

the mathematical form of knowledge is to be found in Spinoza, though the latter in the course of his metaphysical expositions arrives at the conception that discursive knowledge must, in its highest form, become intuition,—mediated or rational knowledge having finally to pass into intuitive or immediate knowledge.<sup>1</sup> This idea was revived or independently enunciated by many

and their connections. ('Meditations on Cognition, Truth, and Ideas,' 1684). "Accordingly the *a priori* or eternal geometrical or metaphysical truths are both clear and distinct. On the other side the *a posteriori* or actual truths are clear but not distinct. The former are therefore fully transparent, accompanied by the conviction of the impossibility of their opposite; with the latter the opposite is conceivable. With the former, intuitive certainty rests on the principle of contradiction; with the latter, their possibility, which is proved by their actual reality, requires further explication through the principle of sufficient reason. . . . In course of its further development this distinction acquired, for Leibniz, metaphysical importance. He distinguished between absolute necessity, which implies the logical impossibility of the opposite, and a conditioned necessity which is merely factual. He divides the principles of things into those the opposite of which is inconceivable, and those of which it is conceivable" (Windelband, 'Geschichte der Philosophie,' 4th ed., p. 334). Prof. Windelband also shows that Leibniz originally considered that the difference between conceptions which are clear and those which are in addition fully defined or transparent applied only to the human or finite intellect, whereas in the Divine Intellect this difference did not exist; but that in the

sequel, in order not to fall into the absolute necessitarianism of Spinoza, he emphasised the difference of necessary and contingent truths. Leaving out of consideration, as alien to the subject of this chapter, the metaphysical aspect, we may say that Leibniz approached the problem of the difference of certitude and precision of knowledge, *i.e.*, the difference between knowledge which we acquire (by observation and reflection) and ultimate convictions which we must possess.

<sup>1</sup> With Spinoza "the cognition of all finite things and states leads to two highest conceptions—extension and consciousness; they both acquire a higher metaphysical importance than finite things possess, they are the attributes [of the absolute substance], the finite things are only their modes. But as abstract thought rises from these ultimate distinctions to the most general, the *ens generalissimum*, the conception of the latter loses all definite content and there remains only the empty form of substance. And for Spinoza the Deity is All—and as such—Nothing. His theology follows entirely the lines of mysticism. . . . To this corresponds also his threefold theory of knowledge, which places, beyond perception and reflection, intuition as the immediate apprehension of the eternal emanence of all things out of God, cognition *sub specie æterni*" (Windelband, *loc. cit.*, p. 342).