

in the last decade been crowded to the wall by the resistless advances of the Ritschl school.

The old liberal school has lost its principal dogmatician in the death of Professor Lipsius, of Jena. In many respects this school is the modern representative of the spirit and method of Baur and the Tübingen school, as it is largely under the influence of the philosophy of Hegel. The appointment of a Ritschl man—Professor Wendt—as the successor of Lipsius has aroused the bitter opposition of the old liberal guard, and one of their number, Professor Nippold, also of Jena, has recently issued an entire volume against the principles, practice, and personal contingent of this school.

The liberals of the old type have in recent years made not only no progress, but have lost ground. This would be a matter of congratulation if something better had taken their place. However the victors have not been the orthodox or confessional school, but the Ritschl clans, the most aggressive school of theological thought that has appeared in Germany since the days of Schleiermacher, which has managed to place its men in nearly all the Protestant faculties of Germany, and is even credited with the plan of capturing those of Luthardt and Frank. The singular power of these men is attributable to their unique dogmatical position. Standing on the philosophical basis of Kant, the right of metaphysics in Christian theology is denied. This practically amounts to a denial of the objective reality or knowable objects of the fundamentals of Christian faith, such as the pre-existence of Christ, the atonement, and the like. Not what these truths and dogmas in themselves are (*Seinsurtheile*), but what they are worth to us for Christian faith (*Werturtheile*) is for them the contents of theology. By making Christian consciousness and conviction, as aroused through the Scriptures, the basis of Christian certitude, and not the Scriptures and their dogmatic contents as such, this school enables, or claims to enable, men to feel sure of their faith and at the same time hold the most destructive views of the Scriptures and their teachings. Practically and in accordance with its philosophical basis, Ritschlism is a system of morals without a basis of positive biblical teaching. Conservative theologians rightly charge the school with "emptying" the evangelical system by retaining the old technical terms, and at the same time depriving these of their positive contents, thus recognizing in the tenets of the school only a new but dishonest form of that rationalism which will ever reappear in the never-ending struggle between faith and unfaith, between conservative and positive theology and its neological counterpart. At the same time, the Ritschl school claims to be the correct interpreter of the principles of Luther and of the Reformation, at any rate of these before they came under the spell of "scholasticism," i.e., positive confessionalism. Among the many able exponents of this modern type of theological thought are Harnack, Kaftan, Kaltenbusch, Achelis, Herrmann, and