

THE
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KANT'S THEORY OF THE A PRIORI FORMS OF
SENSE.

THE problem of the *Critique* is the possibility of *a priori* knowledge. For the solution Kant claims the merit of absolute demonstration from principles *a priori*. This claim, on general considerations, we have shown to be a usurpation which nothing can legitimize. It is a significant corroboration of this criticism that while the entire system, in its organization, constitution, and complexion, is determined by the opposition and correlation of sense and understanding, that distinction itself is nowhere established. We are simply told "that there are two stems of human knowledge, which perhaps may spring from a common root, unknown to us, namely sensibility and understanding."¹ In our consciousness, however they may lie below it, the functions of these two "stems" are perfectly distinct and separate. Like the sexes, the one is characterized by passivity, the other by activity. Receptivity is the function of sense, spontaneity or understanding. By the former, objects are given, by the latter, they are thought. The various kinds of *a priori* knowledge, therefore, are all conditioned by the different forms of relation into which these two factors enter with one another. And the *Critique*, following custom rather than any particular method, begins with the consideration of sensibility. The determination of space

¹ Introduction to *Critique*, III, 52 (13).