

we possess such ground in the moral or practical reason.

*Noumenon* considered as the conscious soul, it seems strange that Kant should have denied our right to predicate existence. Does not his whole system pre-suppose our power to judge of Reason as a reality immediately known to us? The ethical side only of Kant's philosophy was made known in England by Coleridge and Carlyle. Its pure and lofty tone had a great influence with the earlier generations of Liberal and Broad Churchmen whose leaders were Kingsley and Frederic Dennison Maurice. As a philosophical system, the Kantian metaphysics have been evolved in various directions by Schilling, Fichte, and Hegel; and by Mansel and Hamilton in England. At present there seems to be in England and America a tendency to return to and re-interpret Kant, with perhaps a leaning to the development of his system known as Absolute Idealism, as against the denial of the knowability of the Absolute, by Herbert Spencer. Of this school, the work on Kant by Professor Watson, of Kingston, lately reviewed in these columns, is an example which deserves, and has already commanded, attention.

To the earnest student of Metaphysics, the position of Kant among the supreme thinkers of Europe will always furnish a reason for at least attempting to form some idea of his system as set forth, not by commentators, but by himself. The translation in Bohn's library gives some help in the notes, but it may be safely maintained to be impossible for any student to understand the text unaided by an expert or by ample notes. The difficulty of understanding Kant is no doubt in part due to the inherent difficulty of the subject. But all recent commentators seem agreed that it is still more owing to the strange terminology which Kant borrowed from Wolf and his predecessors, who derived it from the scholastic writers of the Middle Ages. And to this terminology Kant assigned new meanings of his own, which was gradually adopted during the twenty years in which this Sphinx of Metaphysics meditated over the riddles given to the world in 1781. Again, it is fully admitted that Kant himself got at times confused and involved. Also, the German language of a century ago

was in a chaotic state as regards clearness of style, which put Kant at a great disadvantage. He was at times a forcible, clear, and even eloquent writer; witness his account alluded to above, of the origin of his 'Critique of Pure Reason'; also his marvellous anticipation of modern evolution in his 'Theory of the Heavenly Bodies, which, by the way, has been erroneously ascribed to Laplace. But the 'Critique' needs not so much to be commented on by commentators who have generally pet theories of their own, as to be re-written before it can be understood by the English reader. With the exception of Locke, modern philosophical writers in our language have enjoyed the advantage of a clear and intelligible style, and this is eminently true of Mill and Spencer, whose speculations, treating as they do of the most recondite questions of Thought, and involving complex detail of illustration, have a terminology that explains itself, and can be readily understood by any educated reader, even if untrained in Metaphysics. Kant's work should be not simply rendered into boldly literal English, but translated in the same spirit of free yet faithful rendering by which the French version of *Dumont* made Jeremy Bentham intelligible.

Kant is pre-eminently a writer whom modern Thought cannot afford to neglect. It is very remarkable to what an extent he anticipated, a century ago, several of the leading ideas of our own age. In his book on 'The Philosophy of the Heavens,' Kant promulgates the theory as to the genesis of the stellar universe, which, fifty years afterwards, was proposed in a modified form by Laplace. In the same work Kant gave the explanation more currently received, of the rings of Saturn. He also distinctly anticipated the Darwinian theory. Mr. Jackson's little book takes too arbitrary a title when it professes to give an account of the 'Philosophy of Kant.' Mr. Jackson only treats of 'Kant's System of Ethics'—the simplest and easiest part of Kant's system. Of the more difficult and more important metaphysical investigations in the Kantian Metaphysics, Mr. Jackson tells us nothing whatever. But on the merely ethical question his *brochure* is well put together, and deserves a good word.