Notes on Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*
Instalment One (of Notes)

Preface

1. Classes of cognitions that do or do not follow “the secure path of science”
   (this seems to mean that there is no need to retrace the path of exposition):
   a. Note: all Kant’s examples of sciences that have passed beyond the need to retrace their paths have since seen the need to retrace their paths—logic (Frege and Russell), math (set theory and non-Euclidean geometry), and physics (relativity and quantum mechanics). These retracings were what Thomas Kuhn has called “paradigm shifts,” in which not only the answers but also the questions and the standards of acceptable investigation have changed.
   b. (In order for there to be reason in a science there must be something in them that is cognized *a priori* (prior to any particular experience).)
   c. Logic: in addition to being secure, also complete.
      i. This is due to logic’s limitations—it deals with nothing but itself and its form.
      ii. Math—an unknown Greek (Thales?) hit upon the method of a priori construction.
      iii. Natural science—posing questions to nature that are *a priori* in form instead of being merely passive recipients of nature’s information.
      iv. Metaphysics—does not yet follow the secure path of science.
   d. To set metaphysics on the secure path of science, we must have it follow the examples of the others and reverse the ordinary assumption—instead of assuming that knowledge must conform to its object, we must assume instead that objects must conform to our knowledge. Thus we may achieve a revolution in metaphysics analogous to what Copernicus achieved in astronomy.
   e. Objects must conform both to our intuitions (sensations) and concepts (thoughts). (This means that the understanding has an innate structure, to which objects must conform in order to be experienced.)
   f. Pure objects (objects not given in experience) can also be thought in terms of the necessary conceptual and intuitive laws of our understanding, but cannot be known to exist.
   g. All that we know *a priori* of objects is what our understanding has contributed to them (by its innate structure).
   h. Our rational cognition applies only to appearances, and leaves the thing in itself uncognized, even though actual (since otherwise there would be nothing for there to be appearances of).
   i. Reason seeks the unconditioned (absolute), but it is contradictory. The critique of pure reason undertaken here resolves this contradiction.
j. In the use of speculative (theoretical) reason, we can never pass beyond the bounds of experience.

k. However, this is not true of practical (ethical) reason.

l. I shall prove that
   i. Space and time are only “forms of intuition (sense experience),” and
   ii. there exist no concepts except those applicable to space and time.

m. Example of a contradiction of pure reason: the soul is both determined (because of the mechanism of nature) and free (because of the plainness of the ethical law).

n. Resolution of contradiction: the object must be taken in two different senses, as appearance, and as the thing in itself. As appearance, the soul is determined, in itself it is free (as can only be known through practical reason).

o. I had to annul knowledge to make room for faith.

p. We must deprive metaphysics of its detrimental effects, by obstructing the source of its errors.

q. This affects only the monopoly of the schools, not the interests of the people.

r. Practical reason shows us:
   i. Immortality, because we are not satisfied with the temporal
   ii. Freedom, because we are conscious of a duty that is contrary to inclination
   iii. God, because of the order of nature

s. Critique is not against dogmatic procedure (deductive exposition), but rather dogmatism (the extending of theoretical reason beyond experience).