

Philosophical Criticism

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The word *criticism* carries a meaning in philosophy which has so little resemblance to the criticism of literature that the latter meaning throws no light on the former. Philosophical criticism is applied to an idea which we have already adopted, but which we remark that we have not deliberately adopted. The mere fact that it has been adopted, as if hastily, that is, without deliberation, though it does not necessarily create a doubt, suggests the idea that perhaps a doubt might arise. The critical attitude consists in reviewing the matter to see in what manner corrections shall be made. This is what one does when one reads over a letter one has written to see whether some unintended meaning is suggested. The criticism is always of a process, the process which led to the acceptance of the ideas. It supposes that this process is subject to the control of the will; for its whole purpose is correction, and one cannot correct what one cannot control.