France, of Germany, and of England, then all the idealistic systems, then the skeptical systems, then the mystical systems, and you will have upon the stage of European philosophy four great schools, all of which are recommended by considerable services, and present to impartial posterity names almost equally celebrated. If, moreover, we search for the part of each country in the general work, we shall find that France and England especially represent sensualism and skepticism; Scotland and Germany, in different degrees, spiritualism; in regard to mysticism, there is a little of it everywhere, and particularly in Germany.

Such is the result which observation gives us: observation, then, confirms the theory. Induction, resting upon the entire history of the past, divided in advance the philosophy of the eighteenth century into four great schools; and we have found that in fact this epoch of the history of philosophy is thus divided. This division, which in itself would be only a real but arbitrary fact, becomes a necessary fact by its relation to the entire history which it continues; it expresses a law of this history. Let us carefully follow it. As philosophical Europe in the eighteenth century is divided into four great schools, so this course will be divided into four parts.

I shall exhibit in turn to you the sensualistic school, the idealistic school, the skeptical school, the mystical school. But by which of these shall I commence? In what order should I present them to you?

Analysis of the human mind has given us not only four different points of view; it has given us those four points of view in an intimate correlation which it is important to observe. The human mind does not start by negation; for, in order to deny, it is necessary to have something to deny, it is necessary to have affirmed, and affirmation is the first act of thought. Man, therefore, commences by believing perhaps in this, perhaps in that, and the first system is necessarily dogmatical. This dogmatism is sensualistic or idealistic, according as man puts more confidence in thought or sensibility, but it is impossible that we should begin by skepticism. On the other hand, if skepticism presupposes dogmatism, mysticism in its turn presupposes skepticism. For what is mysticism? it is, once more, an act of despair on the part of human reason, which, after having naturally believed in itself, and having started by dogmatism, frightened and discouraged by skepticism, takes refuge in sentiment, in pure contemplation and immediate intuition. Behold the necessary movement of systems in the human mind.* In drawing conclusions from the human mind in regard to its history, we have not feared to affirm that here too history would reproduce what the analysis of the human mind had given us; and the experimental method, always agreeing with the rational method, has everywhere shown us, in each of the great epochs of the history of philosophy, sensualism and idealism, skepticism and mysticism, reciprocally developed by each other in an invariable progress and order. Everywhere, in the first part of each epoch, we have encountered two dogmatisms which soon, engaging in contest with each other, wound each other, and end by producing skepticism; this, in its turn, reacts upon them and modifies them, while they also exercise a powerful influence upon its course and its character; and then appears mysticism, which, produced, as it were, out of fear of skepticism and distrust of all dogmatism, equally shuns both, and attaches itself to them again through the warfare itself which it raises against them. This constant order of the development of systems, we can establish as a law, which shall have the same validity as that of the division of systems into four classes; and consequently we can, with the same certainty, predict that in the eighteenth century not only will the same systems be reproduced, but that they will be reproduced in the same order. In fact, if you attentively examine the four great schools which contend for philosophical domination, without ever obtaining it exclusively, in the eighteenth century,

* See on different systems, Lecture 4 of Vol. 2.

you will see that they all exist with the same mutual relation which I have just determined.

There is not in the eighteenth century a single philosophical school which acts upon all other schools and resists their influence; it is this relative development of schools, this reciprocity of action, this perpetual action and reaction which constitutes the philosophic life of Europe in the eighteenth century.

Get an exact idea of the real situation of philosophy at this epoch. The seventeenth century had everywhere terminated, except in England, with the domination of idealism; idealism had not extinguished, but it had conquered sensualism; and it had ruined itself by its own faults, by the ingenious but chimerical hypotheses which mark the triumph and bring the ruin of Cartesianism. It was then that the philosophical minority of the seventeenth century, strengthened by the extravagances of the majority, became the majority in its turn; sensualism, which received a certain number of partisans in the seventeenth century, obtained in the eighteenth century the domination, first in England, then in France: towards 1750, Locke was the philosopher of enlightened Europe. The idealism of the seventeenth century doubtless resisted, but it was beaten down at every point. Later appeared a new idealism, that of the eighteenth century, that of Rousseau and Turgot, that of the Scotch school and the German school. But Rousseau is evidently an opposer, a man of the minority, who contends against the sensualistic majority, represented by the encyclopedists. So Reid is an antagonist of Locke; the Scotch school, as I have already said, is a protestation of the permanent good sense of humanity against the extravagances of the new majority; for we are never the majority with impunity. Kant is Reid enlarged, that is, an antagonist of Locke. Thus, whilst the sensualism of the eighteenth century is a reaction against the idealism of the seventeenth, the idealism of the end of the eighteenth century is a reaction against the sensualism which precedes it. As to skepticism, try, I pray you, to comprehend Hume without Locke and Berkeley. What is Hume?

The last term* of the sensualistic system of Locke and the idealistic system of Berkeley. In Germany, Schulze-Ænesidemus† and Hume-Jacobi‡ are incomprehensible without a sensualistic school and an idealistic school, without Condillac and without Kant, for their skepticism, above all that of Jacobi, falls at once upon both. And by way of parenthesis, remark how history is formed, how the spirit which presides in it forms every thing in its time with weight and measure, and produces systems when it is good that they should come: after Locke and Berkeley, after Condillac and Kant, skepticism was necessary, and it was then that it came. In regard to mysticism, who could comprehend Saint-Martin without Voltaire and Condillac? Was not Saint-Martin driven to his mysticism through fright of skepticism, which he wished to escape, and the sad dogmatism of his times? It is the same with Frederic Schlegel, with Baader, and with other German mystics of our age.§ They are, in my opinion, the offspring of a period worn out with speculation, the last products of a discouraged philosophy which abjures itself. All, or nearly all, have been ardent dogmatists, whom the strife and the movement of mutually destructive systems have precipitated towards skepticism, and of whom some have found refuge in the orthodox mysticism of the ancient faith and the Church, but the most part in a heterodox mysticism, at once arbitrary and chimerical. But finally, all this mysticism is the result of the despair of speculative reason, and we arrive at despair only after having passed through illusion. I regard it, therefore, as an incontestable point, that there are not only four great schools in

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* First Series, Vol. 4, Lectures on Reid, *passim*.

† Schulze wrote a work entitled: *Ænesidemus, or the Foundations given to German Philosophy by Professor Reinhold, with a defence of Skepticism against the pretensions of the Critique of Reason*. See *Manuel of Tennemann*, French translation, 2d edition, vol. ii., p. 327.

‡ Jacobi is the author of the treatise: *David Hume and concerning Faith, or Idealism and Realism*, *Manuel of Tennemann*, vol. ii., p. 321.

§ See on Fr. Schlegel and Franz Baader the *Manuel of Tennemann*, vol. ii., pp. 301, 302.

the eighteenth century, but that these four great schools are regularly developed: first sensualism, then idealism, then skepticism, then mysticism.

I shall do as the human mind and history do. The human mind and history give four points of view, four schools, always and everywhere, and so in the eighteenth century; I shall therefore divide the history of the philosophy of the eighteenth century into four parts. Moreover, the human mind and history make these four points of view appear, these four great schools, in their determined order; I shall present them to you in the same order: I shall begin with sensualism; I shall go from that to idealism, then to skepticism, and shall end with mysticism. But I shall take great care, in presenting to you successively and isolatedly each one of these four schools, to show you always their intimate relation and their reciprocal action in all the degrees of their development. Such will be the order of this course.

Now, what shall be its spirit? On which side shall I rank myself, in this great battle of European philosophy in the eighteenth century? Shall I be a sensualist, an idealist, a skeptic, or a mystic? Once more, I shall do like the human mind and history. The human mind and history produce four systems; therefore these four systems are true, at least in part; for nothing exists, nothing can exist, which has no relation to truth. Pure error, I have already said, would be impossible, and it would be unintelligible: as error penetrates the mind of a man only by the truth which is in it, so it is admitted by other minds, is sustained in the world only by that, and the success of every system supposes that there is some common sense in it. The eighteenth century could produce these four systems, and they had in it great success; therefore these four systems have their truth. On the other hand, these four systems contended together, and strongly contradicted each other. The day when absolute truth shall appear in the world, there will be no more contradiction and strife, all combat will cease; for truth has the

power to rally to itself all minds. But, in the eighteenth century, as in all the great epochs of the history of philosophy, I behold strifes, a lively antagonism between these four systems; I conclude thence, that these four systems, in order to have existed had a cause for existing, their part of truth; they also had, and necessarily, their part of error, in order to have been contradicted, in order thus to have fallen into strife and antagonism; they exist, therefore they are more or less true; they are four in number; therefore they are more or less false: this is for me mathematically exact. What, then, is the duty of the historian? Here as elsewhere, as always, his duty is to do as the human mind and history have done: he must not reject these four systems, for they have existed; and at the same time he must not be the dupe of any of these, for they have fallen into contention, for they have existed, not one, but four; they have been only particular systems, consequently exclusive systems, consequently more or less erroneous and vicious. I shall therefore do two things: I shall defend the foundation and the general principles of the four schools which the philosophy of the eighteenth century presents; I shall defend each one of these schools against the three others, in the name of the human mind and history, which, having admitted them in spite of the other three, have had on account of that, I think, excellent reasons which I shall give; and in defending the foundation of each one of these schools against the other three, I shall overwhelm by the weight of the other three, as the human mind and history have done, the exaggerated and exclusive pretensions of each of them. History has produced all four of them, therefore I will accept them all; history has contradicted them by each other, therefore I shall contradict them by each other, and shall embrace none of them. Thus, in the examination which I shall make of each one of the great schools of the eighteenth century, there will always be two parts: 1st, an apologetical part, which will represent, thus to speak, the reasons of the existence of each school in history; 2d, a critical part, which will

represent the strife and the defeats to which each has been subjected.

Such is the plan, such are the divisions, the order, and the spirit of the history of the four great schools of the eighteenth century which I propose to present to you. But shall I limit myself to this part of the historian? Is this impartiality, which appears like indifference, and which rests, on the contrary, upon a profound sympathy for humanity and for every thing which comes from it, the only task which I propose? No; I must propose to myself still another; and I tell you beforehand that all this tends to, and will end at, dogmatical conclusions.

There is, incontestably, a foundation of truth under the contrary errors of the four fundamental systems of philosophy, without which these very errors would be impossible. But it is the error which is diverse; the truth is one. These four systems, although different in their errors, can and must agree in the truths which they contain. The errors of the systems which destroy each other, cover truths which do not pass away, and the history of philosophy contains a true philosophy, and, as Leibnitz said, *perennis philosophia*, an immortal philosophy, concealed and not ruined in the eccentric developments of systems. This is the common foundation upon which we all live, people and philosophers: we live in truth and by truth, thus to speak; and it is sufficient to disengage this immortal foundation from the defective and variable forms which at once obscure it and manifest it in history, in order to attain to true philosophy. I have long since* said, if philosophy does not already exist, you will search for it in vain; you will not find it. Would it not be absurd, in fact, if here, in 1829, I should pretend to show the truth, finally discovered, in this point of time and space, which had escaped three thousand years of fruitless researches, and so many generations of men of genius? The pretension is insane, and every philosophy which is thus presented is a philosophy which it is easy

* 1st Series, *passim*.

to confound, even before having heard the revelations which it promises. If, on the contrary, under all errors, there is in the history of philosophy as well as in the human mind, a philosophy always subsisting, always ancient and always new, it is only necessary to re-collect it. It is necessary to elevate the true side of all the systems which the history of philosophy contains, to put it in harmony with the true side of all the points of view of the human mind, to collect and offer to men that which they know already but confusedly, that which is in philosophers but in fragments, and, as it were, in shreds, that which has belonged to all time, that which will always be, but everywhere and always more or less mixed, altered, corrupted by the movement of time and human things, by the feebleness of reflection, and the systematic illusions of genius.

Such, you know, is the end of all my labors; this history of the philosophy of the eighteenth century will therefore be, properly speaking, a course of philosophy under the form of the history of philosophy, in the limits of a single epoch, an epoch which is greatest and most recent. I shall end, and wish to end, at theoretical conclusions; but these conclusions will be nothing else than the elevation and reunion of all the truths which have been put into the world, and expanded in the world by the four great schools of the eighteenth century. Every great epoch of the history of philosophy has, thus to speak, a clear result, which is composed of all the errors and all the truths which are due to this epoch: such is the legacy which it bequeathes to the epoch which follows it. The eighteenth century, also, has its clear result; it has a legacy to bequeath to the nineteenth century. I accept this legacy with gratitude, but without binding myself to discharge its obligations; I wish to clear it from dross, and present it thus to the rising generation, as its patrimony, and the foundation upon which it should work.

You comprehend the reach of the philosophical and historical enterprise which I propose to execute with you and before you. The end is good, I believe, but the route will be long; neither in

a few months, nor in a year, shall we be able to arrive at its termination. It is important, therefore, that we should take the first steps as soon as possible, and I shall take up, in the coming lecture, the first great school which offers itself to us in the eighteenth century, to wit, the sensualistic school.

LECTURE XIV.

SENSUALISTIC SCHOOL IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Subject of this Lecture: Review of the different systems of the sensualistic school in Europe during the eighteenth century, in England, France, and Germany.—That, even for the sake of fidelity, the historian should attach himself to the most celebrated systems.—In what order must they be studied? Ethnographical method. Three objections: 1st, arbitrary; 2d, shows not the concatenation, the reciprocal action of systems; 3d, unfavorable to scientific instruction.—Of the true method of its characters: To follow at once the dates of systems, their reciprocal dependence, and the analogy of subjects.—To commence with the metaphysicians and Locke.

The last lecture gave you the general classification of the systems which fill up the philosophy of the eighteenth century. We reduced these systems so diverse and so numerous to four schools; we determined the order in which these four schools have appeared, and consequently the order in which it is necessary to reproduce them. It is the sensualistic school which precedes the others: we will therefore examine it first.

But this school is vast; it embraces several nations and many systems! Where shall we commence? Observe that it is not I that detains you some time yet upon this preliminary question; it is method itself, method, which checks the natural impetuosity of thought, and condemns it to undertake nothing of which it has not rendered to itself a strict account. It is the peculiarity of nascent philosophy to let itself be carried away by its object, to precipitate itself at first into every route that is offered to it; but it is the character of a more advanced philosophy to borrow from reflection the motives of all its proceedings, and to set out upon no route without having wholly measured it, without having recognized its point of departure and its issue. Thus, as we have not approached the eighteenth century at hazard, and as we