

THE
PHILOSOPHICAL REVIEW.

THE GENESIS OF THE CRITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

III. PSYCHOLOGICAL.

CRITICAL philosophy then, in Kant's own case at least, is the result of the sceptical or dialectical method. Of course, Kant's philosophical status at the time he began to practise this method seriously was also an essential condition. It was, as we have seen, that of a man drifting moodily and defiantly into the shoals and quicksands of empiricism with eyes turned longingly to the haven of rationalism toward which a strong permanent under-current tended to draw him. Scarcely had he given to the world his most sceptical works than he wrote for his own eye alone: "I still thought I should find the method of enlarging dogmatical knowledge through pure reason."¹ The next development of his thought, whatever it may be, must take up and reconcile these contradictory moments of rationalism and empiricism. But that is quite consistent with the contention that it was brought about by his insight into, and endeavor to overcome, the dialectic of reason. "Reason bases an assertion upon a universally acknowledged principle, and from another principle just as certain she proves by unimpeachable demonstration the opposite of that assertion." This astonishing phenomenon was the moving impulse to Kant's further development. He regarded it as a "decisive experiment which could not fail to bring

¹ *Reflexionen*, no. 3, *op. cit.* II, 4.