

ates the real value of the total productions is evident to all who consider that a single work may outweigh scores of others. In Germany, as in other lands, much of the best thought of the day is found in journalistic literature. On many subjects authors feel themselves better prepared for essays than for the production of systems. In all departments of deeper thought, theology, as well as philosophy, seeks to go back to first principles, in order to secure a firm foundation. As in philosophy, the theory of knowledge receives most prominence, so in theology, Biblical criticism has received special attention. So long as the attention is absorbed by such questions as the origin of the Pentateuch, of the gospels, of the various epistles, and of other books, we cannot expect many elaborate exegetical works, particularly such as include the whole Bible. Posthumous works, as those of Hofmann and Beck, have appeared, but they were the results of labors performed some decades ago; so there were carefully revised editions of older commentaries, and numerous works on the introduction to the sacred Scriptures, but very few of an exegetical character. The fact that so much was done in Biblical criticism made a work which would give the general results of this criticism in a compendious form a desideratum. One who cannot follow all the learned disputes is apt to be confused by the various theories respecting the books about which the controversy has raged most fiercely. To give a commentary on the Scriptures, in the present stage of criticism, is no easy matter, and is possible only by the co-operation of numerous scholars. To the various exegetical works on the Bible, a new one of importance is about to be added. It is to be prepared under the editorship of Prof. Dr. H. Strack, of Berlin, and Prof. Dr. O. Zoeckler, of Greifswald, assisted by an able corps of Biblical scholars. They aim to give the results of modern research, but in a form which excludes details. The work is intended for ministers, theological students, and intelligent laymen, and seeks to unite the scholarly with the practical. The first volume on the New Testament, containing the synoptical gospels, is already published, being prepared by Prof. Dr. Noesgen, of Rostock. A literal translation of the text, divided into paragraphs, is given. Whatever is required for understanding particular words and phrases, is put into footnotes, so that the explanation of the sense is not burdened with lexical, critical, and archaeological matters. In the comments proper an entire paragraph is considered, and so explained as to give a connected view of the whole. In this way the organism of Scripture is better preserved than when the attention is concentrated on details. Circumlocution, numerous references to the views of others, and lengthy reflections, are avoided, and the interpretation is made as direct and brief as possible. The volume before me, a sample of the whole work, has

only 423 pages, though it contains the first three Gospels, with an introduction to each, and the cost is only a dollar and a quarter. There is no doubt that the admirable arrangement will meet a real need of the times. All the scholars engaged are evangelical. The work will include the apocryphal as well as the canonical books. The second volume on the N. T. is in press, and will contain the Gospel of John and the Acts—the former by Prof. Dr. Luthardt, the latter by Prof. Dr. Zoeckler. In the autumn, a volume containing Isaiah and Jeremiah, by Prof. Dr. Orelli, will appear. The whole work is to be completed in twelve volumes in 1888.

In systematic divinity, as in Biblical literature, fundamental questions and preparatory inquiries have largely absorbed the attention of scholars. Thus, in ethics, the leading questions have been those connected with the freedom of the will, the nature and origin of conscience, the highest good, and the relation of morality to religion—questions in which the influence of philosophical on Biblical ethics is seen. Dörner's posthumous work is by far the most important that has appeared for some time. It will soon be accessible to the English reader—a translation being now in press. In dogmatics, much discussion has been occasioned by the tendencies of Ritschl's school. This is not merely the case respecting particular doctrines, but also with regard to the fundamental questions pertaining to the relation of philosophy to theology. In his efforts to exclude metaphysics from theology, Ritschl is regarded by many as endangering all the doctrines regarded as most essential, namely, those respecting the nature of God, the person of Christ, and the essence of the soul. In dogmatics, as in so many other departments, thought is critical rather than productive.

A work not affected by the Ritschl school is now appearing: the *Lectures on Dogmatics*, by Prof. Dr. J. T. Beck, a posthumous work. His most celebrated lectures were on *Christian Ethics*, and were published in three volumes, edited by Lindenmeyer, who also edits the work on dogmatics. Of the latter (*Vorlesungen ueber Christliche Glaubenslehre*), the first *Heft* has just appeared; the whole will comprise two volumes. Beck, in the Introduction, emphasizes the moral element in religion, and pronounces it the foundation of every correct relation to Christianity. Instead of looking outside of Christianity for a philosophical basis, the author searched for it in revelation, and tried to keep this free from the philosophical and other tendencies of the day. More affected by the mystical and theosophical tendencies of Wuertemberg, his home, than by modern philosophical systems, some of his views seem strange to an age of cold reflection, but he has deep views respecting the great truths of the Bible. He looked on current systems as transient, while divine truth is eternal; and so he aims to lead into the doctrines of the latter without the aid