

Notes and Opinions.

IN *Die christliche Welt* of a recent issue, an evangelical paper for the educated of all vocations, Professor Dr. Adolf Harnack, reviewing Ecke's book entitled *Ritschl und seine Schule*, makes two significant utterances which will be of much interest to readers of THE BIBLICAL WORLD who are familiar with the importance of the Ritschlian movement in present religious thought. The one which will most interest biblical scholars refers to the incomparable dignity of Jesus Christ. Hermann, Professor of Theology in Marburg, and also a leading Ritschlian, has said that it is impossible for us to think of Jesus as highly as men once did. But Harnack, after justly praising Ritschl for his theism, his noble witness to the living God who is not interwoven with nature, declares: "There is no category (*Gattungsbegriff*), be it reformer, prophet, founder of religion, etc., under which we dare subsume Jesus Christ." This is a virtual admission of the uniqueness of the Son of Man. "There are manifold revelations, but for us there is only one *Master* and *Lord*," Harnack concludes. These are weighty utterances from a leader, and are deeply significant of the trend of theological thought.

The other remark has to do with the relation between philosophy and theology; and its significance is due to the persistent and powerful effort on the part of the Ritschlians heretofore to disengage theology from philosophy, on the grounds that the amalgamation of the two is the source of religious uncertainty and theological defeat. Beginning with the reserve clause that Ritschl had conquered speculative rationalism within evangelical theology, through a higher measure of historical insight — "driven it from the stage even" — Harnack proceeds as follows: "Speculative rationalism is now in process of transformation. When it has made history its own — in a higher sense than Biedermann has done — when, hearkening and learning, it has appropriated the entire wealth of historical reality and individual peculiarity, it will return — there can be no doubt of this — with seven spirits, and there will be no devil among them, but spirits of power and of light. Then once again will there begin a hot bat-

tle, and if by that time the Ritschlian consideration of things has not broadened, and if it has not shaped more ecumenically its *exclusive standpoint of revelation* [*italics ours*]—the Absolute is not *the Alone* (*das Einzige*), and under the same sun lie various zones—it will have a hard position. For, when we would reflect over history in its great features and tendencies, and desire to build something out of it, then are we all, whether believers in revelation or not, speculative rationalists, and decidedly so whether we be ashamed of it or not. There is no other way for thinkers.

GEORGE B. FOSTER.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO.



THE VISIT OF MARY TO ELIZABETH--ALBERTINELLI