Lecture I

Characteristic of nearly all the more typical and influential of the philosophic systems which introduced a new temper into German and eventually into European thought between 1795 and 1830 was a fashion of distinguishing two radically different modes of knowing, a "lower" and a "higher," of which the former was said to constitute the method of science, the latter that of philosophy. This fashion appeared in several somewhat differing forms. But in all its forms it was marked by a depreciation of what was called "the ordinary logic" and also of sense-perception as means of becoming acquainted with "reality"—with the true nature of things; and its representatives all proclaimed that there is in man another cognitive "faculty," a different way of knowing, unrecognized by most earlier modern philosophy, through which he can gain a veritable and certain access to Being as it actually is. To some of the most eminent and influential minds of that period this reputed discovery in epistemology seemed the most important event of their age—far more momentous than
such transient and external episodes as the French Revolution or the rise and fall of the Napoleonic Empire.

There were some earlier eighteenth-century fore­shadowings of this new doctrine—for example, in that queer prophetic figure, Johann Georg Hamann. But it was Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi who gave it its most powerful impetus and provided the most familiar terminology for its principal thesis, in the celebrated antithesis of “the Understanding” and “the Reason.” The distinction between these two so-called “facul­ties,” *Verstand* and *Vernunft*, had, indeed, been made, and much insisted upon, by Kant; but he seemed to Jacobi to have reversed the proper relations of the two. The former term in the Kantian vocabulary repre­sented those relational forms which, in perception and thought, the mind, out of its own resources, imposes—as he believed—upon what would otherwise be an unrelated and meaningless chaos of sensations. The “concepts of the Understanding,” though not derived from sense-experience, had for Kant pertinency or validity only when their application is limited to sense-experience; since they tell us what such experi­ence must be for us, they enable us to discover uni­versal laws to which it can be known in advance that all sensibly experienced phenomena will conform; but this is their sole function. The only legitimate use of
these concepts and laws, in short, is what Kant calls their "immanent" use; our minds, however, tend to give them a "transcendental" application, to suppose that they are sources of information about things-in-themselves, or about the totality of experience, not merely about the manner in which particular concrete bits of subjective experience will always be related one to another. When their application is illegitimately extended, when they are taken as affording answers to the larger questions which our minds inevitably ask, these Ideas mislead us; they take our thought beyond its depth. This was not, in fact, precisely Kant's final position, but Jacobi supposed it to be; and it was to this apparently negative outcome of the Kantian theoretical philosophy that he fundamentally objected. While Kant had, Jacobi wrote in 1801 (in the preface of his essay On the Attempt of the Critical Philosophy to Subject the Reason to the Understanding), nominally represented "the Reason as sitting in the Upper House, the Understanding in the Lower," he had ascribed all real rights of cognition to the latter alone, as "the representative of the faculty of Sensibility, which is the true Sovereign, without whose ratification nothing has validity." "The Kantian theory," Jacobi continued, "has for its aim to warn the Understanding against the Reason as a deceiver, and thus to safeguard it against the
Reason's seductions." To Jacobi, on the other hand, it was the peculiarly limited mode of knowing which Kant called "the Understanding" that was the real enemy of all genuine philosophy, at least so far as it asserted its pretensions at the expense of its rightful overlord, the Reason.

What Jacobi was here expressing in figurative language was the thesis that we have a power, however seldom exercised, not merely to imagine, postulate or believe in, but to know, with the most indubitable kind of knowledge, a realm of realities other than that of sense-experience, and not subject to the categories and laws which hold good of the sensible world. This knowledge is not the result of any process of inference, it is not mediated through general concepts; it is a direct "intuiting" or "perceiving" of "the supersensible," analogous, in its immediacy and indubitability, to physical vision, though differing from it utterly in the nature of that which it discloses. This power, then—for the present only incompletely and vaguely defined—is the "Reason" of which Jacobi proclaimed the supremacy.

In Jacobi, as the originator of this fashion of glorifying something usually called "the Reason" at the expense of "the Understanding," what a later writer has called "the new problem of Romanticism," came to consciousness, that of "rediscovering the source, the
root, of all ideas and all problems, the 'blue flower' of knowledge.\textsuperscript{1} The effect upon the minds of Jacobi's contemporaries was the sort of effect which the same type of doctrine, when it is new or seems new, may always be expected to produce, if promulgated with ardor and with rhetorical impressiveness. The human spirit seemed by this discovery—not simply of a new piece of philosophical argument, but of an unsuspected power of direct insight—to be suddenly released from its accustomed limitations; philosophy seemed new-equipped with wings; and those to whom the revelation came often began to speak in rather strange tongues, as, for example, the young Friedrich Schlegel, in the letters which he wrote to his brother in the early seventeen-nineties on "Jacobi's Ver-nunft."\textsuperscript{2}

The importance of the rôle of Jacobi as the initiator of new tendencies in German philosophy is even yet, as a rule, too little appreciated; as a historic influence he is hardly second to Kant. "It will scarcely be denied," wrote Hegel in 1817, in his estimate of Jacobi's historical significance, "that it has been the joint work of Jacobi and Kant to have put an end to the sort of metaphysics which had up to that time

\textsuperscript{1} F. A. Schmid, \textit{Friedrich Heinrich Jacobi} (1908), p. 300.
\textsuperscript{2} Cf. Walzel's \textit{Friedrich Schlegel's Briefe} (Berlin, 1890), pp. 49, 124, 126, 142.
prevailed—to have put an end not so much to its content as to its methodology of knowledge—and to have established the necessity for a completely altered conception of the logical. Jacobi has thus made a definitive epoch in the history of German philosophy, and, since philosophy outside of Germany has become entirely extinct, in the history of philosophy in general.”

The whole generation of German thinkers whose philosophical ideas began to take form between 1785-95 were powerfully affected by Jacobi’s writings. Fichte, for example, in 1794 sent Jacobi, whom he had never met, advance sheets of his *Grundlagen der Wissenschafṭslehre*, and declared: “If there is any thinker in Germany with whom I should especially wish and hope to be in agreement, it is yourself.” The older philosopher seemed to the younger “the noblest figure of pure humanity which our age can show.” In 1795 Fichte wrote: “I have this summer been reading your writings again and again and yet again, and I am astonished, especially in *Allwill*, by

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3 From Hegel’s review of the third volume of Jacobi’s *Werke*, in Hegel’s *Werke* (1835), XVII, 30. Some of Hegel’s earlier comments on Jacobi, written in a more controversial temper, were less appreciative.

the striking similarity of our philosophical views. The public will hardly believe that this similarity exists; possibly you yourself will not do so.” The similarity, in truth, fell considerably short of identity, and Jacobi was destined before his death to engage in vigorous and in some cases embittered, controversies with most of the younger leaders in the new speculative movement— with Fichte himself, with Schelling, Friedrich Schlegel, and Hegel. As often happens with initiators of revolutions, the forces which he had put into action soon passed beyond his control; the ideas which he had planted in younger men’s minds developed into forms upon which he was able to look with small satisfaction. It remains none the less true that certain of the most pregnant of the new conceptions had been first cultivated by him; and that, in particular, the characteristic peculiarities of the new intuitionist theory of knowledge owed more to his teaching than to Kant’s.

Nevertheless, Kant had a share in the responsibility; he was the other grandfather of the theory. Grandfathers of the same child are not necessarily fond of one another; and in this case, each at times expressed his opinion of the other’s philosophic character with considerable candor. To Kant, Jacobi’s assertion of a possible direct perception of ultimate truth, not gained through arduous and sustained efforts of the
laboring intellect, seemed the very negation of philosophy. He therefore viewed the growing influence of Jacobi upon the younger generation with alarm, and was finally moved to combat it. The immediate occasion of his onslaught was a disquisition on the method of philosophy and the sources of metaphysical knowledge appended to an edition of the Platonic Epistles by J. G. Schlosser, the brother-in-law of Goethe and a friend and ardent admirer of Jacobi.

The attack took the form of an article in the Berliner Monatsschrift of May, 1796, entitled "On a Certain Genteel Tone which has of late appeared in Philosophy" (Von einem neuerdings erhobenen vornehmen Ton in der Philosophie). The article, if it contains less connected philosophical argument than is usual in Kant’s writings, has a vivacity and humor which is rare in them; it is the liveliest thing he ever wrote. He evidently felt that the new fashion in epistemology neither deserved nor was likely to be affected by any serious and elaborate refutation, and he therefore relied chiefly upon the weapon of irony. Why "the philosophy of intuition" was described by him, in the title of the essay, as an attempt to introduce a more “genteel tone” into philosophy, is apparent from the following:

It is a consequence not only of the natural laziness but also of the vanity of men, that those who live
on the income from property which they own—be it small or large—consider themselves more genteel than those who have to work for their living. . . . This tendency of human nature has of late reached such a pitch that a so-called philosophy is now advertised in which, in order to possess all philosophical wisdom, one has no need to work, but has only to listen to and enjoy the oracle that speaks within oneself. It is announced that those who follow this philosophy . . . are able by a single penetrating glance into their own inwards (auf ihr Inneres) to accomplish all that others can achieve by the utmost industry—and, indeed, much more. In the case of sciences which require work on the part of those who study them—such as mathematics, the natural sciences, ancient history, linguistics, and philosophy itself, in so far as it is under the necessity of carrying out a methodical development and systematic combination of concepts—many men, no doubt, have manifested a certain pedantic pride; but it is only the philosopher of intuition who can assume this genteel air, since he alone discovers his own nature, not by the herculean labor of self-knowledge built up patiently from the foundations, but by a sort of self-apotheosis which enables him to soar above all this vulgar task-work. When he speaks, it is upon his own authority; and there is no one who is entitled to call him to account.

In a later passage the reference to Jacobi is still more direct and unmistakable:
The pretension to philosophize under the influence of a higher feeling is best of all adapted to produce this genteel tone. For who will deny that I have the feeling? And if I can make people believe that this feeling is not merely a subjective peculiarity of my own, but can be possessed by everybody, and that consequently it is something objective, a genuine piece of knowledge attained, not by reasoning from concepts, but by an intuition which grasps the object itself—then I enjoy a great advantage over all those who must first justify their statements before they are entitled to regard them as true. . . . So hurrah for the philosophy of feeling, which leads us directly to the reality itself (zur Sache selbst)! Down with ratiocination by means of concepts, which seeks truth only through the round-about way of general notions, and before it gets any content which it can immediately grasp, demands determinate forms under which it may subsume that content! . . . There have hitherto been recognized [continues Kant in a more serious vein] only three degrees in the affirmation of the truth of a proposition: the proposition may be known to be true, it may be probable, or it may be a matter of opinion (meinen). But there is now introduced a new kind of cognition which has nothing in common with logic and involves no process of the Understanding but is a sort of anticipatory sensing (praevision sensitiva) of something that is not an object of sense; which in other words, is a presentiment (Ahnung) of the supersensible.°

° Ahnung was one of Jacobi's names for his "intuition."
The real purpose, Kant declares, of those who preach this doctrine is, "under the name of philosophy, to make an end of philosophy altogether; they are not philosophers but mystery-mongers (Geheimniskrämer)." Doubtless the ultimate end at which they aim is praiseworthy enough; "the veiled goddess before whom they too bow the knee is none other than the moral law within us in its inviolable majesty." And it may perhaps be conceded "that after the moral law has been formulated and vindicated by genuinely philosophical methods, it is permissible to lend additional vividness to the idea of it by those essentially aesthetic and analogical modes of expression which writers of this school are fond of employing." But there is always the danger that these mere fashions of speech will be taken literally and that people will be led thereby to fall "into those enthusiastic and visionary modes of thought (in schwärmerische Visionen) which are the death of all philosophy." The truth is, Kant concludes, that "philosophy is fundamentally prosaic; and to attempt to philosophize poetically is very much as if a merchant should undertake to make up his account-books not in prose but in verse."

In spite of these exchanges of compliments between the two philosophers, their doctrines—or the implications of their doctrines—were less radically different and irreconcilable than both at times supposed. Certainly it was far from exact to say, as Jacobi said,
that Kant had unequivocally ascribed a superior cognitive role to the Understanding. For the first *Kritik* had left that "faculty"—in other words, the notions of space and time, the categories, the laws of sense-experience, including that of causality—it had left these completely discredited, as means of knowing either what "things" are in themselves or what we are in ourselves. The Understanding presents merely a world of appearances, of which the constitutive pattern is the creation of our minds. It is a function that betrays its deficiencies by involving us in hopeless contradictions, or leading us up blind alleys, as soon as we attempt to think through, or to apply comprehensively, the concepts by which it operates. The term "the *Pure* Reason" was only another name for "the Understanding," when the Understanding is taken seriously as an organ of metaphysical knowledge; and the negative result of the *Kritik* was, notoriously, a proof that the "Pure" Reason is not an organ of such knowledge. *If* anything more than the general forms and rules of the interconnection of particular sensible phenomena is to be known, it is not the concepts of the Understanding that can disclose it to us, it is not in the Understanding's world of space and time and causality, and the rest, that it is to be looked for. True, if Kant had stopped here, the conclusion to be drawn would have been that nothing more *is* to
be looked for, that metaphysics is impossible; and Kant might have seemed to be what Mendelssohn called him—der Alleszermalmende. But Kant did not stop here. For his so-called “Practical Reason,” which had the last word in his philosophy, gave forth metaphysical as well as ethical deliverances; and though the former were called “Postulates,” and were sometimes described by him as propositions to be accepted by faith on the ground of their needfulness as a support for morals, to one of them he assigned no such equivocal status; it, he declared, is “a matter of fact” (Thatsache) not a “matter of faith” (Glaubenssache)—a fact of which “the objective reality can be shown through experience.” And what Kant thus in the end proclaimed with complete assurance was the reality of a supersensible realm of being, to which we belong—an “intelligible” or “noumenal” world,

6See Kr. d. Urteilskraft, A,451. The potential objects of knowledge are here divided into three classes: Sachen der Meinung (opinabilia); Thatsachen (scibilia); Glaubenssachen (credibilia). Now, Kant observes, alone among the Vernunftideen, the “Idea of Freedom” is a Thatsache; for this, “as the ‘Idea’ of a special sort of causality, can be demonstrated through the practical laws of the Pure Reason and, in conformity with these, be manifested in actual deeds (in wirklichen Handlungen), and therefore, in experience.” But this freedom is solely a property of the Noumenal Ego; therefore, the existence of this supratemporal Ego, “as causa noumenon,” is not problematical merely, but positively demonstrable.
similar to Plato’s, in so far as its inmates were declared to be wholly alien to time and space and the goings-on of nature, but different from Plato’s in that they consist, not of hypostatized universals—Platonic Ideas—but of eternalized individuals—noumenal Egos, *i.e.*, Selves not in space nor in time nor enmeshed in matter. Perhaps the most important thing to bear in mind about the Kantian doctrine as a historical influence in the period 1790–1830 is that it was—to use the concise German labels—a *Zweiweltenlehre* and even a *Zweiwahrheitenlehre*. Philosophy, Kant also in the end held, reveals with certainty another *kind* of world, unknown to sense and to science, discoverable by a different method, more direct than any labored concatenation of “concepts of the theoretical Understanding.” It was chiefly by virtue of this strain in it that the Critical Philosophy could, in despite of its author, co-operate with the influence of Jacobi in the production of that complex of ideas which we are to examine; and it was this aspect of

\[7\] Jacobi later recognized and emphasized this affinity between Kant’s doctrine and his own: Speaking of “a higher faculty, which gives knowledge of the True in and above phenomena, in a manner incomprehensible to the senses and the Understanding,” Jacobi observes: “It is upon such a higher faculty that the Kantian philosophy also is really based” (Introduction to the 1815 edition of *David Hume über den Glauben*).
it above all that won for "Transcendentalism" the enthusiastic acceptance of those who were to give new impulsions to British and American thought—Coleridge, Carlyle, Emerson. About much of Kant's system—about the greater part (and the difficult part) of the *Critique of Pure Reason*—they knew and cared little, I fear; they were all of them somewhat "gentle," in the sense in which Kant had used the word; they did not like to work very hard for their philosophical convictions, though they happily believed this to be unnecessary because the hard work was supposed to have already been done once for all by Kant. And the Kant whose teaching they accepted as conclusive was not the author of the satire on Jacobi's "philosophy of intuition"; it was a Kant whose chief reputed discovery, though reached by a different road, was almost identical with Jacobi's. "The grand characteristic of Kant's philosophy," wrote Carlyle in the *Edinburgh Review* in 1827, is the "distinction . . . between Understanding and Reason," and what he supposed this to imply is made evident in the highly rhetorical passage that follows:

The Kantists . . . [said Carlyle] believe that both Understanding and Reason are organs, or rather, we should say, modes of operation, by which the mind discovers truth; but they think that their manner of proceeding is essentially different; that their
provinces are separate and distinguishable, nay, that it is of the first importance to separate and distinguish them. Reason, the Kantists say, is of a higher nature than the Understanding; it works by more subtle methods, on higher objects, and requires a far finer culture for its development, indeed, in many men it is never developed at all; but its results are no less certain, nay, they are much more so; for Reason discerns Truth itself, the absolutely and primitively True; while Understanding discerns only relations, and cannot decide without an if. . . . Not by logic and argument does it [Reason] work; yet surely and clearly may it be taught to work; and its domain lies in that higher region whither logic and argument cannot reach; in that holier region where Poetry and Virtue and Divinity abide, in whose presence Understanding wavers and recoils, dazzled into utter darkness by that "sea of light," at once the fountain and the termination of true knowledge.  

The temper and rhetorical tone here are Jacobian (and Schellingian) and not Kantian, and so, in part, are the ideas—so far as there can be said to be ideas. What Carlyle said "the Kantists say" was precisely what Jacobi had once said that Kant himself denied. Nevertheless, there was, as we have seen, an element

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8 The State of German Literature, pp. 348-49. See also Carlyle's passage on the subject in his essay on Novalis, 1829, where he himself intimates that his exposition of the distinction is possibly more Jacobian than Kantian.
in Kant's own doctrine which was not altogether incongruous with this attempt of Carlyle's to elucidate the great distinction to the British mind.

Coleridge, it will be remembered, made his theological apologetic in *Aids to Reflection* turn almost entirely upon a proof that man possesses the faculty of Reason and that it "differs in kind" from the Understanding. He tells his readers that "the main chance of their reflecting on religious subjects aright, and of their attaining to the contemplation of spiritual truths at all, depends on their insight into the nature of this disparity" between Understanding and Reason, and "on their conviction of its existence." For Reason alone "is the Source and Substance of Truths above Sense and having their evidence in themselves," and thus our only means of access to the supersensible world with which religion is concerned.⁹

Emerson, too, felt the need of translating some of the familiar antitheses of the Christian dualism into the new and, as he conceived, more "scientific" terminology. He wrote in his *Journal* in 1833: "Jesus Christ was a minister of Pure Reason. The beatitudes of the Sermon on the Mount are all utterances of the mind contemning the phenomenal world. . . . The

⁹*Aids to Reflection*: "Aphorisms on Spiritual Religion," VIII. Coleridge's conception of the distinction has peculiarities of its own which will be noted in a subsequent lecture.
Understanding can make nothing of it. 'Tis all nonsense. The Reason affirms its absolute verity. Various terms are employed to indicate the counteraction of the Reason and the Understanding, with more or less precision, according to the cultivation of the speaker. A clear perception of it is the key to all theology, and a theory of human life. When Novalis says 'It is the instinct of the Understanding to counteract the Reason,' he only translates into a scientific formula the sentence of St. Paul, 'The carnal mind is enmity against God.' "

A year later Emerson writes at length on the subject to his brother Edward:

Philosophy affirms that the outward world is only phenomenal & the whole concern of dinners of tailors of gigs of balls whereof men make such account is a quite relative and temporary one—an intricate dream—the exhalation of the present state of the Soul—wherein the Understanding works incessantly as if it were real but the eternal Reason when now & then he is allowed to speak declares it is an accident a smoke nowise related to his permanent attributes. Now that I have used the words, let me ask do you draw the distinction of Milton Coleridge & the Germans between Reason &

Understanding. I think it a philosophy itself & like all truth very practical. So now lay aside the letter & take up the following dissertation on Sunday.

The “dissertation” runs thus:

Reason is the highest faculty of the soul—what we mean often by the soul itself; it never reasons, never proves, it simply perceives; it is vision. The Understanding toils all the time, compares, contrives, adds, argues, near-sighted but strong-sighted, dwelling in the present the expedient the customary. Beasts have some Understanding but no Reason. Reason is potentially perfect in every man—Understanding in very different degrees of strength. The thoughts of youth, & “first thoughts,” are the revelations of Reason, the love of the beautiful & of Goodness as the highest beauty the belief in the absolute & universal superiority of the Right & the True. But Understanding that wrinkled calculator the steward of our house to whom is committed the support of our animal life contradicts evermore the affirmations of Reason & points at Custom & Interest & persuades one man that the declarations of Reason are false and another that they are at least impracticable. . . . The manifold applications of the distinction to Literature to the Church to Life will show how good a key it is. So hallelujah to Reason for evermore.\(^{11}\)

But the terminology by which Jacobi, and sometimes Kant, had expressed the contrast between the

two modes of knowledge—and which, through its use by Carlyle and Coleridge, has become the most familiar one in English—was not that most commonly employed by the German philosophers who shared Jacobi's conviction of the superiority of the Reason to the Understanding as the origin of philosophical knowledge. The word "Reason" alone did not sufficiently indicate the nature of that superior kind of apprehension to which the Understanding is unable to rise. In common usage the two terms have almost the same meaning; and "Reason" does not naturally suggest the peculiarity of the true philosophical insight—the peculiarity upon which Jacobi himself had insisted; namely, its directness or immediacy. For the antithetic to "Understanding," therefore, Fichte and Schelling adopted the term "intellectual intuition" (intellektuelle Anschauung) (or, if you prefer that translation, "intellectual perception"), or sometimes "intuition of Reason."12 The term has a long prior

12 Cf. Schelling's Philosophische Briefe über Dogmatismus und Kritizismus (1795). The term Vernunft-Anschauung was later adopted by Jacobi also (Werke, II, 59–60): "This, above all else, is to be firmly held: that as there is a sensuous intuition, so there is also a rational intuition, an intuition through the Reason. The two stand as distinctive sources of knowledge over against one another; ... and similarly, both stand in the same relation to the Understanding, and, in so far, also to demonstration. ... We must use the term 'intuition of Reason'
history, but to go into it is not to the present purpose. It too was an expression to which Kant had recently helped to give currency. In several passages he contrasts "sensible intuition," familiar to us in our perceptual experience, with a possible "intellectual intuition" such as natural theology had ascribed to the deity, the Urwesen. The latter mode of perception is distinguished, not only by its assumed freedom from the forms of time and space and the categories of the Understanding, but above all by the assumption that its object is not given to it from without; i.e., the object and the subject in it are not mutually external. But the possibility for us mortals of such a direct quasi-perceptual knowledge Kant had (though inconsistently) denied. Fichte had, however, used the term to express the Ego's immediate consciousness

(Vernunft-Anschauung), because language possesses no other to indicate the manner and mode in which that which is unattainable by the senses is given to the Understanding in overflowing (überschwenglich) feelings alone, and yet as something truly objective, which it has by no means merely invented (erdachte)."

The term as used by Kant was derived from the Neo­
platonic, Patristic, and Scholastic tradition; for a brief indication of the earlier usage, cf. Eisler, Wörterbuch der philo­
sophischen Begriffe, s.v. "Anschauung, intellektuale." The passages in Kant in which the term or idea occurs are De mundo sensibili, II, no. 10; Kr. d. r. V., A, 256; Kr. d. pr. V., A, 178, 247–48; Prolegg., 107, 172.
of its own activity: the immediate consciousness that I am doing something and what I am doing; this is that by which I know something because I am doing it (das unmittelbare Bewusstsein, dass ich handle und was ich handle; sie ist das, wodurch ich etwas weiss, weil ich es tue). Neither the term nor the notion, then, was of Schelling's invention; and there is a measure of justification for the elegantly expressed remark of Liebmann that the intellektuelle Anschauung was simply "raked out of Kant's soiled linen." But it was Schelling who, among his contemporaries, employed the term most copiously, and, on the whole, did most to develop the ideas connected with it, while (though at a later date) he violently repudiated Jacobi's way of expressing the antithesis, on various grounds—among them, that "in all languages until the Kantian confusion of tongues, the term 'Understanding' has always been the name given to the higher faculty." This, however, was largely a matter of taste in nomenclature, and Schelling's vehemence with regard to it was probably due to the fact that, being then engaged in a violent attack upon the older man, he was simply hitting at every feature of Jacobi's philosophy of which he caught sight.

Among the early nineteenth-century followers of Kant, the chief protestant against this terminology was

14 Kant und die Epigonen (1865), p. 94.
Schopenhauer; but it is, in reality, solely against the language of his contemporaries, and not against the essential ideas expressed by it, that he protests. He has the air, indeed, of condemning roundly the entire pretension of Jacobi and Schelling and their disciples to the possession of a higher faculty of "Reason."

The truth is [he declares], they wanted Reason's place and name for a faculty of their own devising, or, to speak more accurately, for a completely fictitious faculty, designed to help them out of the straits in which Kant had left them; a faculty for direct metaphysical knowledge: that is to say, one which transcends all possible experience, is able to grasp the world of things-in-themselves and their relations, and is therefore, before all, a consciousness of God. . . . During the last half-century, however, there has been a considerable divergence of opinion among adepts as to the way in which all these supersensible glories are to be perceived. According to the most audacious [Schelling], Reason has an immediate intuition, or vision, of the Absolute, or even ad libitum of the Infinite and its evolution into the finite. . . . The most modest of these adepts declare that the "Reason" has neither a "vision" nor an "audition" of these glories, but a mere Ahndung, or vague misgiving of them.  

15 Fourfold Root of the Principle of Sufficient Reason, 2d edition, 34 (Eng. tr., Bohn Lib., pp. 131 ff.).
Of these audacities Schopenhauer, when engaged in cudgelling his elder contemporaries, professes himself incapable:

*My* philosophy does not for a moment accept the fable—so cleverly devised by the professors of philosophy, and now become indispensable to them—of a Reason possessing an absolute and immediate knowledge or intuition or “audition,” which they are accustomed to fasten upon their readers at the outset, and thereupon to draw them without difficulty, as by a four-horse team, into that region beyond all possible experience which Kant wholly and forever barred to human knowledge.\(^\text{16}\)

This appearance of contrast between his own epistemological procedure and Schelling’s Schopenhauer gains partly by misrepresenting his rival’s real meaning, chiefly by glossing over, for the occasion, certain of the most fundamental and distinctive of his own philosophical principles. Behind the diversity of phraseology, as our later examination of both systems will readily show, lies a large measure of identity in substance of doctrine.

So much for the immediate antecedents of the general doctrine, the variant terminology in which it was expressed, and some examples of the enthusiastic

utterances about it of those who accepted it as a new philosophic revelation. But from the utterances thus far cited no one can have gained any very clear notion of what the revelation revealed. What it was supposed to reveal, and how, we must attempt to see by a closer and more analytical observation of this historical phenomenon—a resolution of it into the rather numerous, and sometimes mutually incongruous, ideas and philosophic motives which composed it or explained its vogue. The exposition of these will in most cases take its starting point in passages in the early writings of Schelling concerning the “intellectual intuition,” but its purpose is less to summarize the teachings (on this subject) of an individual philosopher than to distinguish (and at the same time to correlate) a number of ideas current in Germany through the two opening decades of the nineteenth century, and in most cases also widely influential and diversely affecting thinkers in other countries and at later periods who were directly or indirectly influenced by these German writers. Schelling was merely the most systematic and most complete elaborator of thoughts which came to him and to his generation largely from the older contemporaries mentioned—and from some still older sources. Some of the ideas which we are to scrutinize were not peculiar to this group but were also shared by numerous other
writers. There is a saying of Goethe's which, though exaggerated, has much truth in it: "that which is in the air, and which the age demands, may spring up in a hundred minds at once, without any borrowing by one from another." The series of interconnected (which does not always mean mutually consistent) ideas which we are to review, was very diffusely in the air as the eighteenth century was ending and the nineteenth beginning.

But it was not of that age alone that this is true. Many of the same ideas appear to have been "demanded" over again almost precisely a century later, initially but by no means solely in France. Henri Bergson performed in his earlier writings, for his generation, approximately the role that some of the German philosophers had performed for theirs; the most characteristic parts of his philosophy closely reproduce most of the typical elements of the theory of knowledge of Schelling and his school. 17 How far the

17 That Bergson's anti-intellectualism has a close kinship with what is commonly called the spirit of Romanticism in philosophy has already been remarked by several writers, e.g. by Professor Frank Thilly in his presidential address before the American Philosophical Association, 1912 (published in the Philosophical Review, 1913, pp. 107-32). But the specifications in justifications of the analogy have not, I believe, hitherto been fully presented, though a number of them have been pointed out by G. Jäger, Das Verhältnis Bergson's zu Schelling (1917); E.
parallelism is due to a direct or indirect influence of the German writers in question upon the thought of the most celebrated and influential of recent French philosophers, it is not especially important to inquire. It is conceivable that the same conceptions again germinated independently in another mind, though it seems more probable that their reappearance was due to the continuous preservation of the seeds of them—especially of certain elements of the Schellingian tradition—in French philosophy of the mid-nineteenth century. However that may be, I think it may be of interest to present the parallelism where it occurs, point by point, in order to make evident the fact that the same theory of knowledge has been one of the factors in the movement of ideas in our own century.

Before proceeding to the connected presentation of the more specific conceptions which make up this theory of knowledge, it is well to guard against a possible misconception of its general implications. It is somewhat misleading to speak of this scheme of ideas without qualification as a species of anti-intellectualism. In some of the uses made of it, especially when it became popularized and was given application in various fields by men of letters and other non-

philosophers, it sometimes did make for obscurantism and for a distrust of scientific methods as such. But though it became the fashion to speak condescendingly, and even contemptuously, of the unfortunate Verstand, which admittedly was the "organ" of scientific inquiry, this was not usually meant to imply that the Understanding is not all very well in its place. It has the respectability which attaches to usefulness; indeed, with respect to it, a theory having some kinship with pragmatism—or with one of the pragmasisms—was a commonplace for the epistemologists who held this view. The operation of the Verstand and the limits of its validity are to be understood solely in the light of its practical utility. It does not make us acquainted with the nature of things or of ourselves, but only with the conditions of effectiveness in the practical and physical business of everyday life; its truth is a purely pragmatic truth. Thus Jacobi writes:

If, by "Reason," we mean man's soul only in so far as it possesses clear concepts—only in so far as it is Understanding—. . . then Reason is merely a piece of property belonging to a man, a tool (Werkzeug) of which he makes use. If, however, we mean by Reason the principle of knowledge as such, then it is the spirit of which the whole living nature of
So Carlyle, in one of his attempts to elucidate the distinction:

The proper province of Understanding is all, strictly speaking, real, practical and material knowledge: mathematics, physics, political economy, the adaptation of means to ends in the whole business of life. In this province, it is the strength and universal implement of the mind; an indispensable servant without which, indeed, existence itself would be impossible. Let it not step beyond this province, however, not usurp the province of Reason, which it is appointed to obey, and cannot rule over without ruin to the whole spiritual man. 19

Schopenhauer caught up and made much of this tool-theory of the intellect. Knowledge was originally destined for the service of the will. The “intellect” exists exclusively for practical ends. It is “by no means designed for deciphering the inner nature of things and of the world.” Yet, of course, Schopenhauer holds that by some other mode of apprehension than “intellect” that nature may be deciphered. Even the biological or Darwinian way of phrasing this doc-

19 Ibid., p. 348. Cf. also the conclusion of the passage from Goethe’s Conversations with Eckermann, cited below.
trine of the exclusively practical rôle of this faculty may be found anticipated in Schopenhauer; for him too the intellect is simply an instrument of adaptation to environment and an aid to survival in the struggle for existence. He quotes with approval a remark of Cuvier's: "The conservation of species depends not less upon the intellectual than the physical qualities of animals," and adds: "This confirms my principle that the intellect, like the claws and teeth, is nothing else than a weapon in the service of the will." The knowing function "far from being absolutely first (as, for example, Fichte teaches) is at bottom tertiary, for it presupposes the [bodily] organism, and the organism presupposes the will." The "progress in the development of the brain, and thus of the intellect," corresponds to the "ascending scale of animal organization," and is, like all the other forward steps of Nature, brought about by the constantly increasing and more complicated needs of the series of organisms —since Nature provides "every animal with the organs which are necessary for its sustenance and the weapons necessary for the conflict that it must wage." Man is of all animals the most highly endowed with intelligence because, on the one hand, his more complex organization makes his wants more numerous,

20 World as Will and Idea (Eng. tr.), II, 166.
21 Ibid., p. 13.
and because, on the other hand, he is one of the most ill-provided among animals in his physical equipment for the struggle with his rivals. In him, however, the development of the intellect has gone so far that he is capable, in philosophy and in art, of “separating willing from knowing,” of employing the intellect for other than practical ends.

This part of Schopenhauer’s doctrine was accurately summarized by his faithful disciple and earliest commentator, Frauenstädt:

Schopenhauer discovered what the intellect is, in its origin and function, and to what class of phenomena it belongs: namely, that it is nothing but a tool, an organ of the will, a means to the preservation of the individual and the species; that, therefore, so far from being anything primary, fundamental, the heart and essence of all things, it, on the contrary, makes its first appearance in Nature only when some being is, through its possession of more developed, complicated and specific needs, compelled to extend the sphere of its existence beyond the limits of its own body. Through this deduction of the intellect, Schopenhauer not only came to the Kantian result, that the intellect is limited to mere phenomena; he also showed the true and ultimate reason why it must be limited to mere phenomena.  

\[22\] *Briefe über die Schopenhauer'sche Philosophie* (Leipzig, 1854), pp. 161–62.
Here is precisely that pragmatic form of idealism which is the true essence—however often forgotten—of Bergson's doctrine, or at least of one phase of his doctrine, about the physical world. That world for him is "phenomenal" in the Kantian sense—namely, that "all that it has that is intelligible is our own work"—but not for the Kantian reason. The "Kantian criticism is definitive in what it denies"; but "in what it affirms" it does not "give us the solution of the problem." The solution is that the intellect produces the \textit{a priori} "form" of space as an instrument for action. "Space is the plan of our possible action on things. It is a view taken by mind. It is an idea that symbolizes the tendency of the human intellect to fabrication." And the "faculty of fabricating artificial objects, in particular, tools for making other tools . . . appears to be the original activity of the intellect."\textsuperscript{23}

A sort of biological pragmatism is, then, what the Germans call a "\textit{moment}" in the theory of knowledge we are considering. But this instrumentalist account of the office and nature of the "intellect" is equivalent to a denial of the fitness of that faculty to serve as the organ of metaphysical insight. For it is a primary assumption of all epistemologists of this group—the grounds for which will become more fully apparent

\textsuperscript{23} \textit{Creative Evolution} (New York, 1911), pp. 157, 205.
in the sequel—that the knowledge which is useful, because concerned with sensible objects and with relations of cause and effect or means and ends, does not yield philosophical truths, since, as Schopenhauer put it, no such knowledge gives us any acquaintance with "the real nature of things." 24 The human mind, writes Bergson, when regarded as working for practical utility, "is the object which psychology, as a natural science, studies"; but "metaphysics is this same mind striving to transcend the conditions of useful action and come back to itself as pure creative energy."

24 World as Will and Idea (Eng. tr.), III, 21.