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BOOK NOTICES.

Text-Book to Kant. The Critique of Pure Reason: *Æsthetic, Categories, Schematism.* Translation, reproduction, commentary, index. With biographical sketch. By James Hutchison Stirling, LL. D., Foreign Member of the Philosophical Society of Berlin. Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, Tweeddale Court. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. 1881.

This work is called a text-book to Kant because it exhibits what is peculiarly constitutive of Kant's doctrines with the fullest details, and in a threefold form. It contains a translation, a commentary, and a reproduction. Of the 548 pages octavo which the body of the work contains, the reproduction occupies 111; the translation, 226 pages; the commentary, 100 pages. A biographical sketch occupies 14 pages in smaller type. Dr. Stirling's great power of biographical characterization reappears in this sketch, and, short as it is, it pictures for us all the essential traits of the man. The publication of this work, most of which was written long since by its author, is a contribution to the centennial anniversary of the appearance in Germany of the great "*Kritik der reinen Vernunft.*" It forms, unquestionably, the most important contribution to the exposition of Kant's theoretical doctrines that has appeared during the hundred years. The fact of the renewed study of Kant's works—"The Return to Kant," as it is called—gives it additional importance at the present time. In American colleges and universities the study of Kant continues to grow upon the attention of the ethical and philosophical faculties, and it is American students especially that are to be congratulated upon the appearance of the long-needed text-book on this difficult subject. It is more and more, every year, coming to be the practice with instructors in mental and moral philosophy to rally and concentrate the best forces of their students upon the mastery of the thoughts of Kant. It is becoming the conviction that philosophy is not to be learned by memorizing names and dates, anecdotes and *bon mots*, with abstract dogmatical summaries of doctrines delivered in the style of "views," "opinions," or "curiosities of human thinking," but rather by the mastery on the part of the student of a higher power of reflection, a closer and deeper habit of thinking. Sense-perception is not philosophy; its feeble power can grasp only isolated facts or items. Ordinary reflection is not philosophy; its power of generalization, though amply sufficient for the discovery of scientific truths, and for the details of relations and dependencies that exist between things or phenomena, is not adequate to the grasp of a single principle as the unity of all. For philosophy is distinguished from special sciences and from desultory thinking by its demand for a first principle—an explanation of all phenomena—while other thinking seeks only subordinate or relative unities. Whenever a thinker stops in his act of subordinating or co-ordinating his discovered principle to others, and entertains the thought that this principle is supreme, and the final explanation of all phenomena of mind or matter, he has entered the third stage of knowing, and is properly a philosopher, no matter how absurd or inadequate his first principle may be in fact. His thought concerns the totality—it is a transcendental unity. Whether this first principle be air or water, matter or mind, it is, as a first principle, the source of all things, and therefore an activity; a self-activity because it is the first and ultimate; self-determining, creative, self-revealing in its manifestations or its phenomena because its activity is necessarily the revelation and manifestation of its own power. The law of the finite is that of relativity to something else beyond it.

The law of the infinite or the totality is that of self-relation. It is as easy to name the general conditions of the infinite as of the finite. The correlative of the finite always lies beyond or outside of it; the infinite always contains its correlative within it. The finite presupposes the infinite, while the infinite does not presuppose but posits the finite.

The third stage of thinking implies, logically, as its premise, the principle of self-determination as the highest. But the majority of systems of philosophy do not realize what they imply, and thus are inconsistent.

Besides such philosophical thinkers as set up a first principle that is inadequate because it lacks self-determination, there is a large class who are philosophers, although they deny in a sense the possibility of philosophy. Those who assert that all our knowledge is relative and concerning the relative seem to deny the possibility of the third species of knowing. In fact, however, their assertion relates to the totality of knowledge, and more than this, strange as it may seem, to the totality of things. It looks beyond all unities of generalization, all conditioned principles, and lays down an ultimate principle. The individual transcends his own knowledge, and predicates concerning the knowledge of his race. He looks at the nature of knowing as he finds it within himself, and makes an unconditional affirmation that knowledge is relative. All things known and knowable are relative—that is to say, they are not independent and self-sufficient, but dependent and correlative. The thought of the dependent and correlative is the thought of an existence that forms an element of a totality that includes it with that on which it depends and to which it relates. A thing is relative and dependent just in so far as it exists, not in itself, but in another. It is likewise known to be independent and relative only in so far as its totality is known to transcend it. By this assertion of universal relativity, therefore, relation is posited in the totality. Moreover, by the distinction made between our knowledge and a possibility of an existence of things in themselves beyond our knowledge, the idea of a totality makes its appearance again. Certainly, the subjective, and all that is opposed to it as objective, both the knowable and the unknowable, constitute together a totality. And just as the law of the finite is the law of relativity or dependence, so the law of the totality is self-relativity and independence. In setting up the universal law of relativity there was implied unconsciously the self-relative totality as the ground of relativity, and including it.

Hence all theories of knowledge in general, whether sceptical or otherwise, are philosophical in their nature, and they imply a positive knowledge of the totality and self-conditioned, just as much as do the dogmatic systems of philosophy.

To Kant belongs the immortal honor of having set forth with exhaustiveness the conditions of sceptical philosophizing. The ten old tropes, and their completer statement in the five new ones, as given by the most able of the ancients in this school of thought—Sextus Empiricus—form a fragmentary and unsystematic exposition of the basis of scepticism. The Kantian Critiques do not accomplish everything that can be desired, but they open the true road to insight into philosophic method, and in doing this lay bare the causes and occasions of all scepticism. For scepticism arises only from partial, incomplete insight into method. Method relates to the connection between the first principle and the world of things that proceed from it. It concerns, therefore, the genesis of the world.

Besides the methods inductive and deductive, so called, we may discriminate other forms as subjective and objective methods. The method by which the individual passes from opinion to truth—from immediate certainty to the cognition of universality and necessity—the passage from crude first views of a subject to an exhaustive comprehension of it in its totality—this is subjective method. The method by which an object

develops in time the possibilities of its being—the process by which it realizes its several phases in time—in short, its historic evolution—the exposition of this is the objective method of treating a subject. If development or evolution is from the simple to the complex, it is obvious that the method of development may correspond to the subjective method, which also would appear to begin with what is simple and proceed to the complex. Moreover, the subjective method proceeds from partial, accidental phases of opinion to a knowing of the totality and necessity. Hence the subjective proceeds towards a knowing of universal forms, or logical conditions of existences. It results in the discovery of how we must know the objects of the world.

The Kantian Critique isolates this problem of the subjective method, and investigates it more profoundly than any previous system of philosophy has done. All philosophy previous to Kant was constructed on the foundation of Aristotle—Induction itself being no new system of philosophizing, but rather a process of collecting data from nature for the purpose of classification and explanation much after the manner used by Aristotle in conducting his own investigations. His was essentially an objective method. The ancient sceptics impinged on difficulties of subjective origin, and possible of solution only through an exhaustive investigation of subjective method. After the sceptics, the scholaestics discover the same difficulty, discussing it in the terms of nominalism and realism. Do universals—that is to say, the ideas of genera and species—exist solely in the mind formed for subjective purposes of classification, or do they subsist objectively—are they corporeal or incorporeal—in brief, are universals *ante rem*, *in re*, or *post rem*, one or all of these? Scholasticism, it is said, found its historical occasion in a passage of the “Isagoge” of Porphyry, as translated by Boethius: “*Mox de generibus et speciebus illud quidem sive subsistant sive in solis nudis intellectibus posita sint, sive subsistentia corporalia sint an incorporalia et utrum separata a sensilibus an in sensilibus posita et circa haec consistentia, dicere recusabo.*” (Almost the only logical writings known to the Middle Ages up to the twelfth century were the translations from Aristotle and Porphyry by Boethius.) This question of the objectivity of universals is fundamental in modern philosophy, and it is singular that the Baconian induction takes for granted the doctrine that universals exist in nature, and may be discovered by empirical investigation, while almost all writers on psychology from the same school of philosophizing hold tenaciously that universals are subjective creations.

The very culmination of the difficulty involved in this problem is reached by David Hume's statement of it. Dr. Stirling summarizes the chief points as developed by Hume (Enquiry): 1. Sensation is the source of all elements of knowledge. 2. There is internal as well as external sensation. 3. Sensation externally is not more product of a sense than sensation internally. 4. What to us are the ideas of our thoughts are, in reality, only copies of our sensible impressions. To these we may add: 5. That, for knowledge, we are shut into our own subjective state of affection or impression: “nothing can ever be present to the mind but an image or perception—this house and that tree are nothing but perceptions in the mind.” Impressions of sense, according to Hume, are our more lively perceptions, and all our ideas, including universals as well as recollections of particular sense-impressions, are the less lively perceptions derived from the former by reflecting upon them. With this doctrine we are left entirely without a bridge over which we may pass from subjectivity to objectivity. With this result the scope of philosophy is a narrow one, and a tolerably complete exposition of its positive doctrines may be written in a single chapter. But the negative bearings of this view may require more books than can be counted. For the

philosopher is called upon to explain the genesis of all ideas of species and genera, of all views of the world, or of departments of the world, or of all relations between objects perceived, or, what is more fundamental, explain how the mind erects a world of objects existing in space from the material given to it as feelings or impressions within itself, and existing only in time. To these themes for philosophic treatment may be added the explanation of the history of philosophic systems that shall account for the almost universal prevalence of error in human thinking.

Here it is, with Hume's clear statement of the question, that Kant takes up the enquiry. He finds in every state of consciousness, not alone particular impressions which may be elaborated into universals (but which are not accompanied by universals of equal or superior validity); he finds, on the contrary, both universals and particulars in every state of consciousness, the universals being the forms and logical conditions of the very existence of the particulars, or, rather, the conditions of our perception and thinking of those particulars. The mind, therefore, does not and cannot derive all general ideas from particular ideas. Its own activity must furnish all those general ideas that make experience of particular objects possible. Kant finds Time and Space, for instance, to be necessary as general ideas, in order that any sense-perception may be possible. Without Time and Space experience would remain mere impressions without unity either as objects or as events. He finds, further, the categories of quantity, quality, relation, and mode, and chief of these the category of relation which is called causality, as likewise indispensable to all experience, and, accordingly, as underrivable from experience. The exposition of this doctrine is the immortal service of Kant. There are further conclusions which Kant thinks necessary to draw from his doctrine—one, a negative one, unfolded in his treatise on the antinomies of pure reason, and another, his doctrine of the basis of morality, found in his "Critique of Practical Reason," considered by many to be the best fruit of all his thinking. The validity of his "Critique" of the antinomies is seriously questioned by later philosophy, and is, perhaps, only valuable as a stimulus to speculative enquiry. Dr. Stirling's translation and reproduction omit all consideration of the antinomies, and close with the second book of the first division just before the transition to the transcendental dialectic or discussion of the antinomies, which is found in the chapter on the ground of distinction of all objects in general into phenomena and noumena. In his preface he remarks, touching the part here translated, "It is all that, properly and peculiarly, is *constitutive* either of or *with* Kant (anything else, unless the categorical imperative, being either only negative and regulative, or simply a corollary)."

The reproduction here given amounts to a rewriting of the treatise, giving its essential thread of connection in a style equally remarkable for clearness, brevity, and completeness. The thought is faithfully reproduced, even with Kant's peculiar side reflections and transitions. It should be said, however, that this reproduction is not the entire work of Dr. Stirling, but only extracts from his entire work as it exists in manuscript.

It is in the translation that we discover best the great powers of the translator to perfectly grasp the difficult German of Kant, and express it again with faithful accuracy in pure English. No philosophic writer of our time is master of a style that so well deserves the rubric which Fichte placed at the beginning of one of his minor treatises: "A sun-clear statement to the public at large . . . an attempt to force the reader to an understanding."

This text-book to Kant, therefore, we conceive to be what its title implies—precisely the book needed by the students of philosophy, whether found in colleges and universities, or pursuing their investigations by themselves.

W. T. H.