

CHAPTER XII.

THE RATIONALE OF PHILOSOPHICAL THOUGHT.

I.

1.
Mathe-
matics and
Meta-
physics.

To the popular mind the science of Mathematics on the one side and that of Metaphysics on the other stand in marked contrast. The former represents, as it were, the most certain, the latter the most uncertain, form of Knowledge which the human mind is possessed of. It is, however, worth noting that nevertheless these two forms of Knowledge have, according to the popular opinion, one quality in common, neither of them seems capable of any real progress. The absolute fixity of the fundamental principles of the one makes a real advance seemingly as impossible as the absolute uncertainty of the principles of the other.

2.
Both
progressive.

In the concluding chapter of the first section of this History I tried to show how, so far as Mathematics are concerned, the popular view is erroneous; no science has advanced and changed during the nineteenth century more than that of mathematics. In the present chapter, which will conclude the second section of this History, I shall endeavour similarly to refute the second opinion,