

*Kant and His Philosophical Revolution.* By Prof. R. M. Wenley. Pp. ix+302. (Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark, 1910.) Price 3s.

In a letter to Stägemann, in 1797, Kant made a seemingly arrogant remark. He said: "I have come with my writings a century too soon; after a hundred years people will begin to understand me rightly, and will then study my books anew, and appreciate them." And indeed the estimate and the prophecy were supported by the most brilliant historian of modern philosophy, and by the writer of the best book on Kant in our tongue—by Kuno Fischer and Edward Caird, namely.

The prophecy no doubt refers to the "Critiques," but Kant's contributions to science are important also. The "Cosmogony"—admirably translated by Hastie—is an astonishing book. It forecasts the conception of evolution, and its scheme is adjustable to all discoveries since made. "Law replaced Lucretian chance, simplicity expelled Cartesian involution, mechanism dispersed the clouds of mysticism raised by Malebranche." Herschel and Laplace were anticipated, and their very errors avoided with marvellous intuition. Where Kant made mistakes, it was inevitable, often owing to lack of mathematical resources, as in his calculation (for the first time) of Saturn's diurnal period.

In metaphysics, Kant's fame is, of course, that of a destroyer. He demolished the various famous "proofs" of God, freedom, and immortality. So far as reason goes, the analysis of the first and most famous "Critique" compels an agnostic attitude, and "man is thrust back powerless in face of his own most characteristic expressions and need." In the later works, they are justified as postulates or necessary hypotheses of the practical reason, giving occasion to Heine's famous sneer.

Prof. Wenley gives an excellent sketch of the condition of Germany in Kant's time, both intellectual and material, and his careful bibliography will be of use to many students. The style is popular and lucid—a difficult thing to manage in an exposition of a writer who uses such terrible terminology as we find in the "Critique of Pure Reason."

*Plant Life in Alpine Switzerland, being an Account in Simple Language of the Natural History of Alpine Plants.* By E. A. Newell Arber. Pp. xxiv+355+xlvi plates. (London: J. Murray, 1910.) Price 7s. 6d. net.

It is exceedingly true, as the author remarks, that a large number of visitors to Switzerland are aroused to great enthusiasm by the masses, brilliant colouring, and variety of the Alpine flowers. Whether their enthusiasm is sufficiently deep to induce biological inquiry and observation in many cases is doubtful, but the author is likely to be quite content if only a small proportion is led to take an intelligent interest in the information which he has set out with evident care and admirable clearness. Also, it may be expected that not a few botanists will be glad to avail themselves of the author's introduction to Schroeter's, Christ's, and Bonnier's studies.

The details are marshalled under genera, while the genera are arranged according to habitat, so that the chapters treat of alpine pastures, meadows, marshes, forests, and the high alpine region. Biological features provide the chief themes, among which may be noted pollination, structural modifications, colour and colour variation discussed in connection with the gentians, fruit of the anemones and Geum and contractile roots of *Veratrum*; cushion, carpet, and rosette plants are dealt with in the chapter devoted to the high alpine, although it is intimated that rosette plants are quite as numerous in lower alpine localities. A very large number of genera are

included; of these, the willows, *Salix reticulata* and *Salix herbacea*, would generally escape notice, while the Papilionatæ and louseworts would attract more attention than they receive here. In the last chapter the author presents an interesting sketch of modern hypotheses regarding the origin of the Swiss alpine flora. A glossary and an introductory account of floral structure are supplied in the appendices; these should render the book intelligible to readers who have had no botanical training, as the author's style is simple and explicit. Finally, a word of commendation should be accorded to the excellent illustrations and the useful diagrams, the latter prepared by Mrs. Arber.

*Index to Desor's Synopsis des Echinides Fossiles.*

By Dr. F. A. Bather, F.R.S. Pp. 46. (London: The Author, at "Fabo," Marryat Road, Wimbledon, 1910.)

By the publication of this index Dr. Bather has supplied a long-felt want and has done a valuable service to all students of living and fossil echinoids. Needless to say, he has carried out his important task with great care and thoroughness. The scheme adopted for the main part of the work is that which is employed by Mr. C. D. Sherborn in his well-known "Index Animalium"; that is to say, the first part of the index contains all generic and trivial names alphabetically arranged, while the second part sets forth the generic names, each one followed by an alphabetical list of all the trivial names which have been associated with it in the "Synopsis." Certain pages of Desor's work appeared in more than one issue and on varying dates, and due regard has been paid to these irregularities by a quotation of actual dates immediately following the page references in question in both parts of the index. Another important feature is the indexing of the plates, on which appeared some names that are not to be found in the text.

Systematic workers have always experienced much difficulty in ascertaining the dates of issue of the various fasciculi of the "Synopsis," and of the re-issue of cancelled and revised pages, and it is therefore a matter for great satisfaction that the author has been able to include in this index a note on the dates of publication, contributed by such a high authority as Mr. Jules Lambert. It so often happens that nomenclatural accuracy is dependent on bibliographical precision that a special value attaches to Mr. Lambert's note and to an exhaustive collation, supplied by Dr. Bather, which immediately follows it.

*Man's Redemption of Man.* By Prof. W. Osler, F.R.S. Pp. 60. (London: Constable and Co., 1910.) Price 1s. net.

An address delivered by Prof. Osler to students of the University of Edinburgh in July last is here presented to a wider public. The message is that of the gospel of science. By observation and thinking, the Greek philosophers grasped great principles and arrived at brilliant generalisations, but not until the secrets of nature were searched out by experiment did the scientific redemption of man begin. The mastery "Of Earth and Water, Air and Fire," is to be obtained by following the experimental method; and through it the conquest of disease and suffering may be confidently anticipated. Unnecessary pain was banished by the introduction of anaesthetics, Listerian surgery has revolutionised the treatment of wounds, while cholera, yellow fever, malarial fevers, and other epidemic diseases have been brought under control. Tuberculosis has yet to be stamped out, and the campaign must be carried on until it is in the same category with typhus fever, typhoid, and smallpox.

The occasion on which Prof. Osler delivered his lay sermon was the Edinburgh meeting of the