A critique of Kant

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A CRITIQUE OF KANT

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN
BY
W. S. HOUGH.

AUTHORIZED ENGLISH EDITION.

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FROM THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE

FOR the New Edition of the fifth volume of my History of Modern Philosophy, which comprises Fichte and his forerunners, I have written, as an "Introduction to Post-Kantian Philosophy," a Critique of Kant, which I herewith publish separately. The first four chapters are entirely new; the fifth gives in revised form the substance of the first chapter of the original volume on Fichte.

I formerly thought it right, as well as suited to the plan of my work, to add a short critique of the Kantian philosophy to the history of the development of post-Kantian philosophy, —which in all its branches grows out of a criticism of the former,—and to reserve an exhaustive critique till the close of the whole, when the reader will have become acquainted with all the standpoints which attempt a solution of the Kantian problems, and which have thus exercised an influence upon the Kantian epoch. And I still hold this view, which is in keeping with the historic method. But I also wish my work to serve the needs of the immediate present, and I have thought that a comprehensive and thorough criticism of Kant's doctrines, which should be guided by a correct conception of his whole system, might prove espe-
cially à propos at this time, and contribute something towards correcting the many errors about Kant which are spread abroad in the literature of the day.

On a number of critical questions relating to Kant's chief work, which I was obliged to investigate at the close of the third volume of my History of Modern Philosophy, my views have met with some opposition at the hands of competent critics. For that reason, if for no other, I felt it incumbent upon me again to take up those questions, and to carry out the criticism there begun in the comprehensive manner at which I have aimed in the present work.

KUNO FISCHER.

HEIDELBERG, 1883.
TRANSLATOR'S PREFACE.

PROFESSOR FISCHER'S monumental work on The History of Modern Philosophy* has been until a recent date wholly inaccessible to English readers. I have therefore thought that his Critique of Kant,† which gives the main results of the two volumes on Kant in the "History," together with the Author's criticism of the Kantian doctrines, would be acceptable in English dress, not only as a valuable and suggestive Essay on Kant, but as affording an Introduction to the point of view and method of Professor Fischer's exposition of Modern Philosophy.

The distinguishing feature of the Critique of Kant is its

* K. Fischer: Geschichte der modernen Philosophie, 6 Bde, München. Fr. Bassermann. An English version of the first volume on Descartes and His School has appeared within this year. It is earnestly to be hoped that a work which would render such important service to philosophical culture in England and America, as the translation of Professor Fischer's entire "History," may be carried forward to completion. Meanwhile, the present fragment, translated nearly two years ago, before this larger undertaking was made known, may not be valueless. Certainly it is the hope of the translator that it may stimulate not a few to a study of the larger work.

† K. Fischer: Kritik der kantischen Philosophie, München, Fr. Bassermann, 1883. As Prof. Fischer tells us in his Preface, this work, besides being published separately, also appears as part of the fifth volume of the "History."
comprehension of Kant's whole philosophy. "Exposition of Kant," or "Criticism of Kant," too often means exposition or criticism of the Critique of Pure Reason. Professor Fischer everywhere emphasizes the importance of basing all criticism of Kant upon the whole of his philosophy. "In criticising the Kantian philosophy," he tells us (p. 146), "we should always remember that it by no means issued from the Critique of Pure Reason as a finished system, but that, on the contrary, it continued to develop, and reached results which were not involved in that work, which do not accord with its fundamental principles, and cannot be adjusted to them by any attempt at artificial symmetries," etc. Again, he says (p. 156), "If we now compare the foundation of the Kantian criticism with its completion, or the Critique of Pure Reason with the Critique of Judgment, it clearly appears how the work has progressed and been transformed under the hands of the philosopher. Neither the doctrine of phenomena, nor that of things-in-themselves, has remained the same," etc. We are familiar with the great transition which Kant's philosophic thinking underwent when he turned his back upon the old metaphysics, but it has not always been made sufficiently prominent that his mental attitude underwent important changes, and made important advances, even after entering upon the Critical period. It is the merit of Kuno Fischer to have emphasized and illustrated so forcibly and fully this development in the (Critical) philosophy of Kant; and it is this, if we mistake not, which especially commends his Critique to the attention of philosophical students, and entitles it to be considered
as in some real sense a contribution to the criticism of Kant.

It is also believed that the Critique will be found a valuable General Introduction to the study of Kant. Professor Fischer’s lucid and vigorous style is well-known, and perhaps nowhere are these qualities better displayed than in the concise yet comprehensive statement of this epitome. It is thought that the clear exposition of "Transcendental Idealism," and the masterly discussion of the "Thing-in-itself"—that bugbear of the Kantian Philosophy—will prove especially helpful.

The translation has aimed to be exact, and has sought to retain something of the manner of the original. The notoriously troublesome word Vorstellung has been uniformly rendered "idea," this rendering being, perhaps, on the whole, the most satisfactory. The more nearly equivalent word, "presentation," is coming into general use in psychological discussions, but besides being often unwieldy, its application is too restricted to meet the more general use of Vorstellung in the present work. The verb vorzustellen has generally been rendered "to conceive" or "mentally represent." The verbal noun Vorstellen, as in "Gesetze unseres Vorstellens," has been uniformly rendered "thought." In such connections, this word is used by Professor Fischer as comprehending perception and understanding, i.e., as designating all finite thought, or, all thought conditioned by space and time, and hence, from the Critical point of view, as being co-extensive with theoretical, or scientific, or knowing reason. The reader will please carefully distinguish idea
Translator's Preface.

(Vorstellung) from Idea (Idee), which also frequently occurs. It is thought that no especial apology is needed for the retention of the word **Aufklärung**. In quoting from Kant, Professor Fischer has made use of Hartenstein's first edition (Leipzig, Leop. Voss. 1838).

I am indebted to Dr. W. T. Harris for the kind permission to republish this *Critique* from the *Journal of Speculative Philosophy*, where it first appeared. With the exception of a few unimportant omissions, and a number of verbal changes, it appears here unaltered.

Paris, Aug. 31st, 1887.
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