

47.
Critical
methods.

all recent philosophical thought — the methods of criticism.

And yet, before taking leave of science and entering on a comprehensive appreciation of the workings of the Critical Spirit with which all our thought seems to be permeated, I owe to my readers the attempt to answer one remaining question. If it be true, as the foregoing narrative has abundantly insisted, that through the increasing application of mathematical methods of measuring and calculating, our thought has become truly scientific and our knowledge accurate and useful for describing and predicting phenomena, as also for manifold practical applications, we may be curious to know whether the refined instrument, mathematical thought itself, has been subject to such change and development as has been undergone by the various branches of science to which it has been applied. In fact, we have to ask the question, How has mathematical thought itself fared in the course of the nineteenth century? The concluding chapter of the present volume will try to give a reply to this question.

48.
The instru-
ment of
exact re-
search.