

Monthly and in the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*. Professor Watson belongs to that new school of British Transcendentalists, of which Ferrier of St. Andrews has the merit of having been the early and unappreciated forerunner; which is now working, though with no slavish imitation, in the spirit of Hegel, and which, under that lofty influence, is rapidly extending its power over the higher thought of the empire. Dr. Watson's book represents one aspect of Kant's philosophy, its theoretical aspect, in which it aims at a rational explanation of the world as an object of knowledge. But there is another side to all philosophy. For we are related to the world, not merely as *knowers*, but also as *actors*; and we demand of philosophy a rational explanation, not merely of human knowledge, but also of human action. This latter problem forms the subject of the second Canadian contribution to the exposition and criticism of Kant's philosophy. The author, Professor Shurman, was the Gilchrist Scholar of seven or eight years ago; and during the tenure of his scholarship carried on his studies mainly in London. There he received the additional honor of obtaining a Hibbert Travelling Scholarship, which enabled him to continue his studies for two years at the universities of Germany. On his return to his native province of Nova Scotia in 1880, he was appointed to the philosophical professorship in Acadia College; and we are pleased to learn that he has just been transferred to the new chair in Dalhousie College, Halifax, endowed by Mr. George Munro of New York.

The two works under review represent the two sides of philosophical speculation,—the theoretical and the practical. The former grapples with the problem, how the world has come to fashion itself as it does in our knowledge; the latter seeks to explain how we come to react on the world as we do. Both works, moreover, deal with these problems of philosophy from a similar point of view: not only do they both expound the Kantian solution of each problem, but they also both discuss the solution of each problem by that English school of thinkers, which stands in most direct antagonism with the philosophy of Kant. In England, especially when contrasted with Scotland and Germany, the predominant tendency of speculation has been towards *Experientialism*, the system which bases all knowledge on experience, on facts. Unfortunately, however, the *Experientialist* takes an extremely inadequate view of what experience means. He forgets that a fact of experience must be a fact to some conscious being,—an interpretation which some intelligence forms of a phenomenon excited in his consciousness. Now, the *Experientialist* insists upon limiting our knowledge to facts; he proclaims, not for the sake of epigrammatic fun, but in sober earnestness, that

"He knows what's what, and that's as high
As metaphysic wit can fly."

He allows, therefore, no inquiry which goes beyond the actual existence of facts: he excludes all question about the reason of their existence; or, if such a question is admitted, the only reason adduced for any fact is, that similar facts have been observed in other places or at other times. That is to say, he falls back, in the last resort, on the dogma of the Uniformity of Nature; and this unexplained dogma is assumed as the inexplicable starting-point of all our knowledge.

Now, to Kant this is an unphilosophical, because uncritical, attitude of mind. For him it is not enough that a dogma, like Fate or Chance or the Uniformity of Nature, happens to exist among our thoughts, or that a fact takes the particular form which it happens to have in our minds. He insists upon knowing what right any idea has to determine our thoughts about things, why a fact presents itself in the particular form it assumes.

The endeavor to solve this problem may be said to form the inherent aspiration of the human intellect at all times; but it describes, with special appropriateness, the form which the higher aspirations of men assumed at the time precisely when Kant's Critique of Pure Reason appeared. It appeared, as we have seen, a hundred years ago, and therefore at a time when the eighteenth century was nearing the close of its task. At all times men are apt to outgrow the forms of thought and the customs of life, which have been fashioned by an earlier age; but few generations of men have ever so completely outgrown their mental and social clothing as the Europe of last century, while fewer still have ever so unceremoniously cast aside their worn-out garments. There arose an universal, uncontrollable yearning to get back to Nature after her artificial trappings had been removed,

—a yearning which, in phrases rendered familiar by Kant, might be described as seeking to get beyond mere *subjective* forms to *objective* facts, to realities.

The profoundest historians of last century have taught us to read the evidences of this universal aspiration in all the great movements of the age. In the revolutions of social usage, of moral and spiritual life, of literature, of educational theory, of theological speculation, of science in general, we may trace an endeavor to get beyond traditional forms of thought and conduct to what is purely natural, purely rational. It was of course in the political science and the political movements of the time, that the most startling evidences of the universal revolution were seen. Here, as in educational theory, Rousseau became the exponent of the spirit of the age. Under his lead political science became a speculation on the natural condition of society, political action directed itself to the realization of that condition. The French Revolution, in which this tendency culminated, was but a practical application of the doctrines of Rousseau; it was an effort to introduce a natural social condition,—an effort unfortunately, not only inspired, but guided, by the frantic despair of millions of men who had been suffering unendurable misery from the artificial inequalities of human life.

Such were the general strivings amid which the Critique of Pure Reason wrought itself into shape in its author's mind. It is a philosophical interpretation of these strivings,—a speculative exposition of their aim. For they are all endeavors to find out what is true and real, not to this or that man, not to this or that nation, not to this or that time, but to all men, and, for that matter, to all beings endowed with reason. Now, that is, in its essential meaning, the drift of Kant's Critique. It is a critical investigation of pure reason. It is an inquiry into what is true for all reasonable beings,—true for them because they are reasonable,—true, therefore, for reason purely as reason. That this inquiry was exhausted by Kant, his most ardent admirers need not, and do not, maintain; but they hold that he has opened a new insight into the essential drift of philosophical speculation,—into the ultimate aim of all scientific effort. For all science proceeds on the assumption, that the universe is an intelligible, a reasonable, system. The processes of science are, therefore, simply the processes of reason finding itself in the world. That language is in fact not too sacred for the subject, which describes all scientific labor as an aspiration of man's finite reason seeking communion in Nature with the infinite reason of its Maker.

THE PROBLEM OF PHILOSOPHY.

The Problem of Philosophy at the present time: An introductory address delivered to the Philosophical Society of the University of Edinburgh. By Edward Caird, LL.D., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Glasgow. Glasgow: James Maclehose & Sons, 1881. New York: Macmillan & Co., 1882.

It is now a truism to assert that the present is an age of criticism and transition, marked by the passing away of one, and the coming of a new and higher order: "old things are passing away; all things are becoming new." The Mediaeval order of society—its feudalism and ecclesiasticism—which between them divided the control of man's whole life, is slowly dissolving. The principle of individual freedom—political, intellectual, religious—implicit in the critical movement of the 16th century, has since become explicit; it has been realized in outward form in church and state, and has made imperative the task of rebuilding the new and higher order of the coming time. Intellectual freedom, and the corresponding impetus to activity in every branch of inquiry; the rapid strides made by physical science, and the adoption of the scientific method, have revolutionized thought. The period of the intuitions of childhood has passed; that of reflection has come, when ideas and systems implicitly received, must be re-thought, and the hidden logic by which they were arrived at, brought to light; when their temporary and accidental elements must be discarded, and their eternal elements remoulded in a higher form. Men cannot live on negotiations