

## THE RIDDLE OF THE UNIVERSE

ject of thought on which the modern library contains so many dusty folios that will never again be opened." The importance of the question is also seen in the fact that Kant put it in the same category with the questions of the immortality of the soul and belief in God. He called these three great questions the indispensable "postulates of practical reason," though he had already clearly shown them to have no reality whatever in the light of *pure* reason.

The most remarkable fact in connection with this fierce and confused struggle over the freedom of the will is, perhaps, that it has been theoretically rejected, not only by the greatest critical philosophers, but even by their extreme opponents, and yet it is still affirmed to be self-evident by the majority of people. Some of the first teachers of the Christian Churches—such as St. Augustine and Calvin—rejected the freedom of the will as decisively as the famous leaders of pure materialism, Holbach in the eighteenth and Büchner in the nineteenth century. Christian theologians deny it, because it is irreconcilable with their belief in the omnipotence of God and in predestination. God, omnipotent and omniscient, saw and willed all things from eternity—he must, consequently, have predetermined the conduct of man. If man, with his free will, were to act otherwise than God had ordained, God would not be all-mighty and all-knowing. In the same sense Leibnitz, too, was an unconditional determinist. The monistic scientists of the last century, especially Laplace, defended determinism as a consequence of their mechanical view of life.

The great struggle between the determinist and the indeterminist, between the opponent and the sustainer of the freedom of the will, has ended to-day, after more