

Germany at present no religious influence is so potent, and none promises such universal sway. Strong names like Harnack and Kaftan and Herrmann have given it a steadfast and enthusiastic adherence. The scholarship of such men has been regarded as a proof that this new phase of religious thought must be vastly more than the mere shallow and ephemeral, while their zealous and fascinating advocacy has forced it upon the attention, if not the reception, of thousands of young men who have come under the spell of their teaching. Chair after chair in the German universities has been captured, and the indications are that Ritschlianism shall soon have a preponderating influence in nearly all of these seats of learning. The attentive student of the literature of the day need not be told that already this new theology has made itself felt both in Great Britain and on the continent. Not that it can as yet count many as professed disciples, but that its teachings are more or less marked. The late Edwin Hatch was its Oxford exponent. Dr. Herron of America, who has written extensively on Christian sociology, shows sympathy with it in his views of the person of Christ and the atonement. At least one American periodical gives it hearty advocacy. Review articles and published lectures show a leaning in this direction. And occasionally from the pulpit, and even from the platform of the evangelist, the way of salvation is indicated as submission of the will to God, without any reference to the expiatory sacrifice of Christ. And yet it is doubtful whether this system can ever seriously affect theological thought here or in Britain, for the English mind is too much of the matter-of-fact type, and, in evangelical churches especially, is too strongly wedded to the principle that the Bible is the only rule of faith and practice. In its diluted and hence its more dangerous form, however, it may spread, and the conservators of the truth should be on the alert ready to indicate deviation from the plain teaching of scripture.

## SKETCH OF RITSCHL.

The remarkable man who has given rise to this new theology, Albrecht Ritschl, was born at Berlin on the 25th March, 1822. He was the son of a preacher and counsellor who was afterwards appointed Bishop and General Superintendent of Pomerania. Albrecht was a student of theology from his youth, giving promise at an early period that a noted if not a brilliant future lay before him. The first years of his university life, (1839-41), were spent at Bonn. The next two years found him at Halle where he received his degree as doctor of philosophy. From Halle he passed to Heidelberg, and from Heidelberg to Tübingen. In 1846 he is found again at Bonn, but this time as a teacher, and his theological standpoint is that of Baur. For six years his teaching seems not to have attracted much attention, if a small attendance upon his lectures is any evidence. In 1852 he was appointed Extraordinary, and in 1859 Ordinary Professor. Dissatisfied with the scholasticism and the speculation which had so affected German religious thought, he now began to formulate what he regarded a more promising theology. In 1864 he received an appointment at Göttingen as the successor of Dorner. Here he met with Lotze, whose philosophy he professes to have accepted, and here he elaborated and taught his own theological system till his death in 1889.