

47.
Schleier-
macher's
Religious
Discourses.

to find a way out of it.¹ It is therefore not surprising to see how other courses of thought which bore on the same subject were hailed with interest or with enthusiasm as they presented themselves about the same time, *i.e.*, at the end of the eighteenth century. Among these must be mentioned, as perhaps the most important and fruitful, the appearance of Schleiermacher's 'Religious Discourses' (1799). These discourses were published with a significant sub-title, as addressed to the "educated among the despisers" of religion. It is not my intention to enter now into an adequate consideration of Schleiermacher's views, which will occupy us fully on a future occasion, as they mark probably the most important attempt during a long period to get out of

¹ This perplexity is well brought out by Reinhold in his 'Letters on the Kantian Philosophy,' which appeared in two volumes in 1790 and 1792. They are admirably analysed in Kuno Fischer's work on 'Fichte and his Predecessors,' which forms the fifth volume of his 'History of Modern Philosophy' (see especially p. 54, &c.) Kant started in his first 'Critique' with a purely logical problem which he expressed in the abstract question: How are synthetical judgments *a priori* possible? His answer to this question was partly logical, partly psychological. A strictly scientific examination of the solution he gave belongs, as I stated above (p. 125), to a much later period, when both logic and psychology had been much further developed. Kant's age was hardly prepared to give an exhaustive and satisfactory reply; but the abstract question presented itself to that age in various concrete forms which were intelligible to the reasoning of

a much larger circle of educated persons. Among these, three problems stand out most prominently: 1. How is scientific knowledge possible? 2. How is morality or moral obligation possible? 3. How is religion possible? That scientific knowledge did exist—notably mathematics and natural philosophy—there was no doubt; that a moral code must exist, and that this is closely connected with a higher or spiritual view of things, was not denied,—neither by such destructive sceptics as Voltaire in France, nor hardly even by such radical thinkers as David Hume in England. The more practical forms in which the abstract question of Kant presented itself, the desire to have a philosophy which made it intelligible how science (presupposing a natural order), a supreme law of conduct (presupposing a moral order), and religious belief could exist together and in harmony, appealed at once to the age in which Kant lived.