

incorrectly be described as an importation into the critical atmosphere then everywhere prevailing of the spirit of Leibniz. The foremost representative of this widely different "habit of thought" is Hermann Lotze. On the other side, the strictly logical monism of Spinoza, as detached from his mystical pantheism, has latterly found favour among prominent representatives of Naturalism, or even Materialism. Be this as it may, Lessing and many of his followers certainly found in the philosophy of Spinoza a resting-place and refuge from the prosaic moralising and shallow rationalism of the Deists in England and the Encyclopædists in France. Compared with these Spinoza rose before them as an inspired writer, as one who looked at the great life problems not from a utilitarian and narrowly moralising point of view but *sub specie aeternitatis*.

Now though Spinoza is commonly instanced as a decided dogmatist in opposition to Kant's criticism, and though Kant himself knew little of Spinoza and never mentions Lessing, these three thinkers nevertheless contributed, each in his way, to cultivate an important field of modern research which, perhaps more than any other, exhibits the workings of the modern critical spirit. Each in his way helped to establish what has been termed the Higher Criticism in Theology. The two great critical movements in modern German Theology, Higher Criticism as applied to the biblical records on the one side, and the philosophical interpretation of religious beliefs on the other, can both, to a large extent, point to Spinoza, Lessing, and Kant as their earliest representatives.

27.  
Spinoza,  
Lessing,  
Kant, and  
the Higher  
Criticism.