

traditional Continental philosophy had led to scepticism and pessimism, and was generally—though erroneously—believed to be fruitless, the critical spirit attacked the principles of exact science and of moral conduct, it must have been with some surprise that it was found that this critical analysis had been begun and successfully practised long ago by prominent thinkers in this country. A growing appreciation in Germany of the writings of Mill and Spencer and other English thinkers has been the consequence.

Looking at philosophical thought in the nineteenth century as a whole, we may thus say that it is based upon two independent traditions: that which prevailed in this country and that which prevailed on the Continent. They were to some extent complementary, and may, besides, in other ways, be characterised by the different position which they took up to the problem of knowledge.

The problem of knowledge presents among others two principal sides to the philosophic thinker. He may inquire as to the means and methods of extending knowledge, or he may inquire into the difference of correct and incorrect, of true and false, of certain and doubtful knowledge. Each of these inquiries will lead in due course to the other. We cannot discuss the means of increasing knowledge without some kind of definition of what knowledge is. And on the other hand, we cannot discuss the question of certainty and validity of knowledge without casting a glance at the large body of actually existing and increasing knowledge. For, in actual practice, the pursuit and extension of