

manner. Let one imagine, arbitrarily, four straight lines, which enclose a plane, so that the opposite sides are not parallel, and name this figure a *trapezium*. The conception, which I explain, is not given before the definition, but springs first from it. Whatever signification a cone may elsewhere have, in the mathematics it arises out of the arbitrable representation of a rectangular triangle, which is moved round on one side. The explication here and in all other cases manifestly springs from the *synthesis*.

The definitions of philosophy are of quite another nature. There the conception of a thing is given, but confused or not sufficiently determined. I must dissect it, compare in all sorts of cases the separated criteria with the given conception, and render this abstract thought copious and determinate. For example, every body has a conception of *time*: this must be explained. I must contemplate this idea in all sorts of references, in order to discover marks of it by dissection, to connect different abstracted marks, whether they yield a sufficient conception, and are coherent, whether the one does not in part include the other in itself. Did I endeavour here to come to a definition of time synthetically, what a happy chance must it be, were this conception directly that, which fully expressed the idea given us.

But, it may be said, philosophers sometimes explain synthetically likewise, and mathematicians analytically. For instance, when the philosopher arbitrarily conceives a substance

stance with the faculty of reason, and denominates it a spirit. My answer however is, such determinations of the signification of a word are never philosophical definitions, but if they are to be termed explications, they are but grammatical ones. For it is not at all the province of philosophy, to say, what sort of a name I shall give an arbitrable conception. LEIBNITZ imagined a simple substance, which has nothing but obscure representations, and named it a *slumbering monade*. Here he did not explain, but imagine, this *monas*; for the conception of it was not given to him, but created by him. Whereas mathematicians have sometimes explained analytically, I own it, but it was always a fault. Thus WOLF has considered with a philosophic eye the similitude in geometry, in order to treat under the universal conception of it that occurring in geometry likewise. He might have omitted it; for when I conceive figures, wherein the opposite angles, which the lines of the periphery enclose, are equal, and the sides that enclose them have the same relation, this may always be considered as the definition of the similitude of figures, and in like manner with the other similitudes of space. The universal definition of similitude in general signifies nothing to geometry. It is happy for the mathematics, that, when, by an ill-understood duty, the geometrician sometimes embarks in such analytical expositions, nothing is in fact inferred therefrom by him, or his next consequences constitute at the bottom the mathematical definition, else this science would be

exposed to the very same unfortunate discord, as philosophy.

The mathematician has to do with conceptions, which are often capable of a philosophical exposition; as for example with the conception of *space* in general. But he assumes such a conception as *given* according to its clear and common representation. Sometimes philosophical expositions are given him from other sciences, particularly in the applied mathematics, *exempli gratia*, the exposition of fluidity. Then however such definitions do not take their rise in the mathematics, but are only used there. It is the business of philosophy, to anatomise, to render copious and determinate, conceptions that are given as implicated; but of mathematics, to connect and to compare given conceptions of quantities, which are clear and secure, in order to see what can be inferred from them.

## 2.

*The Mathematics contemplate in their Solutions, Demonstrations and Consequences, the universal among the Signs in the concrete, Philosophy the universal by the Signs in the abstract.*

As we treat our propositions here but as immediate inferences from experiences, I refer on account of the present, *first*, to arithmetic, as well the universal of the undeterminate quantities, as that of the numbers, where the relation of the quantities is determined to a  
unity.

unity. In both are placed first, instead of the things themselves, their signs, with the peculiar marks of their augmentation or diminution, their relations etc., and afterwards proceeded with these signs according to easy and sure rules, by transposition, connexion or subtraction, and various alterations, so that the marked things themselves are hereby totally left out of thought, till finally at the conclusion the signification of the symbolical figures is deciphered. *Secondly*, in geometry, in order, for instance, to cognise the properties of all circles, one circle is described, in which, instead of all possible lines intersecting one another within it, two lines are drawn. By these are demonstrated the relations, and in these are contemplated the universal rule of the relation of all the lines *in concreto* crossing or decussating one another in all circles.

If the procedure of philosophy is compared with this, it will be found totally different. The signs of the philosophical contemplation are never any thing else, than words, which neither show in their composition the component conceptions, of which consists the whole idea that the word denotes, nor are able in their connexions to mark the relations of the philosophical thoughts. Hence in every reflection in this species of cognition one must have the thing itself in view, and is obliged to represent to one's self the universal *in abstracto*, without being able to use the great assistance of handling single signs instead of the universal conceptions of the things themselves.



selves. When, for example, the geometrician wishes to evince, that space is divisible to infinite, he takes a straight line, which stands perpendicularly between two parallels, and draws from a point of one of these parallel lines other lines, which bisect in the same manner. He cognises by this symbol with the greatest certainty, that the division must proceed without end. Whereas, when the philosopher wishes to evince, that every body consists of simple substances, he in the first place assures himself, that there is in general a whole out of substances, that in these the composition is a contingent state, without which they can exist, that therefore all composition in a body may be annulled in thought, in such a manner however, that the substances, of which it consists, exist; and, as that, which remains of a composite, when all composition in general is annulled, is simple, that the body must consist of simple substances. Here neither diagrams or figures nor visible signs can express the thoughts or their relations. Nor can any transposition of the signs be performed according to rules in the place of the abstract contemplations, so that the representation of the things themselves might in this procedure be permuted with the clearer and easier representation of the signs, but the universal must be pondered in the abstract.

## 3.

*In the Mathematics there are but few insolvable Conceptions and immensurable Propositions, but in Philosophy innumerable.*

The conception of quantity in general, of unity, of multitude, of space etc. is, at least in the mathematics, insolvable, their dissection and exposition belong not at all to this science. I am well aware, that many geometers confound the boundaries of the sciences, and in the doctrine of quantity are sometimes inclined to philosophise, for which reason they endeavour to explain such conceptions, though the definition in such cases has no mathematical consequence whatever. But it is certain, that every one conception, which, whether it can be elsewhere explained or not, does not require it in this science at least, with regard to a discipline is insolvable. And I have already said, that there are but few such in the mathematics. But I go still farther and maintain, that indeed none at all can occur in them, namely, in the sense, that their exposition by dissection of the conceptions pertains to the mathematical cognition; suppose it were even possible. For the mathematics never explain by dissection a given conception, but by arbitrable conjunction an object, whose thought is just thereby first possible.

Does one compare herewith philosophy, what a distinction becomes evident? In all its disciplines, chiefly in metaphysic, every one dissection that can take place is necessary, for

for as well the perspicuity of the cognition, as the possibility of sure inferences depends thereon. But it may be immediately foreseen, that it is unavoidable in the dissection to fall on insolvable conceptions, which will be so either in themselves or for us, and that there will be an immense number of them, as it is impossible, that universal cognitions of so great a variety should be composed but of a few fundamental conceptions. Hence many can almost not be resolved at all, for example, the conception of a *representation*, of *simultaneousness*, or of *successiveness*, others but in part, as the conception of *space*, of *time*, of the various *feelings* of the human soul, of the feeling of the *sublime*, of the *beautiful*, of the *disgustful* etc. without the precise knowledge and solution of which the springs of our nature are not sufficiently known, and where a careful observer perceives, that the dissection is by far not sufficient. I acknowledge, that the expositions of *pleasure* and of *displeasure*, of *appetition* and of *aversation* and numberless such like, have never been delivered by sufficient solutions, and do not wonder at this insolubleness. For with regard to conceptions of so different a nature distinctive elementary conceptions must form the basis. The fault, which some have committed, to treat all similar cognitions as such, which collectively admit of being resolved into a few simple conceptions, is similar to that, into which fell the ancient natural philosophers, to wit, that all the matter of nature consists of the  
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four elements, commonly so named, which thought is annulled by better observation.

Besides, the mathematics are grounded but upon a few indemonstrable propositions, which, were they elsewhere even susceptible of a proof, are considered in this science as immediately certain. *The whole is equal to all the parts taken together; between two points can be but one straight line etc.* Such principles the mathematics are accustomed to lay down in the beginning of their disciplines, in order that it may be perceived, that none but such self-evident propositions are directly presupposed as true, for all the others are strictly demonstrated.

If one compares with this philosophy, and particularly metaphysic, I would be glad to see a table of the indemonstrable positions drawn up, which form the basis of these sciences through their whole tract. They would no doubt make up a plan that were immense; however in the investigation of these immense fundamental truths consists the most important affair of the higher philosophy, and these discoveries will never be brought to an issue, so long as such a sort of cognition shall extend itself. For whatever be the object, those criteria, which the understanding perceives in it at first and immediately, are the *data* to just as many indemonstrable positions, which then constitute the groundwork, from which the definitions can be discovered. Ere I prepare myself to explain, what space is, I clearly perspect, that, as this conception is given me, I must before all seek by anatomizing for those marks, which are first and immediately herein thought.



thought. Accordingly I observe, that therein there is much without one another, that these many are not substances, for my object is not to cognise the things in space, but space itself, that space can have but three dimensions etc. Such positions may be illustrated, by contemplating them in the concrete, in order to cognise them intuitively; but they never can be proved. For whence could this be done, as they make up the first and most simple thoughts, which I can have of my object, when I begin to think of it. In the mathematics the definitions are the first thought, which I can have of the explained thing, because my conception of the object springs first from the definition, and there it is absolutely absurd, to consider them as evincible. In philosophy, where the conception of the thing, which I am to explain is given me, what is immediately and first perceived in it must serve for an indemonstrable fundamental judgment. For as I have not yet, but first seek, the whole distinct conception of the thing, it cannot be shown from this conception, but it rather serves, to generate this distinct cognition, and definition. Therefore I must have first fundamental judgments before all philosophical exposition of things, and in this no fault can be committed, but that I consider that as an original, which is but a derived, mark. In the following contemplation will occur things, which will put this beyond a doubt.

## 4.

*The Object of Mathematics is easy and simple,  
but that of Philosophy difficult and entangled.*

As quantity is the object of the mathematics, and in its contemplation it is considered but how often something is posited or laid down, so it is evident, that this cognition must rest upon few and very clear fundamental doctrines of the universal doctrine of quantity (which is properly the universal arithmetic). There may be seen springing out of simple and few fundamental conceptions the augmentation and diminution of the quantities, and their dividing into equal factors in the doctrine of the roots. A few fundamental conceptions of space effectuate the applications of this universal knowledge of quantity to geometry. For instance, in order to convince one's self one needs compare but the easy conceivableness of an arithmetical object, which comprises in itself a prodigious plurality, with the much more difficult comprehensibility of a philosophical idea, wherein one endeavours to cognise but little. The relation of a *trillion* to the unity is quite distinctly understood, while philosophers hitherto have not been able to render intelligible the conception of *liberty* from its unities, *id est*, its simple and known conceptions. That is, the qualities, which constitute the proper object of philosophy, are infinitely multifarious, whose distinction requires great exactness: as also it is much more difficult, to resolve implicated

cognitions by dissection, than to connect given simple cognitions by synthesis, and so to arrive at consequences. There are many, I know, who find philosophy very easy in comparison with the higher mathesis. . But these name philosophy every thing that is contained in books, which bear that title. The distinction will be discovered by the issue. Philosophical cognitions have for the most part the fate of opinions, and are like meteors, whose lustre bespeaks not their duration. They vanish, but the mathematics are permanent. Metaphysic is no doubt the most difficult of all human introspections; but a metaphysic has never yet been written. The problem of the Academy shows, that there is reason to inquire after the way necessary to be taken, in order first to search for it.

## CONTEMPLATION THE SECOND.

THE ONLY METHOD OF ATTAINING THE  
GREATEST POSSIBLE CERTAINTY IN META-  
PHYSIC.

**M**etaphysic is nothing but a philosophy on the first grounds of our cognition; therefore what was shown in the foregoing contemplation of the mathematical cognition in comparison with philosophy, will likewise be valid relatively to metaphysic. We have seen considerable and essential distinctions, which are to be met with between the cognition in both sciences, and in regard of which one may say with bishop Warburton, That nothing has been more pernicious to philosophy, than mathematics, namely, the *imitation* of them, in the method of thinking, where they cannot possibly be used; for as to the *application* of them in the parts of philosophy, where the knowledge of the quantities occurs, that is quite different, and the usefulness immense.

In the mathematics I begin with the definition of my object, for example, a triangle, circle etc., in the metaphysics I must never begin therewith, and the definition here is so little the first that I cognise of the thing, that it is rather almost always the last. In the mathematics I have no sooner a conception of my object, than the definition gives it; in the metaphysics I have a conception, which is



already given me, though intricately, I must seek its distinct, ample and precise one. How can I then begin with it? Augustinus said, I know well what time is, but if any body asks me, I know it not. Here must take place many operations of developing dark ideas, of comparison, subordination and limitation, and I dare venture to say, That, though many true and acute things have been said of time, the real exposition of it has never been given; for with regard to the nominal exposition, it is of little or no service to us, for without it one understands this word sufficiently, not to permute it. Had one as many right definitions as occur in books under this name, how certainly could one draw inferences and conclude therefrom. But experience teaches the contrary.

In philosophy and namely in metaphysic much may be cognised of an object distinctly and with certainty, also sure consequences be therefrom drawn, before one is in possession of its definition and even when one does not at all undertake to give it. Of every one thing we may be immediately certain of different predicates, though I do not yet know enough of them, in order to give the ample determinate conception of the thing, that is, the definition. Though I never explained what an *appetition* is, I could say with certitude, that every appetite presupposes a representation of the object of the appetite, that this representation is a prevision of the future, that with it is combined the sentiment or feeling of pleasure etc. All this every one constantly

stantly perceives in the immediate consciousness of the appetite. From such compared observations one might perhaps at last arrive at the definition of the appetite. But, as long as without it that, which is sought for, can be inferred from a few immediately certain marks of the same thing, it is unnecessary to risk an undertaking so hazardous. In the mathematics this is, as you know, very different.

The signification of the signs in the mathematics is certain, because one may be easily conscious to one's self of that which one wished to give them. In philosophy in general, and in metaphysic in particular, the words have their signification by the use of speech, except so far as it is more exactly determined to them by logical limitation. But as in very similar conceptions, which nevertheless involve a considerable hidden distinction, the same words are often used, great heed must be taken here in every application of the conception, though its denomination seems to accommodate itself exactly to the usage of speech, whether it is actually the same conception, which is here conjoined with the very same signs. We say, a man *distinguishes* gold from brass, when he cognises, that in the one metal there is not so much massiveness, as in the other. Besides one says, that brutes *distinguish* one food from another; when they eat the one, and leave the other. Here in both cases is used the word to distinguish, though in the former it signifies as much as to *cognise the difference*, which never can take place, without *judging*; but

in the latter it denotes, only that the distinctive representation is *distinctively treated*, where it is not just necessary, that a judgment shall precede. As we then perceive but in brutes, That they are incited by different sensations to different actions, which is very possible, without their needing to judge in, the smallest degree on either the agreement or the disagreement.

From this flow quite naturally the rules of that method, according to which the greatest possible metaphysical certainty can be solely attained. They are very different from those, which have been hitherto followed, and promise a happy issue, insomuch that, when they are brought to the application, such could never have been expected in another way. The *first* and chief *rule* is, that the beginning be not made from expositions, merely the exposition of the word must then be sought, for instance, necessary is that, whose opposite is impossible. But there are but few cases, where the clear determinate conception can be so confidently fixed directly at the beginning. Rather let that, which is immediately certain in the object, be sought with care, even before one has the definition of it. Draw consequences therefrom, and endeavour principally to acquire but true and quite certain judgments of the object, even without depending on a hoped for exposition, which must never be ventured, but, when it distinctly offers itself from the evident judgments, first granted. The *second rule* is, that the immediate judgments of the object relatively to what  
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is first met with in it with certitude be particularly noted, and, when it is certain, that the one is not contained in the other, that they, like the axioms of geometry, be let precede as the groundwork of all consequences. Hence follows, that in the contemplations of metaphysic that which one knows certainly, were it but little, be always particularly noted, though essays of uncertain cognitions may be made, in order to see, whether they do not conduct to the track of certain cognition, yet in such a manner, as not to mingle them with the former. I shall not mention the other rules of conduct, which this method has in common with every other rational one, but proceed to render it distinct by examples.

The genuine method of metaphysic is at bottom the same with that, which NEWTON introduced into natural philosophy, and which was there productive of such beneficial consequences. One ought, it is there said, by sure experiences, with the assistance of geometry, to search for the rules, according to which certain phenomena of nature happen. Though their first ground is not perspected in the bodies, it is certain, that they act according to these laws, and the involved events of nature are explained, when it is distinctly shown, how they are contained under these well-demonstrated rules. Just so in metaphysic, Seek by sure internal experience, that is, an immediate evident consciousness, those criteria, which certainly lie in the conception of some one universal quality, and though you do not know the whole nature or essence of the thing,



you may use it with certainty, in order to deduce therefrom a great deal in the thing.

EXAMPLE

*of the only sure Method of Metaphysic, in the  
Cognition of the Nature of Bodies.*

For the sake of brevity I refer to a demonstration, which is shown in a few words in the first contemplation towards the end of the 2. paragraph, in order first to lay as a foundation here the proposition: Every body must consist of simple substances. Without making out, what a body is, I know for certain, that it consists of parts, which would exist, though they were not conjoined: and notwithstanding the conception of a substance is an abstract conception, it is without doubt of the corporeal things of the world. But it is not even necessary to name them substances, it is sufficient, that hence can be inferred with the greatest certainty, that a body consists of simple parts, of which the plain dissection is easy, but here too prolix. Now I can by means of infallible proofs of geometry show, That space consists not of simple parts, of which the arguments are well known. Accordingly there is a determinate number of the parts of every body, which are all simple, and a like number of the parts of space it takes up, which are altogether composed. Hence follows, that every simple part (element) in the body takes up a space. I now ask, What means, to take up a space? I perceive, without giving myself

self any trouble about the nature of space, that if a space can be penetrated by every thing, without any thing existing that resists it, one, if he chose, might say, there is something in this space, but never that this space is taken up by it. Whence I cognise, That a space is taken up, when something exists, which resists a moved body in the effort to penetrate it. But this resistance is the impenetrability. Therefore bodies take up space by impenetrability. Impenetrability, however, is a *power*. For it manifests a resistance, that is, an action opposed to an external force. And the power, which belongs to a body, must belong to its simple parts. Consequently the elements of every body fill their space by the power of impenetrability. But I ask farther, Whether the first elements then are not expanded, as every one in the body fills a space? Here I may adduce an exposition, which is immediately certain, namely, that is *expanded*, which posited of itself (absolutely) fills a space, as every single body, though I represent to myself, that there is nothing besides it, would fill a space. However if I contemplate an absolutely simple element, it is, when it is posited alone (without connection with others), impossible, that there should be much in it without one another, and that it absolutely takes up a space. Hence it cannot be expanded. But as a power of impenetrability applied to many external things is the cause, that the element takes up a space, I perceive, that thence flows a plurality in its external action, but no plurality relative to internal parts, by

consequence it is not expanded, because it takes up a space in the body (*in nexu cum aliis*).

I shall bestow a few words still, in order to render evident, how shallow the proofs of metaphysic are, when it from its exposition once laid as a foundation, conformably to assuetude, boldly draws conclusions, which are lost, so soon as the exposition illudes. It is known, that most Newtonians go still farther than Newton, and maintain, that bodies attract one another immediately, even at a distance (or as they denominate it, through the void space). I let the rightness of this proposition, which has certainly much reason on its side, remain undetermined. But I maintain that metaphysic at least has not refuted it. First, bodies are *distant* from each other, when they do not *touch* one another. This is exactly the signification of the word. If I inquire now, What do I understand by touching or contact? I perceive, that, without troubling myself about the definition, I always judge from the resistance of the impenetrability of another body, that I touch it. For I find that this conception springs originally from feeling, as I but presume by the judgment of the eyes, that one matter is in contact with another, but first know it certainly by the observed resistance of impenetrability. Thus, when I say, A body acts on a *distant* one immediately, this means, that it acts upon it immediately, but not by means of impenetrability. But it is not to be conceived, why this should be impossible, otherwise somebody must show, that either impene-

impenetrability is the sole power of a body, or that it can act at least with no other immediately, without doing it at the same time by means of impenetrability. But as this has never been demonstrated, and in all appearance will hardly ever be demonstrated, metaphysic has no proper ground for revolting against the immediate attraction at a distance. However let us hear the metaphysician's arguments. The first on the list is the definition, The immediate reciprocal presence of two bodies is contact. Hence follows, when two bodies immediately act upon one another, they are in contact with one another. Things that touch or are in contact with one another are not distant. Therefore two bodies never act immediately at a distance etc. The definition is surreptitious. Not every immediate presence is a contaction, but only that by means of impenetrability, and the rest is but built in the air.

From the above-mentioned examples it is evident, that a great deal may be said of an object with certainty, as well in metaphysic, as in other sciences, without having explained it. For here it has been explained neither what a body is, nor what space, and yet of both there are certain positions. That which I principally insist on is, That the procedure in metaphysic must be totally analytical, for its province is, in fact, to resolve implicated cognitions. If with this be compared the procedure of philosophers, as it is in vogue in all schools, how perverted will it be found? The most abstract conceptions, which reason naturally has at last in view,  
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make with them the beginning; when they have once adopted the mathematician's plan, which they are absolutely determined to imitate. Hence a strange difference is found between metaphysic and every other science. In geometry and other cognitions of the doctrine of quantity the beginning is made from that which is easy, and one proceeds slowly to more difficult exercises. In metaphysic the beginning is made from the most difficult: from possibility and existence, from necessity and contingency in general, and so on, all conceptions, to which are necessary both great abstraction and attention, chiefly, as their signs in the application admit of many insensible varieties, whose distinction must not be neglected. The procedure must absolutely be synthetic. One explains therefore directly in the beginning, and infers therefrom with certitude. The philosophers of this taste felicitate one another that they have learned from the geometrician the secret of thinking solidly and profoundly, and do not at all observe, that he acquires it by *composed* conceptions, but they by *solution* only, which totally alters the method of thinking.

Whereas, as soon as philosophers will condescend to take the natural way of sound reason, first to investigate that which they know of the abstract conception of an object (*exempli gratia* space or time), without yet laying any claim to the expositions; when they conclude but from these sure *data*, when in every altered application of a conception they notice whether the conception itself, notwithstanding  
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its sign is the same, be not here altered: they would not perhaps have so many introspections to offer to sale, but those, which they exhibit, were of a sure value. Of the latter I shall yet adduce an example. Most philosophers mention as an instance of obscure conceptions that, which we may have in a profound sleep. *Obscure* representations are those of which one is not conscious to one's self. Now some experiences show, that we have representations in even profound sleep, and as we are not conscious to ourselves of them, they are obscure. Here the *consciousness* is of a twofold signification. One is either not conscious to one's self of a representation, that one has it, or that one had it. The former denotes the obscurity of the representation, as it is in the mind; the latter shows nothing but that one does not remember it. The above-mentioned instance gives to cognise, only that there may be representations, which one does not remember waking, but whence by no means follows, that they in sleep should not have been clear with consciousness; as in Mr. Savage's example of a person seized with a catalepsis, or in the usual actions of a noctambulo. However by concluding far too easily, without having previously given at every time the conception its meaning by attention to different cases, a probable great mystery of nature is in this case passed over negligently, namely, that perhaps in the deepest sleep the greatest habit of the soul in rational thinking may be exercised, for there is no other ground for the contrary, than that one does not remember it

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on waking, but which ground evinces nothing

It is not yet the time, to proceed synthetically in metaphysic, only when the analysis shall have helped us to conceptions distinctly and fully understood, will the synthesis be able, as in the mathematics, to subordinate the composed cognitions to the most simple ones.

## CONTEMPLATION THE THIRD.

## OF THE NATURE OF METAPHYSICAL CERTAINTY.

## 1.

*The philosophical Certainty is in general of another Nature, than the mathematical.*

One is certain, so far as one cognises, that it is impossible, that a cognition is false. The degree of this certainty, when it is objectively taken, depends on what is sufficient in the criteria of the necessity of a truth, but so far as it is subjectively contemplated, it is so much the greater, as the cognition of this necessity has more intuition. In both considerations the mathematical certainty is of another species than the philosophical. This I will show in the most evident manner.

Human understanding, like every other power of nature, is tied to certain rules. One does not err, because the understanding connects the conceptions irregularly, but because one negates that mark of a thing, which one does not perceive in the thing, and judges, that that *is not*, of which one is *not conscious* to one's self in a thing. Now the mathematics, *in the first place*, attain their conceptions synthetically and may say with certainty, that what they did not intend to represent in their object by the definition, is not therein contained. For the conception of the defined  
springs



springs first from the definition, and has no signification any farther, than what the definition gives it. If philosophy is herewith compared, and namely metaphysic, it will be found that it is far more insecure in its explications, when it inclines to venture on any. For the conception of what is to be expounded is given. If one notices neither the one nor the other mark, which appertains to its sufficient distinction, and judges, that to the ample conception no such mark is wanting, the definition is false and illusory. We might exhibit such errors by innumerable examples, but I refer with regard to them to what is abovementioned of contact. *Secondly*, the mathematics contemplate in their consequences and demonstrations their universal cognition under the signs in the concrete, but philosophy together with the signs in the abstract still. This constitutes a considerable difference in the mode of both, to attain certainty. For as the signs of mathematics are sensible means of cognition, it may be known with the same certainty, as one is assured of what one sees, that no conception has been neglected, that every single comparison was made according to easy rules etc. Whereby the attention is much facilitated, as it has not to consider the things in their universal representation, but the signs in their single cognition which is sensible. Whereas the words, as the signs of the philosophical cognition, assist to nothing, but the remembrance of the denoted conceptions. Their signification must always be had immediately in view. The pure intel-  
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lect must be kept on the stretch, and how insensibly escapes a mark of an abstracted conception, as nothing sensible can manifest to us its omission, but then different things are held the same, and erroneous cognitions are brought forth.

Here now has been shown, That the grounds, whence may be deduced that it is impossible to have erred in a certain philosophical cognition, in themselves never equal those, which are to be had in the mathematical field. But besides this, the intuition of this cognition, as to the rightness, is so much greater in the mathematics, than in philosophy; as in those the object is contemplated in sensible signs in the concrete, but in this never but in universal abstracted conceptions, whose clear impression cannot be by far so great, as the former. In geometry, where the signs have over and above a similarity with the things marked, the evidence is by consequence still greater, though in algebra the evidence is just as certain.

## 2.

*Metaphysic is susceptible of a Certainty sufficient  
for Conviction.*

The certainty in metaphysic is of the very same sort, as in every other philosophical cognition, as this cannot be certain, but so far as it is conformable to the universal grounds, which the former furnishes. It is known through experience, That we can by grounds

of reason, even besides the mathematics, in many cases become fully certain to conviction. Metaphysic is but a philosophy applied to more general introspections of reason, and it cannot possibly be otherwise circumstanced.

Errours arise not only because we do not know certain things, but because we undertake to judge, though we do not yet know all that is thereto requisite. A great many deceits, nay, almost all of them collectively, have this forwardness to thank for their origin. You know a few predicates of a thing certainly. Well, bottom your conclusions upon these, and you will not err. But you will absolutely have a definition; however you are not sure, that you know all that is thereto requisite, and as, notwithstanding that, you hazard it, you fall into errours. Hence it is possible to avoid errours; when one seeks certain and distinct cognitions, without however assuming so easily a definition. Again, you can with surety infer a considerable part of a certain consequence. But do not allow yourselves to draw the conclusion on the whole consequence, how small soever the difference may seem to be. I grant, that the proof is good, in whose possession one is, to show, That the soul is not matter. But beware to infer therefrom, that the soul is not of a material nature. For by this every one understands, not only that the soul is not matter, but not such a simple substance, which can be an element of matter. This requires a particular proof, namely, that this thinking being is not, like a corporeal element, in space, by  
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impenetrability, nor can constitute together with others an extended body and a mass, of which indeed no proof has yet been adduced; which, were it discovered, would point out the incomprehensible manner, in which a spirit is present in space.

## 3.

*The Certainty of the first fundamental Truths in Metaphysic is of no other Species, than that in every other rational Cognition, except the Mathematics.*

In our days Crusius \* imagined by his philosophy to give quite another form to metaphysical cognitions, by not granting the position of contradiction the prerogative, to be the universal and chief principle of all cognition, by introducing many other immediately certain and invincible principles and maintaining, that this rightness would be comprehended from the nature of our understanding, according to the rule: What I cannot otherwise think than true, is true. To such principles is numbered among others: What I cannot

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cannot

\* I have found it necessary here to make mention of the method of this new philosophy. It is of late become so celebrated, it has also relatively to the better enlightening of many introspections a merit so much acknowledged, that it would be a real want, where metaphysic is treated, to pass it over in silence. What I here touch, is merely the method peculiar to it, for the difference in single positions is not enough to denote an essential difference of one philosophy from another.



cannot think as existing, has never existed; every thing must be somewhere and (if I may so say) somewhen etc. I shall in a few words show the true nature of the first fundamental truths of metaphysic, as also the true form of this method of Crusius, which in this point does not swerve so much, as one may imagine, from the philosophical cast of mind. Hence may also be deduced, in general, the degree of the possible certitude of metaphysic.

All true judgments must be either affirmative or negative. As the *form* of every *affirmation* consists in something's being represented as a mark of a thing, that is, as the same with the mark of a thing, so is every affirmative judgment true, when the predicate is *identical* with the subject. And as the *form* of every *negation* consists in something's being represented as colliding with a thing, a negative judgment is true, when the predicate contradicts the subject. The position, therefore, which expressès the essence of every affirmation, and by consequence contains the chief formulè of all affirmative judgments, is, To every subject belongs a predicate, which is identical with it. This is the *position of identity*. And as the position, which expresses the essence of all negation, To no subject belongs a predicate that contradicts it, is the *position of contradiction*, so is this the first formulè of all negative judgments. Both together constitute the chief and universal principles, in the formal sense, of all human reason. And the most have erred in granting the position of contradiction the rank,

rank, with regard to all truths, which it has but relatively to the negative. But every position, which is immediately thought under one of these chief principles, but cannot be otherwise thought, is invincible; namely, when either the identity or the contradiction immediately lies in the conceptions, and cannot by dissection or must not by means of an intermedial mark be perspected. All others are evincible. A body is divisible, is a demonstrable proposition, for the identity of the predicate and subject may be shown by dissection and thus mediately: a body is *composed*, but what is composed, is *divisible*, therefore a *body* is divisible. The mediating mark here is, to be *composed*. Now in philosophy there are many invincible positions, as has been aforementioned. Indeed all these rank under the formal first principles, but immediately, so far however as they at the same time contain grounds of other cognitions, they are the first material principles of human reason. For instance, *A body is composed*, is an indemonstrable proposition, so far as the predicate as an immediate and first mark can be thought but in the conception of the body. Such material principles, says Crusius with reason, constitute the groundwork and stability of human reason. For, as aforesaid, they are the matter for definitions, and the *data*, wherefrom, though there is no definition, may be surely concluded. And in this Crusius was in the right, when he blamed other schools of philosophers, for having passed by these material principles, and ad-

hered to the formal ones merely. For from these only nothing at all can be actually proved, because positions are required, which contain the middle term, whereby the logical relation of other conceptions must be able to be cognised in a ratiocination; and among these positions some must be the first. But one can never grant any positions the value of material chief principles, when they are not evident to every human understanding. But I hold that several of those, which Crusius mentions, even allow of considerable doubt.

With regard to the chief rule of a certainty, however, which this celebrated man thinks of preposing to all cognition, and consequently the metaphysical likewise, namely, *What I cannot otherwise think than true, is true* etc. it is easy to perspect, that this position never can be a ground of the truth of any one cognition whatever. For when it is owned, that no other ground of truth can be assigned, than because it cannot possibly be otherwise holden than true, one gives to understand, that no ground of truth at all is further assignable. Now there are, it is true, many indemonstrable cognitions; but the feeling of conviction relatively to them is an avowal, but not an argument, that they are true.

Metaphysic then has no formal or material grounds of certainty, which is of another species than that of geometry. In both the formal of the judgments takes place according to the positions of agreement and contradiction. In both are indemonstrable propositions, which

which make the groundwork of concluding. Only as the definitions in the mathematics are the first indemonstrable conceptions of the things demonstrated, so must in their place different invincible positions in metaphysic furnish the first *data*, but which may be just as sure, and which offer either the matter for expositions or the ground of sure consequences. A certainty, of which metaphysic is capable, is just as sufficient to conviction, as that of which are susceptible the mathematics, only, the latter is easier and participant of a greater intuition.



CONTEMPLATION THE FOURTH.  
 OF THE PERSPICUITY AND CERTAINTY, OF  
 WHICH THE FIRST GROUNDS OF NATURAL  
 THEOLOGY AND MORAL ARE SUSCEPTIBLE.

## 1.

*The first Grounds of Natural Theology are  
 susceptible of the greatest philosophical  
 Evidence.*

**I**t is both the easiest and the clearest distinction of a thing from all other things, when this thing is an only one possible of its kind. The object of natural religion is the sole first Cause; its determinations are so circumstanced, as not to be easily permuted with those of other things. But the greatest conviction is possible, where it is absolutely necessary, that these and no other predicates belong to a thing. For in contingent determinations it is for the most part difficult to find out the variable conditions of their predicates. Hence the absolutely necessary Being is an object of that nature, that when its genuine conception is once discovered, it seems to promise more security than almost any other philosophical knowledge. In this part of the problem I can do nothing but take into consideration the  
 possible

possible philosophical cognition of God; for it would be much too prolix, to bring to the rest the doctrines of the philosophers, who have already handled this subject. The chief conception, which presents itself here to metaphysic, is, the absolutely necessary existence of a being. In order to come to that it might be first inquired, *Whether it be possible, that nothing at all exists.* When it is now perceived, that then no existence whatever is given, and *nothing to be thought of*, and no possibility has place, only the conception of the existence of that which must form the basis of all possibility needs be investigated. This thought will enlarge itself and establish the determinate conception of the absolutely necessary Being. But, without my engaging particularly in this plan, as soon as the existence of the only most perfect and necessary Being is cognised, the conceptions of his other determinations will become more precise, because they are the greatest and the most perfect, and much more certain, as only those, which are there necessary, can be granted. I have, for instance, to determine the conception of the divine *ubiquity* or omnipresence: I easily cognise, that that Being, on whom all others depend; independent himself, determines by his presence the *place* of all other beings in the world, *but to himself no place among them*, as he would then belong to the world with them. Therefore God is properly at no place, but he is present to all things in all *places, where the things are.* In like manner do I perspect, that, as the things

of the world subsequent to one another are in his power, he doth not thereby determine to himself a point of time in this series, consequently, that relatively to him there is nothing either past or future. When I then say, God foresees the future, this doth not signify, God sees that which is *relatively to himself future*, but what is future to certain things in the world, that is, follows a state of it. Hence is to be cognised, that the cognition of the future, of the past, and of the present relatively to the action of the divine understanding are by no means different, but that it cognises them all as actual things of the universe; and this foreseeing may be much more precisely and more distinctly represented in God, than in a thing which pertains to the whole of the world.

In all points, therefore, where an *analogon* of contingency is not to be met with, the metaphysical cognition of God may be very certain. But the judgment on his free actions, on Providence, on the procedure of his justice and goodness, as even in the conceptions which we have of these determinations in ourselves there is yet a great deal not developed, in this science can have but a certitude by approximation, or one that is moral.

## 2.

*The first Grounds of Moral, according to their present Quality, are not yet capable of all the requisite Evidence.*

In order to render this obvious I shall point out, only how little *obligation*, even according to

to the first conception, is known, and how far distant therefore one must be from delivering in practical philosophy the perspicuity and security of the fundamental conceptions and principles necessary to evidence. One *ought* to do this or that, and forbear the other thing; this is the formule, by which every one obligation is expressed. Now every *ought* expresses a necessity of the action, and is susceptible of a twofold meaning. I *ought* to do something, (as a *mean*) when I will something else (as an *end*); or I *ought immediately to do*, and to realise, something else (as an *end*). The former may be denominated the necessity of means (*necessitatem problematicam*), the latter that of ends (*necessitatem legalem*). The first species of necessity indicates no obligation at all, but only the precept as the solution of a problem, what are the means I must use if I wish to attain a certain end. Whoever dictates to another what actions he must either perform or forbear, if he would promote his own happiness, he might include among them perhaps all the doctrines of moral, but then they are no longer obligations, but so, as if it were an obligation, to describe two segments of a circle, when I intend to bisect a straight line into two equal parts, that is, they are by no means obligations, but only directions for a proper conduct, when an end is designed to be accomplished. As now the use of means has no other necessity, than that which belongs to the end, so are all the actions, which moral prescribes on condition of certain ends, contingent,



tingent, and, so long as they are not subordinated to an end necessary in itself, can never be named obligations. I ought, for instance, to forward the common perfection, or I ought to act agreeably to the will of God; to whichever of these two positions the whole practical philosophy were subordinated, this position, if it shall be a rule and ground of obligation, must command the action as immediately necessary, and not on condition of a certain end. And here we find, that such an immediate chief rule of all obligation must be absolutely inevitable. For it is not possible to cognise and to infer from any contemplation of a thing or of a conception, whatever it be, what ought to be done, if that which is presupposed, is not an end and the action a mean. This, however, it must not be, because it would then be no formule of obligation, but of problematical address.

And now I can declare in a few words, that after long reflection on this subject I am convinced, that the rule, **Do what is the most perfect possible by thee**, is the first *formal ground* of all obligation *to act*, in the same manner as is the position, **Forbear that, whereby perfection, the greatest possible by thee, is hindered, relatively to the duty to forbear**. And as nothing true flows from the first formal principles of our judgments, unless material first grounds are given, so flows from these two rules of the good alone no particular determinate obligation, unless inevitable material

material principles of practical cognition are therewith conjoined.

The beginning has been first made in our days to perspect, That the faculty to represent the *true* is that of *cognition*, but that to have a sense of the *good*, *feeling*, and that they must by no means be permuted.\* As there are conceptions of the good not to be dissected, that is, that which is met with in the objects of cognition contemplated apart, so there is also an insolvable feeling of the good, (this is never met with in a thing absolutely, but always relatively to a feeling being). It is the province of the understanding, to resolve and to render perspicuous the composed and implicated conception of the good, by pointing out, how it springs out of simple feelings of the good. But, if this is simple, the judgment, This is good, is fully inevitable, and an immediate effect of the consciousness of the feeling of pleasure with the representation of the object. And as many simple feelings of the good are most certainly to be found in us, there are many such like insolvable representations. Accordingly when an action is immediately represented as good, without its containing in a concealed manner a certain other good, which may be therein cognised by anatomizing, and is on that account termed  
perfect,

\* The reader will be pleased to remember, that this Treatise was written in the year 1763, twenty years at least before Kant's great works, namely, THE CRITIC OF PURE REASON, THE CRITIC OF PRACTICAL REASON, and THE CRITIC OF JUDGEMENT etc. which contain his systematical writings, and deeper introspections.

perfect, the necessity of this action is an invincible material principle of obligation. For example, Love him who loves thee, is a practical position, which indeed ranks under the chief formal and affirmative rule of obligation, but immediately. For as it cannot be further shown by dissection why a peculiar perfection lies in mutual love, so this rule is not proved practically, that is, by means of reducing to the necessity of another perfect action, but immediately subsumpted under the universal rule of good actions. Perhaps my adduced example does not exhibit the matter distinctly and convincingly enough; but the limits of a treatise, like the present, which in all probability I have already exceeded, permit me not that completeness, which I could have wished. There is an immediate deformity in the action, which collides with the will of Him, from whom our existence and all good proceed. This deformity is clear, though the disadvantages, which may accompany as consequences, of such a procedure, are not considered. Hence the position, Do what is agreeable to the will of God, is a material principle of moral, which nevertheless ranks formally under the aforementioned chief and universal formule, but immediately. One must not either in the practical philosophy, or in the theoretical, so easily hold something, which it is not, invincible. However these principles, which contain as postulates the groundworks to the other practical positions, are indispensable. Hutcheson and others have delivered, under the name of moral sentiment  
or

or feeling, a beginning to beautiful observations.\*

From this may be perceived, that, though it must be possible to attain the greatest degree of philosophical evidence in the first grounds of morality, the chief fundamental conceptions of obligation must first be more securely determined, in regard of which the want of the practical philosophy is still greater than that of the theoretical, as it must yet be first of all made out, whether the cognoscitive faculty merely or feeling (the first internal ground of the appetitive faculty) determine the first principles thereof.\*\*

These are the thoughts, which I submit to the judgment of the Royal Academy of Sciences. I presume to hope, that the grounds here propounded are of some consequence to the desired elucidation of the object.

\* But which Kant some years afterwards beautifully confuted. It is interesting to observe the progress of the human understanding, which is fully displayed by comparing this little Treatise with Kant's subsequent doctrines.

\*\* Kant has since determined these in the most masterly and satisfactory manner.



WHAT MEANS,

TO ORIENT ONE'S SELF IN  
THINKING?

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Let us employ our conceptions ever so sublimely, and thereby abstract ever so much from the sensitive faculty, yet there still adheres to them *typical* representations, whose proper destination it is, to make them, which are not derived from experience, fit for the *use of experience*. For how could we procure signification to our conceptions, were they not built upon some one intuition or other (which at last must always be an example from some one possible experience)? When we afterwards leave out from this concrete act of the understanding the mixture of the type, first of the contingent perception by sense, then even the pure sensitive intuition in general; that pure conception of understanding, whose compass is now extended, and contains a rule of thinking in general, remains. In like manner is the universal logic itself brought to pass; and many *heuristic* methods of thinking lie perhaps still concealed in the experience-use of our understanding and of reason, which methods, if we understood to draw them carefully from that experience, might enrich philosophy, even in abstract cogitation, with many useful maxims.

Of this nature is the principle, which the late Mendelssohn expressly professed, as far as I know, but in his last writings (the *Morning-hours*, page 165—66, and the *Letter to Lessing's Friends* p. 58 and 67); namely, the maxim of necessity, in the speculative use of reason (to which with regard to the cognition of supersensible objects he trusted so much, even to the evidence of demonstration) to orient himself by a certain mean of guidance, which he sometimes termed *common sense* (*Morning-hours*), sometimes *sound reason*, and sometimes *sound understanding* (to *Lessing's Friends*). Who had thought, that this acknowledgment of the potency of the *speculative* use of reason would have been so pernicious in matters of theology (which in fact was inevitable); but even the common sound reason, on account of the ambiguity, in which he left the exercise of this faculty in contradiction to speculation, would be in danger of serving as a principle of fanaticism and of the total dethroning of reason? And yet this happened in the dispute between Mendelssohn and Jacobi, chiefly by the by no means insignificant conclusions of the acute author of the *Results*;\* however I will not impute to either the intention of introducing a cast of mind so pernicious, but rather consider the  
under-

\* Jacobi's *Letters on the Doctrine of Spinoza*. Breslau 1785. — Jacobi against Mendelssohn's *Accusation*, concerning the *Letters on the D. of S.* Leipzig 1786. — *The Results of the Jacobian and Mendelssohnean Philosophy critically investigated by a Volunteer*. Leipzig, 1786.

undertaking of the latter as an *argumentum ad hominem*, which one is entitled to use as a mere defence, in order to profit by the adversary's weaknesses to his disadvantage. On the other hand I shall show, That in fact it is reason *merely*, not a pretended secret sense of truth, no transcendent intuition under the name of belief, upon which tradition or revelation may, without the consent of reason, be grafted, but, as Mendelssohn maintained steadfastly and with a just zeal, merely the proper pure human reason, whereby he found necessary, and recommended to orient one's self; though the great pretension of the speculative use of it, and chiefly its sole commanding authority. (by demonstration), must be dropped, and, so far as it is speculative, nothing further left it, than the business of purifying the common conception of reason from contradictions and the defence against its own sophistical attacks on the maxims of sound reason. — The extended and more precisely determined conception of *self-orienting* may assist us to exhibit distinctly the maxims of sound reason in their elaborations for the cognition of supersensible objects.

*To orient one's self*, in the proper sense of the expression, is, From a given point (into four of which we divide the horizon) to find the other points, or the *orient* or east. If I see the sun, and know that it is at present twelve o'clock, I know how to find all the cardinal points, south, west, north and east. But for this purpose I absolutely require the feeling of a difference in my own subject, to wit, the



right and left hand. I name it a feeling; because these two sides show no sensible difference externally in the intuition. Without this faculty, in the describing of a circle, I could not know, without needing in it some one difference of the objects, to distinguish the motion from the left to the right from that in the opposite direction, and thereby to determine *à priori* a difference in the situation of objects, nor whether I should put west to the right or to the left of the south point of the horizon, and so complete the circle through north and west to south again. I therefore orient myself *geographically* in all objective *data* in the heavens but by a *subjective* ground of distinction; and, if one day by a miracle all the constellations were altered in their direction, so that what was formerly eastern became western, though they preserved the same figure and the very same situation towards one another, no human eye would the next starlight evening remark the smallest alteration, and even the astronomer, if he attended to that merely, which he sees and not at the same time to what he *feels*, would unavoidably *disorient* himself. But the faculty of distinguishing by the feeling of the right and of the left hand, which is indeed bestowed by nature, but become familiar by frequent exercise, comes very naturally to his assistance; and he will, when he fixes the polestar, not only remark the alteration which has happened, but that notwithstanding, be able to orient himself. I may now extend this geographical conception of the procedure of orienting one's self,

self, and understand by it, To orient one's self in a given space in general, therefore merely *mathematically*. In the dark I orient myself in a room which I know, when I can lay hold of but one single object, whose place I remember. But here it is evident that nothing assists me but the faculty of determining the situations according to a *subjective* ground of distinction: for I do not at all see the objects, whose place I must find; and, if any one for the sake of a joke should place on the left side of a room all the objects which were before on the right, though in the same order among themselves, I, were the walls all alike, would not know what to make of the room. But I quickly orient myself by the mere feeling of a difference of my two sides, the right and the left. The same happens at night when I must walk and turn properly in dark streets, which I know, but in which I can distinguish no house. Finally I may extend this conception still more, where it would then consist in the faculty of orienting one's self, not merely in space, that is, *mathematically*, but in *thinking* in general, that is, *logically*. It may be easily devined, according to analogy, that this will be an affair of pure reason to direct its use, if it, setting out from known objects (of experience), is to extend itself beyond all bounds of experience, and finds no object of intuition at all, but merely space for it; as it is then no longer able, according to objective grounds of cognition, but merely according to a subjective ground of distinction, in the determination of its own faculty of judg-

ing, to bring its judgments under a precise maxim.\* This subjective mean, which then remains, is nothing but the feeling of the proper *want* of reason. One may remain secure from all error, when one does not undertake to judge, where one knows not so much, as is requisite to a determining judgment. Thus ignorance in itself is the cause of the limits, but not of the errors in our cognition. But, where it is not so arbitrable, whether one shall judge determinately or not on something, where an actual *want* and even such a one, as adheres to reason itself, renders judging necessary; and yet want of knowledge in regard to the points requisite to the judgment limits us; a maxim is necessary, according to which we pass our judgment; for reason will be satisfied. When it is then previously made out, that here there can be no intuition of the object, not even something homogenous with it, by which we could exhibit the object suitably to our extended conceptions, and thus secure them their real possibility; nothing farther is left for us to do, than, First *to prove* well the conception, with which we have a mind to venture beyond all possible experience, whether it be free from contradictions; and then to bring the *relation* of the object at least to the objects of experience under pure conceptions of understanding, whereby

\* *To orient* one's self in thinking in general, 'is' then, When the objective principles of reason are insufficient, to determine one's self in the holding-true according to a subjective principle of it.

whereby we do not at all render it sensible, but yet conceive of something supersensible, suitable at least to the experience-usé of our reason: for without this precaution we could make no use whatever of such a conception, but instead of thinking extravagante.

However by the mere conception there is nothing yet effectuated with regard to the existence of this object and to the actual connection of it with the world (the complex of all objects of possible experience). But the *right of the want* of reason, as a subjective ground of presupposing and assuming something, which it dares not pretend to know by objective grounds, presents itself now; and consequently *to orient* itself in thinking, in the immense space of the supersensible that is filled for us with dark night, merely by its own want.

Many supersensible things may be conceived (for objects of the senses do not fill up the whole field of all possibility), where reason however feels no want to extend itself to them, and still less to suppose their existence. Reason finds employment enough with the causes in the world, which manifest themselves to the senses, (or at least are of the same sort, as those which manifest themselves to them), not to stand in need, in their behalf, of the influence of pure spiritual beings of nature; whose supposition would rather be detrimental to its use. For, as we know nothing of the laws, according to which such beings may act, but of those, namely, the objects of the senses, we know, at least



we may hope to discover still, a great deal; the use of reason would rather be injured by such a presupposition. It is therefore by no means a want, it is rather mere curiosity, which tends to nothing but reveries, to search after them, or to play with such phantoms. The conception of a *first Being*, as supreme intelligence and at the same time as the chief good, is of a totally different nature. For not only, that our reason feels a want to lay as a foundation the *conception* of the unlimited to the conception of all that is limited, therefore of all other things;\* but this want extends to the  
 . presupposition

\* As reason requires to the possibility of all things to presuppose reality as given, and considers the difference of things by negations adhering to them but as limits; it finds itself necessitated to lay down originally as a foundation one single possibility, namely, that of the unlimited Being, but to consider all others as derived. As the thorough possibility of every one thing must absolutely be met with in the whole of all existence, at least the principle of the thorough determination renders possible the distinction of the possible from the actual of our reason but in such a way; so we find a subjective ground of necessity, that is, a want of our reason itself, to bottom all possibility upon the existence of a most real (supreme) Being. Thus arises the Cartesian proof of the existence of *God*, subjective grounds of presupposing something for the use of reason (which at bottom always remains but a use of experience) being holden objective ones, consequently want for insight. So is it circumstanced with this, and so are circumstanced all the proofs of the worthy Mendelssohn in his Morning-hours. They yield nothing for the behoof of a demonstration. But they are on that account by no means useless. For not to mention, the fine occasion which these extremely ingenious developements of the subjective conditions of the use of our reason give to the complete cognition of this our faculty; for the behoof of which they are permanent examples: thus is the holding-true from subjective grounds of the use of reason, when objective ones are wanting to us and we are nevertheless necessitated to judge, always of the greatest importance; only, we must not give out what is but extorted *presupposition*, as *free introspection*, in order not to lay ourselves  
 selves

presupposition of its *existence*, without which it can give itself no satisfactory ground at all of the contingency of the existence of the things in the world, but least of all of the conformity-to-end and order, which is everywhere to be met with in a degree so admirable (in the small, because it is near us, still more, than in the great). Without assuming an intelligent Author, there cannot, without falling into mere absurdities, be assigned the *smallest intelligible* ground of those; and, though we cannot *evince* the impossibility of such a conformity-to-end without a *first intelligent Cause*, (for then we had had sufficient objective grounds of this assertion, and not required to appeal to the subjective one's); notwithstanding this want of insight, a sufficient subjective ground of supposition of it remains, namely, that reason *requires*, To presuppose something, that is intelligible to it, in order to explain by it this given phenomenon, as every thing else, with which it can combine but a conception, doth not supply this want.

But

selves open without necessity to the opponent, with whom we have engaged in *dogmatising*, who may use our weakness to our disadvantage. Mendelssohn certainly did not think, that *dogmatising* with pure reason in the field of the supersensible is the direct way to philosophical fanaticism, and that nothing but a critic of this faculty of reason can cure this evil radically. Indeed the discipline of the scholastic method (that of Wolf, for example, which he therefore recommended), where all the conceptions must be determined and every step justified by principles, may stop this mischief for a time; but by no means, withhold it entirely. For with what right will one hinder reason, which, according to his own acknowledgment, has succeeded so well in that field, from going still further in the same? and where is then the boundary, where it must stop?