points, seeing that he was full of enthusiasm for the advance of physical science and for the newly-founded Royal Society. But he attacked unsparingly the Aristotel- ianism of the schools, which was still dominant at Oxford. Against this, and also against the materialistic dogmatism of Hobbes, he invoked the weapons of scepticism; and he was led by his own arguments to query “ whether there be any science in the sense of the dogmatists.” He based this conclusion partly upon the ground that our knowledge of causes, being derived simply from “ concomitancy,” is far from being “infallibly conclusive.” “The causality itself,” he says, anticipating Hume, “ is insensible ” ; accordingly, “the foundation of scientifical procedure is too weak for so magnificent a superstructure.” More celebrated than any of the above was Pierre Bayle (1617- 1706), whose scepticism lay more in his keen negative criticism of all systems and doctrines which came before him as literary historian than in any theoretic views of his own as to the possibility of knowledge. Bayle also paraded the opposition between reason and revelation ; but the argument in his hands is a double-edged weapon, and when he extols the merits of submissive faith his sincerity is at least questionable.

Hume, the most illustrious and indeed the typical sceptic of modern times, is treated at length in a separate article. Here, therefore, it is only necessary to point out shortly in what his scepticism consists. It is sometimes placed, as we have seen it is by Kant, in his distrust of our ability and right to pass beyond the empirical sphere. But the mere denial of the possibility of “ divinity or school meta­physics,” as we find it in the *Inquiry,* combined with an apparent confidence in “ experimental reasoning concern­ing matter of fact and existence,” does not constitute scepticism, but rather what would now be called agnosticism or positivism. It is essential to the sceptical position that reason be dethroned within experience as well as beyond it, and this is undoubtedly the result at which Hume arrives in his larger and more thorough­going work. More generally, therefore, his scepticism may be considered to lie in his relation to preceding philosophy. The *Treatise* is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the principles of Lockianism, inasmuch as these principles, when consistently applied, leave the structure of experience entirely “loosened” (to use Hume’s own expression), or cemented together only by the irrational force of custom. Hume’s scepticism thus really arises from his thorough­going empiricism. Starting with “ particular perceptions ” or isolated ideas let in by the senses, he never advances beyond these “ distinct existences.” Each of them exists on its own account ; it is what it is, but it contains no reference to anything beyond itself. The very notion of objectivity and truth therefore disappears ; the *Schein* or appearance of the moment is the only reality. Hume’s analysis of the conceptions of a permanent world and a permanent self reduces us to the sensationalistic relativism of Protagoras. He expressly puts this forward in various passages as the conclusion to which reason conducts us. The fact that the conclusion is in “direct and total opposition ” to the apparent testimony of the senses is a fresh justification of philosophical scepticism. For, indeed, scepticism with regard to the senses is considered in the *Inquiry* to be sufficiently justified by the fact that they lead us to suppose “an external universe which depends not on our perception,” whereas “this universal and primary opinion of all men is soon destroyed by the slightest philosophy.” Scepticism with regard to reason, on the other hand, depends on an insight into the irrational character of the relation which we chiefly employ, viz., that of cause and effect. It is not a real relation in objects but rather a mental habit of belief engendered by frequent

repetition or custom. This point of view is applied in the *Treatise* universally. All real connexion or relation, therefore, and with it all possibility of an objective system, disappears ; it is, in fact, excluded by Hume *ab initio,* for “the mind never perceives any real connexion among distinct existences.” Belief, however, just because it rests, as has been said, on custom and the influence of the imagination, @@1 survives such demonstrations. “ Nature,” as Hume delights to reiterate, “ is always too strong for principle.” “Nature, by an absolute and uncontrollable necessity, has determined us to judge as well as to breathe and feel.” The true philosopher, therefore, is not the Pyrrhonist, trying to maintain an impossible equilibrium or suspense of judgment, but the Academic, yielding gracefully to the impressions or maxims which he finds, as matter of fact, to have most sway over himself. “ I may— nay, I must—yield to the current of nature, in submitting to my senses and understanding ; and in this blind sub­mission I show most perfectly my sceptical principles,” for, after all, “if we believe that fire warms or water refreshes, ’tis only because it costs us too much pains to think other­wise.” @@2

The system of Kant, or rather that part of his system expounded in the *Critique of Pure Reason,* though expressly distinguished by its author from scepticism, has been included by many writers in their survey of sceptical theories. The difference between Kant, with his system of pure reason, and any of the thinkers we have passed in review is obvious; and his limitation of reason to the sphere of experience suggests in itself the title of agnostic or positivist rather than that of sceptic. Yet, if we go a little deeper, there is substantial justification for the view which treats agnosticism of the Kantian type as essentially sceptical in its foundations and in its results. For criticism not only limits our knowledge to a certain sphere, but denies that our knowledge within that sphere is real ; we never know things as they actually are, but only as they appear to us. Our knowledge, in Kant’s language, does not show us “the inward essence of the object in itself, but only the relation of the object to the subject.” But this doctrine of relativity really involves a condemnation of our knowledge (and of all knowledge), because it fails to realize an impossible and self-contradictory ideal. The man who impeaches the knowing faculties because of the fact of relation which they involve is pursuing the phantom of an apprehension which, as Lotze expresses it, does not apprehend things, but is itself things; he is desiring not to know but to *be* the things themselves. If this dream or prejudice be exploded, then the scepticism originating in it—and a large proportion of recent sceptical thought does so originate—loses its *raison d'être. @@3* The prejudice, however, which meets us in Kant is, in a some­what different form, the same prejudice which is found in the tropes of antiquity—what Lotze calls “ the inadmissible relation of the world of ideas to a foreign world of objects.”

@@@1 “Belief is more properly an act of the sensitive than of the cogitative part of our nature.”

@@@2 Much the same conclusion is reached in what is perhaps the ablest English exposition of pure philosophic scepticism since Hume —Mr Arthur Balfour’s *Defence of Philosophic Doubt* (1879). “The reader may wish to know,” says Mr Balfour, “what constitute the ‘ claims on our belief' which I assert to he possessed alike by science and theology, and which I put forward as the sole practical founda­tion on which our convictions ultimately rest. . . . Whatever they may be, they are not rational grounds of conviction. . . It would be more proper to describe them as *a kind of inward inclination or impulse"* (pp. 316-7).

@@@3 It may be as well to add that the sceptical side of Kantianism is mainly confined to the *Critique of Pure Reason,* but this side of Kantian thought has been most widely influential. The remarks made above would not apply to the coherent system of idealism which may be evolved from Kant’s writings and which many would consider alone to deserve the name of Kantianism or Criticism.