

account of this school, to which we probably owe the greater part of the important psychological work of the century, it may be interesting to refer briefly to the causes which prevented the purely introspective methods of psychology from ever receiving due recognition in Germany. The reason will probably be found in what may be called the essentially metaphysical turn of the German mind. The principal aim of all prominent thinkers in Germany down to the present day is to arrive at first principles, to lay firm foundations of knowledge and practice. This has seemed a necessary requisite because, ever since, through the political and ecclesiastical wars and controversies which followed the Reformation and accompanied the Revolution in Germany, not only the material progress of the nation had been arrested, the historical traditions and foundations of society destroyed, but also the fundamental beliefs criticised and variously attacked. This general unsettlement in the political, economical, social, and religious world urged upon thinkers as their first and paramount duty the laying and perfecting of solid foundations and principles. This was the task which Descartes had set himself in France, and which Leibniz, though in a less systematic manner, took up for the first time in Germany at the end of the seventeenth century. It has been considered as such by all prominent German thinkers down to the present day. It was most distinctly put forward by Kant and his immediate followers, and not less by those who stood in opposition than by those who professed to follow the lines which he had indicated.

So far as the special branch of philosophy with which