

ence.<sup>1</sup> Expression has been given to this belief in the self-confident and even triumphant teachings of materialism from the time of the French encyclopædists

<sup>1</sup> In the present connection as referring to the problem of the Spirit it may suffice to select out of an enormous literature on the subject a few outstanding pronouncements. Among leading intellects who have exerted great influence upon current philosophical thought, especially in Germany, no one has more emphatically and uncompromisingly rejected the conception of the miraculous than Eduard Zeller. In this regard his 'Polemics with Albrecht Ritschl' are well worth reading. In an anonymous and highly interesting article, contributed in the year 1860 to the 4th volume of Sybel's 'Historische Zeitschrift' (p. 90, *sqq.*), Zeller reviewed the principal distinctive features of the Tübingen historical school of which Ferd. Chr. Baur (1792-1860) was the head and centre. Of these the first was expressed as follows: "Of the two presuppositions of the older supernaturalistic theology; that we possess in the biblical records firstly, plain history, and secondly, a supernatural event not governed by the general laws of historical happening—of these two presuppositions Baur dropped the second, the first he did not dare, in the main, to meddle with. Thus there arose for him the task of showing that it was only necessary to understand rightly the biblical reports in order to find in them, instead of supposed miracles, only natural and fully intelligible events" (reprinted in Zeller's 'Vorträge und Abhandlungen,' vol. i., 2nd ed., p. 297). Incidentally the author refers (p. 302) to Schleiermacher's and Hegel's views on this subject:

"Schleiermacher as critic and exegete took up to the writings of the New Testament mainly a rationalistic position, whilst, indeed, in his *Glaubenslehre* with the fundamental miracle of the ideally perfect Christ he opened the door to all other miracles. . . . Hegel also, to begin with, took up a rationalistic position to positive religion. . . . In the sequel, when the reconciliation of faith and knowledge became the watchword of his philosophy of Religion, he explained that the historical side was immaterial for the believer as it only depended upon the idea contained therein: and thus he expresses himself so vaguely that the most opposite views could appeal to him with equal justice." Further on Zeller gives a very clear definition of his objection to the miraculous: "A miracle is an event which stands in contradiction to the analogy of all other experience, and this is, indeed, the essence and the notion of a miracle" (p. 304). He then goes on to repeat in substance what David Hume had already said in his *Essay on Miracles* a century before.

To these expositions of Zeller Albrecht Ritschl replied in a paper published in the 'Jahrbücher für Deutsche Theologie' (1861) on "the Historical method of investigating early Christianity" (vol. vi. pp. 429-459). This reply, as well as the article of Zeller which provoked it, are important as showing how Ritschl, in following Schleiermacher, approaches the sacred histories from a position which differs completely from that of science or metaphysics. The substance of his argument is that the authors of