

The true theologian is no professional. Nor are our halls simply schools for a mental discipline such as an Arts course affords. Theology is of no value except in so far as explaining the Christian life, it makes preachers who can edify the Body of Christ. The true preacher is one who can present to his people living organic truth fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth—an adequate knowledge of the Son of God from whom the whole body builds itself up in love.

Where theology becomes rationalism preaching must die. And rationalism may be orthodox or heterodox. There have been pulpits filled by men whose doctrine has been unimpeachable, but who themselves being rationalists, have been utterly devoid of power. They had not "the secret of Jesus Christ" and in their hearts they knew not God. In proof of this one need only refer to German preaching so full of pious commonplace, so utterly ineffectual in the life of the people. Of course some one replies at once, "O yes the country of Baur and Strauss." But not entirely so by any means, for though some of the followers of these men have strayed into the pulpits, the bulk of the preachers are orthodox Lutherans, but in many cases none the less rationalists. Theology and religion lies so often side by side without any interaction that the one becomes rationalistic the other flabby.

We call men rationalists not because of the verbal content of their creed, but because it is purely a thing of the intellect; whereas the true theologian is a religious man, worshipping Him who is a Spirit in Spirit and in truth. Theology is the expression of faith. A system of theology or a creed may be nothing more, and in itself is nothing more, than a form of words, useful possibly as a badge by which members of outward organizations may recognize one another, but in so far as it is employed merely to denote certain assured results of argument or disputation, those who do so to that extent declare themselves rationalists.

In this lies, I conceive, the immense service that the followers of Ritschl are doing for German theology. It is the fashion at present to launch criticisms at the devoted heads of these men and often to deny them the right to the name theologian. Their method is said to be false, their positions inconsistent, their results untrustworthy. In Germany, they are mercilessly riddled by a Pfeiderer no less than by the orthodox Frank, while in Britain such eminently reliable theologians as Orr and Denney have very few good words to say for them.

One would not think for a moment of looking for their services in their formal philosophical or theological contributions. Their defects are so patent as to need no emphasis. But why are the class-rooms of Harnack, Kaftan and Herrmann filled to overflowing? Simply for this reason that theology is