space and time, Hegel rejected Kant's doctrine that there is an essential contradiction between the analytic judgment of self-consciousness and the synthetic judgment of knowledge, and recognised that the consciousness of self and of the object are correlative elements in the unity of a thought which is both analytic and synthetic at once. Expressing this idea formally, we may say that truth is to Hegel a syllogism in which these two judgments form the premises. Thus, what are to Kant irreconcilable extremes, are to him abstract elements which cannot be absolutely separated without confusion and contradiction. It is for him an ultimate law of intelligence that it can realise itself, or, what is the same thing, can realise its unity with itself, only in opposition to that which seems at first to be altogether independent of it, and which has characteristics just the opposite of its own. It is as against such an object that it comes to itself; and it is just because it finds itself in the presence

Changes in the  
Kantian  
theory which  
this applica-  
tion of it would  
necessitate.



of such a seemingly strange object that its activity is awakened to discover the content of that which thus seems to be externally presented to it. When, however, we become conscious of the law which thus manifests itself in our experience, we are necessarily led to certain results which were hidden from Kant. In the first place, we are obliged to regard Kant's absolute distinction of perception and conception as resting upon the supposed contradiction between the unity of thought, which is purely analytic, and the matter of sense as apprehended under the forms of time and space, which are essentially forms of difference. In the second place, when we thus reduce the difference of thought and the matter which it determines to a merely relative distinction, or distinction of correlative opposites, we are inevitably carried on to a conception of the world as in unity with the intelligence, or as an organised system in which the intelligence is manifested. Lastly, this way of reflexion leads us to transform Kant's view of the relation of the phenomenon to the noumenon, and to regard the former as simply a factor of the latter, though usually it is treated as if it were in itself a complete reality, both by the ordinary unreflecting consciousness and by the one-sided reflexion of science.

Kant's contrast of the intelligible and the empirical characters.

The contrast of these two points of view may be made more manifest, if we consider in the light of it Kant's solution of the antinomy between freedom and the necessity of nature. In Kant's view, the category of causality, as schematised, can only connect phenomena with phenomena, but, divested of its schema, the bare category may be used as a bridge between the phenomenal and the noumenal. In this sense, the idea of a self-determining cause may be admitted, at least problematically, without in any way interfering with the necessary causal connexion of natural phenomena. Nay, Kant thinks that in this way room may be found not only for one self-determining principle, on which the whole chain of natural causality depends, but also for a self-determining power in beings who,

as empirically known, are merely finite substances determined to action from without according to necessary laws. Thus men may be considered as having at once an intelligible and an empirical character. In the former character, all their feelings, desires, and actions, are to be regarded only as links in the necessary chain of natural phenomena; while, in the latter character, all these phenomena of their existence are the results of that inner principle of freedom which belongs to them as noumena.

To this view the first objection is that, when Kant makes the category of causality express the dependence of the phenomenal on the noumenal, he is allowing the pure conception, divested of its schema, to have a significance which elsewhere he refuses to it. For, apart from the schema, the category was supposed to mean nothing but the analytic unity of thought with itself, (here the analytic unity of the consequent with a reason which already contains it,) and it was only through the reflexion of the category upon time that it acquired the synthetic power of combining different phenomena which were not analytically connected. Here, however, the category by itself is allowed to express a synthesis not only of two different phenomena but of the two disparate worlds of noumena and phenomena. This is one of the indications that Kant, almost in spite of himself, represents the category as already different from the pure unity of analytic thought, and occupying a sort of intermediate position between it and the schema. In other words, the category already has something of a synthetic nature, though its synthesis is not supposed to have a necessary reference to a manifold given under conditions of time and space.<sup>1</sup>

When we set aside this formal objection, however, we find it difficult to regard the transition from phenomena to noumena, and from necessity to freedom, as anything but an expression,—distorted by Kant's method of abstraction, but

*Is it consistent with Kant's own principles?*

*The noumenon should be regarded as the *res connectiva* and the phenomenon as an abstraction.*

<sup>1</sup> Or, indeed, to any *given* manifold; for the idea of a connexion between the phenomenal and the noumenal excludes any such reference.

still an expression—of the truth that the externality of successive phenomena, viewed as causes and effects of each other, disappears when brought in relation to the self for which they are thus connected. What, from the abstract point of view in which phenomena are regarded as separate though necessarily connected objects, appears as the determination of one phenomenon or object by another, is recognised as a mere aspect of what is really a process of self-determination, so soon as we take account of the unity in reference to which and within which alone the change can take place. If, however, we thus interpret Kant's language, we cannot think of the phenomenal world as something outside of the noumenal and determined by it, but must, on the contrary, regard the noumenal as the complete reality which is inadequately conceived as the phenomenal. Because he makes the noumenal more abstract than the phenomenal, Kant has been obliged to cut off the connexion between them and to reduce their relation to an external determination of the one by the other. But in this way he comes into collision with himself: for to conceive the phenomenal as externally determined by the noumenal, as one phenomenon is by another, is to forget that the former is the reality of which the latter is the appearance for us.

Difficulty as to the phenomenal view of the soul as an object.

The absolute division which Kant makes between noumena and phenomena, and especially between man in his noumenal reality and man in his phenomenal appearance, is closely connected with another defect of his system to which attention has already been drawn. Inner experience, as we have seen, occupies a dubious place in Kant's theory. In the first edition of the *Critique*, it was simply regarded as part of the same connected consciousness into which outer experience also enters. In the second edition, it is seen to be posterior to outer experience and not capable of the same scientific treatment. But it is never distinctly recognised by Kant that inner experience includes outer experience and goes beyond it; or, to put it otherwise, that outer experience is simply inner

experience regarded as apart from any reference to a thinking or even a feeling subject. Hence, he speaks of the defectively scientific character of Psychology, not seeing that the impossibility of satisfactorily determining mind as an object, in the same way that material objects are so determined, arises from the impossibility of making in its case the abstraction which we readily make in regard to material objects. Mind, as an object, will not submit to be treated as connected with other objects by the law of external necessity; because to treat it so, is to leave out of account that which is essentially distinctive of mind, that by reason of which it is more than a material object. But Kant, taking mind with all its phenomena as an *object* like other objects of experience, though one which we cannot perfectly determine, holds that its ideas, feelings, desires, etc., are to be regarded simply as states of an empirical substance, which are nothing more than links in the chain of the necessity of nature; and he allows us to regard man as free only when we take him as the *subject* for which he and all other objects are. But can ideas, desires, and feelings, be treated simply as states of an object of experience? Can we talk of "states of consciousness" as if they were qualities or states of a material object? Are not such "states" necessarily represented as forms of self-consciousness, which cannot be referred to any object except that which is also a subject? In this sense, we may allow that Kant was expressing an important truth when he spoke of the ego as standing in its own way when it tried to represent itself as an object. For it is impossible, in truth, to take a conscious self as one of the objects of experience, objects which are conceived as externally determining and determined by each other, without leaving out all its distinctive characters as a conscious being. Even an animal cannot be fully or adequately determined from such a point of view, much less an intelligence. We need higher categories to do justice to life and mind; and if experience means the determination of objects by the principle of

external necessity, we cannot have experience of such objects.

Now, it is because Kant did not observe this, because he still tried to take the self, with all its ideas, desires, and feelings, as an object of experience, (though he was obliged to confess that it could not adequately be determined as such,) that he was obliged, on the other hand, to make such an absolute division between the self as a self-determining subject in its noumenal reality, and the self as a known object or phenomenon. In truth, the self, in Kant's sense, never is presented to us as a phenomenon, and none of what are called its states can be taken simply as links in the chain of the necessity of nature. For, as forms of self-consciousness, such states are already conceived as expressions of a principle, the unity and identity of which manifests itself in all their difference, in such a way that they cannot be conceived as externally determining each other, or as externally determined by anything else. To treat mind and its states as externally determining each other, or as subject to an external determination by other things, is simply to pretend to talk of mind and really to talk of matter.

This difficulty applies even to the phenomenal view of inorganic matter.

Now, as has been already stated, even matter cannot be fully and adequately treated under the abstraction which leaves out of account its relation to the subject; for ultimately matter is merely an element in the spiritual unity of the world. But still, it is possible to make the abstraction in question with a good result; and, indeed, it is necessary to make it, if we would not have the first steps of science embarrassed by consideration of its ultimate problems. For, as we have seen, in speaking of inorganic matter we are speaking of the abstract opposite of mind; and we must, in the first instance, deal with it as such, under the appropriate categories, *i.e.*, we must deal with it as a system of necessity. Ultimately, indeed, when we view such a system in the light of its necessary relation to the self that knows it, we learn that it is only an abstraction—one element in reality torn away from its

necessary complement. But, as the mind must go out of itself in the consciousness of the external world, ere it can return to itself in self-consciousness, the ultimate interpretation of the world as spiritual is impossible, unless we are willing first to take it as it immediately presents itself, *i.e.*, as a merely natural world. Or, perhaps, it would be more exactly to the point to say, that though poetic imagination may at once, in the way of immediate intuition, see the spiritual in the natural, such insight can become knowledge only through the slow process of science, which deals with nature in its abstraction as nature, and reaches the use of the higher categories only when the explanation that can be given through the lower is exhausted. It is for this reason that the mathematical explanation of the world was prior to the dynamical explanation of it; and if the dynamical explanation of it as a system of necessity has not yielded to a further explanation of it as part of a system of freedom, it is partly because the former explanation is still incomplete.

While, however, this is true, we must observe that the possibility of employing such an abstract method is limited by the nature of the object, as well as by the needs of the subject of knowledge. In dealing with the inorganic world, we can make abstraction of any law but the law of necessity; indeed, for a reason already stated, we must in the first instance do so. It is even possible, with a good result, to make the same abstraction in dealing with the physical existence of organic beings; indeed, the science of Physiology is founded on such abstraction.<sup>1</sup> But what are we to make of Psychology on such a method, when the simplest determination of the life of a conscious subject as such is an *idea*, *i.e.*, involves a reference to the unity of a self which can never be determined except as it determines itself? If in this case the abstraction is capable of

Though more definitely to the phenomenal view of life and mind.

<sup>1</sup> It has, however, been shown above, Vol. I. 646, that the need for a correction of the results of this method by higher categories, is more immediately felt here than in the physical sciences.

being made, and if we can thus have what may be called a natural science of mind, it is at least obvious that such a science involves a more immediate distortion of the facts than was implied in the other cases. If it be true in any sense that in man nature comes to itself, or comes to self-consciousness, how can we pursue the science of man without reference to this return, or regard the self-consciousness which is its result merely as a phenomenon connected with other phenomena according to the analogies of experience. In this case, the confusion of a convenient scientific abstraction, with a knowledge of the object in its complete reality, will be much more dangerous; nay, without great caution, it may turn the science of mind into a systematic perversion of the facts of mind by the omission of its most distinctive characteristic. A psychology treated without reference to the unity of the self, would be the play of Hamlet with the part of Hamlet omitted; nor is it much better if that unity is merely named, and not used to explain any thing. Such a psychology may do some valuable service, not only in collecting and arranging the data for the science, but also in showing lines of connexion and relationship between them. But, as it must leave the central problem of mind untouched, it cannot give a final explanation of any of its phenomena. For it is impossible to find our way through that which is just the sphere of freedom by the aid of the categories of necessity. It was Kant's merit that his criticism rested from the first upon the principle, that it is impossible to apply to the subject the categories by which objects are determined as such; and that in dealing with the third antinomy, he at least reserves a place beyond the region of necessity for the freedom of man as such a subject. And that freedom he was afterwards to prove on the evidence of the moral consciousness. It is also his merit that in the second edition of the *Critique*, he made some steps toward a view of inner experience, as not merely the consciousness of the self as an object among other objects, but as an outer experience freed

from its abstraction, *i.e.*, regarded as the experience of a self. He thus, at least, prepared the way for a better solution of the difficulty than he has given in the abrupt opposition of man as a phenomenal object under the law of necessity, to man as a noumenal subject under the law of freedom. It is true that, in his *Critique of Practical Reason*, we find little or no trace of this solution of the difficulty. Indeed throughout all Kant's ethical works his primary object seems to be rather to separate the spheres of nature and freedom; and the idea of a reconciliation between them, though not entirely absent, is kept in the background. In the *Critique of Judgment*, however, that idea again becomes prominent, and under certain reservations, the objective teleology of organic life and the subjective teleology of the feeling of beauty, are used to fill up the chasm between nature and spirit, between necessity and freedom.