

differences between the human and animal forms is therefore the result of the vast researches on this subject. All remains of men found have proved to be distinctively human, without evidences of transition from another form. And all over the face of the earth, back to the last human traces, we find the human family a unit, with essentially the same views and thoughts. "Einheitlich tritt uns das Menschengeschlecht entgegen."

RITSCHL'S THEOLOGY.

Ritschl has published the third edition of his little book on *Instruction in the Christian Religion* (Unterricht in der christlichen Religion). It contains less than 100 pages and is intended chiefly for religious instruction in gymnasia, though many parts of the volume are too obscure for that purpose. For a general view of the author's position the book is of the first importance.

Among the numerous discussions of this theology the book of Prof. W. Herrmann on the *Communion of the Christian with God* (Verkehr des Christen mit Gott) deserves prominence. The author places himself on the stand-point of Ritschl, connects his discussion as closely as possible with the views of Luther, and seeks to show that Ritschl's position harmonizes with Scripture and the Reformation. After various efforts to prove the new tendency doctrinally correct the attempt is here made to show that it meets the practical needs of our religious nature. The volume of 295 pages is divided into three parts, which discuss God's Communion with us; Our Communion with God; and The Thoughts of Faith (Gedanken des Glaubens). This theology has an abhorrence of mysticism as well as of metaphysics; and as the doctrinal discussions of the school aim at the elimination of the metaphysical elements from theology, so this more practical volume opposes pietism and mysticism in devotional exercises. Communion with God is based solely on Jesus Christ. His life is a guarantee of our intimate relation to God. Christ's divinity is frequently mentioned, but it is not accepted in the orthodox sense. The principle of all exclusion of metaphysics forbids the assertion of divine likeness in the nature or essence of Christ. The power of Jesus is in His example. Redemption and peace are obtained through Him on account of what He leads us to believe respecting divine love. Our communion with God is emphasized as one of faith, not of emotion or fancy.

In his *Zeitschrift*, 12 Heft, 1886, Luthardt has a lengthy review of the volume, in which he defends the orthodox Lutheran view and exposes what he claims to be deviations of the Ritschl school from the doctrines of Scripture.

On the subject of Mysticism in Theology a brochure has been published by Max Reischle, in defense of Ritschl's view. Ritschl holds that the pietistic and mystical elements were intro-

duced into the Evangelical Church because the doctrine of justification by faith had lost its efficacy, and formalism and dogmatic petrification had taken its place. He holds that by restoring that doctrine to its proper place, pietism and mysticism lose their significance for Evangelical Christians. The pamphlet points out three characteristic marks of mysticism:

1. That the communion which religion seeks with God can only be obtained by freeing the soul from the world and the Church. This the author declares impossible, since every believer is included in the Church which God embraces in the grace bestowed in Christ; and it is only in connection with the world that the believer has a consciousness of his moral mission and his guilt. We are therefore unable ever to isolate ourselves from the world and the Church in our communion with God.

2. Mysticism pretends that there is an immediate relation of the soul to God and Christ, without regard to the historic mediation. The author objects to this that the word of Scripture is necessary for such communion, and that our whole relation to Christ depends on that word. The communion is consequently mediated.

3. Mysticism holds that the influence of God on man takes place in the inmost depth of the soul, behind the active functions of the spiritual life. The author holds that in its functions the essence of the spirit is active, and that divine grace can only be manifested in the ethical and religious functions. This view is made necessary by the rejection of metaphysics; since according to this rejection nothing can be postulated of the relation of the soul's essence to God, there is nothing left but to place God into relation with the active functions of the soul. The author regards the offers of grace presented to the intellect as at the same time offered to the emotions and the will, so that the entire personality is involved.

RUSSIA.

An official document has recently been published in the Baltic provinces revealing the same intolerant spirit which so frequently of late has manifested itself in the persecution of Evangelical Christians. It consists of a letter from the Governor of Livonia to the Greek Bishop of Riga. Its publication in the various languages of the provinces is intended to serve as a warning to such as violate the laws respecting members of the orthodox (Greek) church. The governor says that a number of peasants baptized according to the orthodox ritual and recorded in the orthodox registers, have been found attending the catechetical lectures of Lutheran ministers, who then inscribed their names in the Lutheran registers. Marriages have also been performed by Lutheran preachers when one of the parties belonged to the Greek Church, when the service had not been first performed by an orthodox priest. It has happened, too, that peasants recorded as ortho-