

## BERNHARDISM IN ENGLAND

any one can see that they are written by men ignorant and tired, who therefore, since writing is their trade, take the line of least resistance when they write and say what it needs no thought to say, and what no violent patriot can call pro-German. The newspapers are very much afraid just now lest any one should accuse them of discouraging recruiting. It is as much as a writer's place is worth to have that charge brought against him, and it is freely brought by those who believe that Englishmen will not fight like Germans, unless they are worked up into a state of German virulence. Therefore, it might be said, one should ignore those things as part of the inevitable folly produced by war and the necessity to write about it when you have nothing to say. But there is more in it than that ; for, as we are all more or less ignorant and often tired, we are all apt to take the line of least resistance both in thought and in action. And Bernhardism is the line of least resistance, like all kinds of Paganism. We need a constant effort, both moral and intellectual, to believe that human nature is not merely human nature, or that, when it is, it is not admirable. There always has been for all men an allurements, not only in the passions themselves, but also in a glorification of them. That is the allurements of Paganism ; and it appeals to us all, like soft turf when we are climbing a mountain. In war, too, we have to make great material efforts, and have therefore the less energy left for spiritual efforts. We are tired and a little