

to quite recent times, British philosophy was pre-eminently moral philosophy. Even the highly important investigations of Locke, which inaugurated the modern Theory of Knowledge and the more recent researches in Psychology, were originally prompted by a desire to prepare the ground for the discussion and solution of ethical problems. And down to quite recent times, there is a well-marked inclination in English thought, again and again to revert to the discussion of ethical rather than metaphysical questions. Metaphysics, on the other hand, which on the Continent forms the unbroken thread connecting the philosophical systems from Descartes to Lotze, has never continuously and consistently formed the subject of British thought. This has, since the time of Bacon, prided itself rather on finding its way out of metaphysics and reverting to common-sense. And, so far as the theory of knowledge is concerned, it has more than once ended in scepticism or agnosticism, for which maladies the cure had to be found equally in an assertion of the evidence of common-sense. If moral philosophy is thus peculiarly an English province of thought, it is also that department in which English thought has been least affected by foreign thinkers, even less than psychology, in which the now widespread influence of the physiological and physical sciences has been mainly imported from abroad.

2.  
New be-  
ginnings  
of ethics in  
Germany  
and France.

At the end of the nineteenth century, however, Ethics has become the leading subject of philosophical discussion not only in this country but likewise in Germany and France. In Germany indeed, it had received a great