

mind above all external evidence, has been applied to theology and Biblical criticism, with destructive freedom by such writers as DeWette, Wegscheider, Bauer, and Strauss. They have melted the objective truths of the Bible in the crucible of their philosophy, until nothing remains but transcendental mysticism; and quieted alarm by declaring, that spiritual meaning is not disturbed, by denying the truth of the facts and teachings of Revelation! The effect upon the religious life of Germany has been most disastrous. A cold scepticism, or avowed Pantheism, was largely substituted for the inspiring and consoling truths of the gospel. The influence of this school of speculative theology, has not been unfelt in England and America. The "Broad Church" party of England, and the "Liberal Christians" of America, are its reflectors and expounders. From this source they draw their principal theories, criticisms, and arguments; modified of course to the conditions of society, and the state of opinion in these countries. It is surprising, that at a time when theology in Germany is veiling its light before the revived power of scripture Christianity that men who make strong pretensions to be independent thinkers, should become the venders of these warning speculations. A strong reaction is now in progress in Germany, and the long dominant scepticism of the Ideal Philosophy, has been ably and successfully confronted on its own soil. Such names as Neander, Hengstenberg, Tholuck, Krumacher, and Müller, are names of hope for the future. But, doubtless drawn by some moral sympathy, our Anglo-Saxon Rationalists seem to have studied only the sceptical writers, and to be mostly unaware of the existence of a better class, containing answers to the objections so

prominently set forth, as fresh from the mint of original thought.

A late writer compares the English students of German theology, to King Solomon's merchants—some brought back "gold, silver, and ivory;" and some only "asses and peacocks." Among the assailants of the authority and inspiration of the Bible in America, Theodore Parker has attained a well earned pre-eminence. He possessed many elements of influence and popularity. But however freely we acknowledge and admire his independent courage, and broad human sympathy, his strong vigorous intellect, and extensive, if not profound learning, no impartial critic can deny that he is characterized by illogical dogmatism—hasty generalization—and unfair misrepresentations of the opinions of his opponents. His tenets are marked by strange inconsistency. He tells us that in early childhood, (certainly before he could have examined the subject,) he gave up the common idea of God, and many points in the popular theology; yet seems to think his dicta undisputable, and sneers at those, who after the most sincere and thorough research, have adopted different conclusions. He presumes to determine what God ought to be, and to do, then holds up to contempt a God who can hate any man; yet in some other word, he himself denounces the slaveholder, the intemperate, or the selfish hypocrite, as types of humanity that his soul abhors. He takes for granted that *his* opinions and the universal instructions of mankind are identical. Adopting with other assumptions from M. Comte, a theory of the general progress of the race from the rudest Fetishism, everything in heaven and earth and hell must be shaped to harmonize with his opinions. Miracles are rejected because he is so well acquainted with