

metaphysics of Leibniz. In the first half of the nineteenth century a similar process of sifting and analysing was infused into scientific theology in Germany, whilst critical philology under the hands of F. A. Wolf and his successors attained, during the second third of the century, that rigid, methodical development which for a long time gave it the leading influence in the higher secondary and learned schools of Germany.

All these resultants of the desire to sift, to arrange, and to judge historically transmitted material, be it facts, records, or theories, testify to the working of the critical spirit. This latter, together with the purely scientific or exact spirit, marks probably the most important characteristic of nineteenth century Thought. It is accompanied by its necessary and inevitable ally—historical research and learning.

All methodical thought which cannot adopt, or is not yet ready to adopt, the canons of exact or scientific thought, such as have been set out in the earlier portion of this work, has been all through the nineteenth century, and is still, under the undisputed sway of the historical and critical spirit; all philosophical theories, be they logical, psychological, or purely scientific and enunciated for whatsoever end or purpose, are dominated by criticism and history. So much is this the case that in many instances research has almost lost itself in history and criticism, to the damage of the positive interests which originally prompted it. We notice this, for instance, in the work of many distinguished representatives of critical theology abroad: the religious interest has not infrequently given way to a purely literary or learned interest.

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Criticism
and history.