

disciples, and aiming always at "a certain specific fidelity to himself."

The graphic words of Dr. Orr most fitly characterize his writings:—"His works, difficult and cumbrous as they are in style, irresistibly produce upon the reader the same impression of power, originality, and penetrative, if frequently arbitrary, judgment; while the system of thought unfolded in them is characterized by a certain massive unity, massive rather than internally compact or clear, vast and vague like mountains seen through mist."

While energetic strength of character is one factor in Ritschl's phenomenal influence, there is another even greater. He was an epitome of his age. Great currents of thought are never provincial, but are always produced within the lines of the world's movements. Outlying isolated fragments are never possessed of vitality, nor do thinkers who cut themselves off from their fellows live. All works of power require to feel the strong pulse of progress, and to have the warm breath of the living race of their age breathed into them. So it was with Ritschl. He is above all else one of the most characteristic representatives of the time-spirit. Pfleiderer says: "The peculiar significance of the system lies in the fact that it is the theological expression and mirror of the general consciousness of the time, both on its strong and legitimate, and also on its weak and dangerous sides."

In his mental growth, which seems strangely chaotic, until the clue is found, Ritschl passed through nearly all the important schools of thought of his day. Happy in his early life—for his father was a saintly man, an earnest Bishop in the Evangelical Church, and his mother the joyous light of a truly German home—he maintained throughout life the deep religious feeling and strongly ethical bent which became part of his very nature at his pious parents' knees. When his University life began Bonn was chosen as his college, because of the fame of Nitzsch, whose scriptural supernaturalism was in accord with the sympathies of the elder Ritschl. Nitzsch roused the deepest reverence in his pupil, who could never approach