

exact science. We may ask the question: What is the reason that, in former instances, the critical movement was so soon superseded by constructive efforts, whereas modern criticism, notably in Germany, has become a growing, all-destructive, and dominant current? The answer to the question is this: Criticism in former times was not really methodical; it was casual, in many cases brilliant, but it was not conducted on any fixed principles, and was therefore easily overpowered by novel and daring speculations and by that enthusiasm of creative effort which is always absent in purely negative movements.

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Its method-
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The critical movement both in the age of Socrates and in the age of Descartes developed very rapidly into scepticism, which, as it marks the last stage of the destructive movement of thought, has not in itself the germs of any further development, and is usually followed by a complete reaction in favour of an uncritical acceptance of some dogmatic position. Kant was the first great thinker who desired to interpose between the sceptical stage—which had been reached in England and France through the influence of Locke and Hume, of Bayle and Voltaire—and a new positive philosophy, which he had in view, a methodical examination of the ways and means by which the human mind could arrive at certainty and knowledge. He laid the foundation of a special philosophical discipline which has latterly received the name of "Erkenntnisstheorie" (theory of knowledge) in Germany, and which has become domiciled in England under the name "Epistemology." But neither Kant, in the purely