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THE THEOLOGY OF RITSCHL.

Lecture by Rev. John Currie, D.D., Professor of Hebrew and Old Testament Exegetics, delivered at the opening of the College, Nov. 6th, 1895.

GERMANY, it has been said, thinks for the rest of Europe: some would add, and for America too. This is a high claim, and, while we cannot stop to examine its validity, the admission must be made that more than any other country in Christendom Germany affects the trend of biblical scholarship and gives shape to religious thought. And this need occasion no wonder, for through a long series of years the nation has yielded a large per-centage of scholars who, on the principle of the division of labor, have become specialists in every department of theological science, not only mastering in minutest detail the material accumulated by their predecessors, but working in new lines, contemplating truths from new standpoints, and drawing conclusions which while not always correct are notwithstanding stimulating and not unfrequently productive of good. But subsidiary to this main cause, and a necessary outcome of it, are two considerations both of which are important factors in giving our Teutonic friends this high vantage ground. The press, with untiring energy, is spreading abroad thousands upon thousands of volumes of German literature; some in the original and others in the form of translations. These are read with avidity, and while in some cases they only arouse the reader to repel with weapons old or new what he regards as attacks upon the truth, in other cases the material is assimilated, and forming a part of the mental equipment of English scholars finds its way to the public in the goodly volume or the Quarterly Review, or the popular monthly. Then, it is the great ambition of students in the United States as well as in England and Scotland to take a complete or a post-graduate course at Berlin, Leipzig, or some other great German university. Attendance upon such a course is generally recognized as a high certificate of scholarship. When a chair becomes vacant, other things being equal, the candidate who has prosecuted his studies in