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ARTICLE I.—*A Half-Century of the Unitarian Controversy; with particular Reference to its Origin, its Course, and its prominent Subjects among the Congregationalists of Massachusetts.* With an Appendix. By GEORGE E. ELLIS. Boston: Crosby, Nichols & Co. 1857.

THIS book deals with great topics. In form, it is an historic survey of Unitarianism, during the fifty years of its avowed existence, and distinct organic development, in New England. In substance, it is an elaborate and ingenious defence of rationalism, both abstract and concrete—as a principle, and in its actual workings and fruits among Unitarians and other parties in the Congregational connection. The principal chapters in the volume first appeared in a series of articles in the *Christian Examiner*, of which its author was editor. We have no doubt that their republication in this form was demanded by the general conviction of his brethren, that nothing could better subserve their cause. On nearly every page, we see the strategy of the dexterous polemic, familiar with the whole history of the conflict, the present position and attitude of his foes, and striking his keen and polished weapons, with consummate precision, at their tenderest points. He accomplishes much by his calmness, self-possession, and generally courteous and conciliatory style, which he seldom loses, except when he touches Old

Art. IV.—*A Text-Book of Church History.* By Dr. John C. L. Gieseler. Translated from the fourth revised German edition, by Samuel Davidson, LL.D., Professor of Biblical Literature and Ecclesiastical History, in the Lancashire Independent College. A New American Edition, revised and edited by Henry B. Smith, Professor in the Union Theological Seminary, New York. Vol. I. A.D. 1—726. Vol. II. A. D. 726—1305. (Translated by Davidson and the Rev. John Winstanley Hull, M. A.) New York: Harper & Brothers, 1857. 8vo. pp. 576 and 624.

The favourite maxim, that history is philosophy teaching by example, has often been abused by making it the basis of specific prophecies or prognostications, which are usually falsified by the event, as well as by the general fact, that all the great developments of providence are unexpected, and take the most intelligent observers by surprise. For illustrations of this statement, we need go no further than the last hundred years, within which one American and three French Revolutions, the Crimean war and taking of Sebastopol, the rebellion in China, and the mutiny in India, with many intermediate changes of the same and other kinds, have been as startling to the world, as if it had possessed neither faculties nor elements for calculation, though in each successive case, the prophet *ex eventu*, sees exactly how it might have been foretold, and proceeds, with faith unshaken, to foretell the next accordingly. But these empirical attempts and failures cannot destroy the true use of experience and history, as a source of correct judgments, even in relation to the future; just as long practice is an invaluable guide to the physician, though it does not enable him to predict with certainty the issue, even of a single case. Though less exciting and amusing than this soothsaying use of history, it is more safe and instructive, at least sometimes, to look back instead of forward, and observe how often the reality has contradicted what appeared to be the strongest antecedent probabilities. Leaving the reader to attempt this on a large scale for himself, we shall merely call attention to a single instance, more immediately connected with our present purpose.

If anything could have been looked upon as probable, or

almost certain, in the infancy and childhood of the Christian Church, it was that she would pay great and early attention to her own eventful history, and soon bring it to a high state of perfection. For this, both inducements and facilities existed in abundance. While the lawfulness and usefulness of such pursuits were attested, as they still are, by the space allotted to historical matter in the word of God, and in the literature and liberal studies of all cultivated nations, the most perfect models of combined simplicity and art or skill, were furnished by the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin classics. With such examples and authorities, the many gifted and accomplished Christians of the early ages could not possibly be ignorant what history ought to be, and what it might be made to be in proper hands. From these advantages, together with the obvious importance of authentic history to vindicate the truth, and guard it from corruption, it might well have been expected that the ancient Christian literature would be specially distinguished by its masterpieces of historiography.

But so far was this antecedent probability from being verified by the event, that the first three centuries are, in this respect, almost a blank. The histories composed in that long period, so far as we can now ascertain, were very few in number, and those few so little read or valued, that not one of them has been preserved entire. The oldest writer of church history of whom we have any definite authentic knowledge, unless Papias be entitled to this designation, was Hegesippus, a converted Jew of Asia Minor, who, about the middle of the second century, by travelling and otherwise, collected the traditions of the apostolic age, now extant only in the tantalizing shape of fragments, extracts and quotations, in the works of later writers. The same thing may be said, in substance, of the Chronography of Julius Africanus, written about a hundred years later. Nor is it certain what we should have thought of these works, if they had come down to us. There is certainly no evidence that either was a regular historical composition, or anything more than a collection of historical materials, consisting of fragments, anecdotes, and documents. But whatever may have been their form or character, they do not seem to have been so much in demand, as to secure their preservation

by a frequent transcription, which is now the only test of accuracy and popularity in ancient writings. It is, however, a precarious and doubtful one, as we may learn from the lost books of Livy, and the lost plays of Aristophanes and Sophocles, a few examples out of many, clearly proving that the disappearance of an ancient writing may arise from causes wholly independent either of its literary merit, or the public taste.

This remarkable neglect of ecclesiastical history, in the very period when it might have been expected most to flourish, is a riddle or enigma, which admits of no complete solution, the best attempts being only partially successful, and the rest sheer failures. Some have thought it sufficient to refer to the constant persecutions of the age, as the cause of this defect in its productions. But this is not a satisfactory solution, as the same cause did not hinder other kinds of intellectual exertion, the results of which are extant and abundant. It is the less conclusive because some of the most interesting narratives of that age, which have been preserved, owe both their existence and their subject to these very sufferings. Such is the exquisite description of the martyrdom of Polycarp, recorded by his church at Smyrna; such the thrilling story of the contemporary persecution in the south of Gaul, as preserved in an epistle from the churches of Lyons and Vienne. A better explanation, although still not wholly satisfactory, is that historical studies were discouraged, and almost excluded, by the general attention paid to doctrinal controversy, and to philosophical speculation, which, when pushed to an extreme, has always led to the neglect of history. The deficiency of this solution lies in its not explaining why metaphysics or polemics triumphed over history in this case. One circumstance which may, at first sight, seem to favour the opinion that the persecutions were the cause of the neglect in this case, is that the first change for the better took place under Constantine, by whom the church was freed from persecution. But this, if it be more than a fortuitous coincidence, cannot outweigh or neutralize the fact just mentioned, as to other forms of intellectual activity, within the bosom of the persecuted church.

True it is, however, that the date of the oldest church history now extant is just posterior to the age of persecution.

This is the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius, bishop of Cesarea in Palestine, in the early part of the fourth century, the confidential friend and spiritual guide of Constantine. Eusebius, as appears from his own writings, was a man of good mind and extensive reading. His temper and spirit were so mild and liberal, even towards the erring, that he was frequently suspected, either justly or unjustly, of agreement with them. From his private relations and official position, he was familiarly conversant with all the great events and persons of the day. He also derived great advantages as a historian, from his free access to the archives of the empire, as well as to the famous library at Cesarea, founded by his friend Pamphilus, from whom he derives one of his historical surnames.

Besides his *Præparatio* and *Demonstratio Evangelica*, Eusebius wrote a *Chronicle*, or series of annals, and an *Ecclesiastical History*, the first work known to have been formally so called. To this work, his account of the Martyrs of Palestine, and his panegyrical biography of Constantine, may be regarded as appendices or supplements. This history is disfigured by a style at once inflated and jejune, combining the worst faults of classical and oriental diction. It is also rendered less agreeable and useful, by a method, sometimes wholly arbitrary or fortuitous, and sometimes simply chronological, without any attempt at a digested systematic form. This is the more remarkable, as no Christian writer of that age had better opportunities of intimate acquaintance with the highest models of historical composition, sacred and profane. It might almost seem that this old Greek writer, like some modern Germans, thought it necessary, or at least desirable, to make church history as unlike general history as possible.

But with all its faults of style and method, this great work has its undeniable merits, not only relative, arising from its chronological priority, but absolute, arising from intrinsic value. The first of these is the personal testimony of a competent and generally credible witness to the events of his own time. The next, perhaps entitled to the chief place in importance, is the preservation of much older matter, which would otherwise have perished. This consists not only of quotations, extracts, and mere fragments, although often of the highest interest, but in

many cases of entire documents, in their original authentic form. The abundance, not to say profusion, of such matter in the writings of Eusebius, and the inartificial mode of its insertion, though exceedingly injurious to the literary merit of the composition, adds, in the same proportion, to its value as a storehouse of materials, and to the author's claim to his traditional honours as the Father of Church History.

This claim rests not on the contents of his own work alone, but also on the influence of his example in promoting similar attempts by his contemporaries, and especially his followers in the next generation. In one respect these imitators generally differed from their model; namely, in the substitution of polemic zeal and partiality, for the often latitudinarian indifference of their predecessor. Of this class the familiar type and representative is Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, in Cyprus, at the end of the fourth century. To him we owe a large part of our information as to the ancient heresies, but with the drawback of a strong suspicion, that the zeal of the historian sometimes outran his knowledge, and erected sects and systems on the slight foundation of a name, or of a single incident. That this unwholesome practice was not confined to the orthodox or Nicene historians, we may gather from the case of Philostorgius, whose lost work is described by his contemporaries as intended to maintain the Arian cause. Another lost historian of the same age is Sidetes, of Pamphylia, represented as a copious, but confused and unmethodical writer.

The next century produced several continuators of Eusebius, whose history ends with the year 321. Among these the most eminent were two Byzantine lawyers, Socrates and Sozomen, and the eminent bishop, theologian, and interpreter, Theodoret. All of these unfortunately cover nearly the same ground, being little more than a hundred years, so that the chain of historic materials is tripled not in length but thickness. In the beginning of the sixth century, Theodorus of Constantinople wrote a further continuation of Eusebius, which is lost, and an abridgment, which is extant, but of little value. The last important name in this Eusebian succession, as it may be called, is that of Evagrius of Antioch, who brought down the

history until near his own times at the close of the sixth century.

All the works which we have now named were composed in Greek, the Latin church historians of the same age being little more than translators and abridgers. The *Historia Sacra* of the Gallic Presbyter, Sulpicius Severus, sometimes called the Christian Sallust, on account of his comparatively classic style, and the similar work of the Spanish Presbyter, Orosius, are general histories, but contain much religious and ecclesiastical matter. The Italian Presbyter, Rufinus of Aquileia, famous both as the friend and enemy of Jerome, translated and continued the great work of Eusebius. Cassiodorus, a learned senator and statesman under Theodoric, the Gothic king of Italy, by compilation and abridgment formed a manual, which, in conjunction with the one just mentioned, was in use as a text-book through the Middle Ages. During the Middle Ages, there are no professed church historians in Greek, until we reach Nicephorus Callisti, in the thirteenth century; but much ecclesiastical matter is contained in the long series of Byzantine Historians, extending from the close of the fifth to that of the fifteenth century. This absorption of ecclesiastical in civil history is less surprising, as the Greek church was not only united with the state, but peculiarly and constantly involved in politics and court intrigues.

The subjugation of the western Roman Empire (near the end of the fifth century) by the northern barbarians was followed by great intellectual depression and neglect of learning; and even after study and instruction were revived, it was under a scholastic dialectic form, which was scarcely less adverse to historical and classical pursuits than the grosser barbarism which preceded. Under such discouragements all history degenerated into mere collections of materials, in the form of chronicles or annals, with less and less of that methodical and systematic character, which must be added to the mere accumulation of detailed facts, in order to convert them into history, as the science of events, or the rational estimate of what has happened. It is characteristic of the period in question, that its great historians are such as William of Tyre, and Matthew Paris, for the East and West respectively. Let it be observed,

however, that among the most conspicuous exceptions to this general dearth of historical genius in the Middle Ages, are the names of some ecclesiastical historians, to whom we are indebted for important contributions to our knowledge of their national churches. As examples we need only name Beda Venerabilis in England, Gregory of Tours in France, Paulus Diaconus in Italy, and Adam of Bremen in the north of Europe.

But besides the intellectual and literary degradation of church history in the Middle Ages, it was morally debased by the increase of superstition, and especially that form of it called Hagiolatry, or Saint-worship. This unscriptural but popular corruption, in addition to its other worse effects, tended to generate a rivalry between the tutelary saints of different churches, provinces, and nations. To maintain this trivial but exciting competition, their biographies insensibly usurped the place of more important history. Then, under the same vicious and violent excitement, the Lives of the Saints were first embellished, then falsified, and finally invented and forged outright, in order to effect their purpose. Even this, however, did not always prevent their being sanctioned by the highest ecclesiastical authority as *legenda*, or lessons to be read in public or private worship, as approved examples of life and manners. From this abuse the words *legend* and *legendary* have become almost synonymous with *fable* and *fabulous* in modern usage.

The general stream of historical knowledge, as well as the particular current of church history, was at its lowest ebb in the age immediately before the Reformation, and if such coercion had been needed to corroborate the force of circumstances and events, would no doubt have been intentionally kept there, even by the more enlightened rulers of the Church, whose policy and interest it was to represent existing rites and doctrines as identical with those of the apostolic age, an illusion which would instantly have been dispelled by any clear view of the intervening history. The Revival of Letters, which preceded and prepared the way for the Reformation or Revival of Religion, gave the first shock to the prevailing ignorance, while the sceptical criticism of such writers as Laurentius Valla excited a spirit of original inquiry into ancient history as well

as doctrine. This spirit of historical research is related to the Reformation, both as a cause and an effect. It led the way to the correction of abuses, falsely claiming to be primitive in date, and apostolical in origin, and to the restoration of a purer faith and practice. These, in their turn, gave a stronger impulse to this class of studies, and reciprocally aided what had aided them.

All the polemic writings of the great Reformers are historical as far as they demonstrate the corruptions of the Church of Rome to be innovations, and contrast them with the simplicity and purity of ancient times. It is worthy of remark, however, that Luther and Calvin wrote no formal histories, as their associates, Beza and Melancthon, did; a difference possibly fortuitous, but probably arising from the fact, that the importance of Ecclesiastical History, as such, and in its proper form, not merely as an incident or element of polemic theology, but as a direct means of refuting error and establishing the truth, was more and more appreciated as the work advanced.

In perfect harmony with this view of the matter is the well known fact, that the first complete church history, even in conception, though a genuine product of the Reformation, was not projected, or at least not carried even into partial execution, until after Luther's death. The honour of this great design belongs to one of his most zealous disciples, Matthias Flacius, often called Illyricus, from his native country, although educated in the schools of Wittenberg. As represented by himself and others, he appears to have been a man of sturdy intellect and solid learning, an uncompromising enemy of Rome and its corruptions, but less favourably, although not less palpably distinguished by the coarseness of his taste and the violence of his temper.

To this man we owe the new and bold conception of a history of the church upon the largest scale, designed expressly to expose the Romish errors and corruptions in detail, and to trace the progress of the great apostasy from age to age. He had the sagacity to see that such a work could be successful only in proportion to its fulness and exactness, and to the weight of the authorities on which it rested. He also saw with a perspicacity still more surprising, that the execution of his

purpose was beyond the strength and skill of any one man, and could only be accomplished by associated labour. He therefore organized a system of concerted operations, which does credit both to his inventive and administrative talent, and could scarcely have been improved by the busiest and noisiest "convention" in our own day. The work was divided among ten active labourers, (*operarii*,) seven of whom were to collect materials, two to digest them, and the tenth to shape them, or reduce them to a written form, either before or after which it was subjected to the joint and several inspection of five managers, (*gubernatores*,) who controlled and checked the acts, not only of the underlings, but of each other.

The great work, thus sagaciously projected and laboriously executed, came to light in parts or numbers, most of which included each a century. The first was issued from the press of Oporinus, at Basel, in 1559; the last appeared in 1574, after an interval of fifteen years. The proper name or title given to it by its authors was, "Ecclesiastica Historia, integram Ecclesiæ Christianæ ideam complectens." But as its associated writers, at the time of its original appearance, were chiefly resident at Magdeburg, as indicated in the title, ("per aliquot studiosos et pios viros in urbe Magdeburgiæ,") though afterwards separated and reduced in number, it has been generally known by the name of the Magdeburg Centuries, and its authors by that of the Magdeburg Centuriators.

This work, notwithstanding its extent of surface and complexity of form, appears to have obtained a wide and rapid circulation, both among the friends and the opponents of the Reformation. Its appearance acted on the darkness of the age as a sudden blaze of light, in which the rays before emitted singly were concentrated, or, without a figure, the results of various particular discussions were reduced to a complete and regular historical arrangement. At the same time it raised ecclesiastical history to a position which it has ever since retained, especially in Germany; and although it repressed for a time the spirit of original investigation, in a field which seemed to be already exhausted, it eventually gave a new and mighty impulse to such studies, in both divisions of the great Protestant body, exciting Lutherans to continue the good work

among themselves, and stirring up the Calvinists to emulation. Its effect upon the Church of Rome was still more remarkable. After various attempts to counteract its influence in other ways, it there led to the laborious preparation of a work of the same kind, designed expressly to refute it, and to establish by historical evidence the very system which the "Centuries" were meant to overthrow. The person chosen for this sevice was a young Dominican, of great ability and learning, Cæsar Baronius, who was afterwards rewarded for his labours with a cardinal's hat. The "Annales Ecclesiastici" made their first appearance in 1588, and were continued by the same hand until 1607. Besides the opportunity of profiting by the example and experience of his immediate predecessors, Baronius had access to additional materials, especially to those secreted in the archives of the Papal See, and other repositories inaccessible to Protestants. But while this seemed to give him some exclusive advantages, it also tended to excite suspicion as to the fidelity with which he had made use of these materials, so carefully withheld from public view. And this suspicion has prevailed, not only among Protestants, but to some extent within the Church of Rome. The "Annals," although now extremely rare, have been several times reprinted, with and without continuation. These two great works, themselves the fruit of theological discussion in the age of the Reformation, were in turn the parents of a vast and varied literature, belonging to the province of ecclesiastical history. The impulse given to such studies was still felt within as well as without the Roman pale. But though the Annals of Baronius were intended to maintain the strictest form of Popish doctrine, the later historiography of that church was chiefly in the hands of its more liberal theologians, such as Fra Paolo (Sarpi,) the classical and almost Protestant historian of the Council of Trent, to whom Pallavicino bears the same relation as Baronius to the Magdeburg Centuriators. To the same class may be referred a brilliant constellation of historians belonging to the Gallican or Romish Church of France, among whom may be named Morinus, Petavius, Tillemont, Richard Simon, Fleury, and Natalis Alexander, whose history was composed in such a spirit as to be put upon the

index of forbidden books at Rome. The most elegant and eloquent of these Gallican historians was the famous Bossuet, the most popular preacher and successful champion of his church in that age, whose "Discours de l'Histoire Universelle" is not only a French classic of the first rank, but a noble comprehensive view of the whole field of history, from the highest Christian ground, though not without an eye to the exaltation of his own creed and communion.

The Reformed or Calvinistic Churches of the seventeenth century furnished many zealous and successful rivals of the great historians of the previous age; but it was noted, as a curious fact, that their researches tended rather to special than to general church history. Yet, Hottinger, in Switzerland, produced a good work of the latter class, while Spanheim, and the Basnages in Holland, Daillé, Blondell, and Salmasius in France, excelled in cultivating smaller fields. In the same century, the Church of England produced many eminent historical writers, chiefly on special and restricted subjects, among whom may be named, as representatives, Archbishop Usher; Bishops Pearson, Beveridge, and Burnet; Doctors Dodwell, Cave, Bull, and Bingham, who is still one of the highest authorities in the department of Ecclesiastical Antiquities or Christian Archæology.

The tone of church history continued to be controversial or polemic, more especially in Germany, until Calixtus, in the seventeenth century, attempted to introduce a more pacific and dispassionate mode of treating the subject, with a view to the promotion of his favourite scheme of reuniting all communions on the doctrinal and ecclesiastical basis of the early centuries. But the unpopularity of this design impaired his influence, which might otherwise have been a great one, on contemporary historiography. More success attended the efforts of Spener, the first founder of the Pietists, to moderate polemic rancour, and to make experimental piety the essence of church history, as well as of Christianity itself. This movement met with less direct opposition from the orthodox Lutherans, because they were at that time chiefly busied, like the Calvinistic writers of an earlier day, with special subjects, such as the history of the Reformation, as composed by Seckendorf and others. Thus

the antipolemic or irenic spirit was allowed for a time to become prevalent in general church history, until, by being pushed to an extreme, it grew as pugnacious in its opposition to "dead orthodoxy," as the older writers were in opposition to "rank heresy." The chief representative of this extreme reaction, was Godfrey Arnold, in the early part of the last century, who, without professedly departing from the doctrines of his church, became the patron and apologist of heretics in general, alleging that in most of their contentions with the church, they were morally if not theoretically in the right. This singular work, although it gave rise to a long and angry controversy, was deprived of permanent and popular effect, by its paradoxical excess, as well as by its harsh and unattractive style.

Though Arnold, strictly speaking, had no followers, his very extravagances, when contrasted with those of previous writers in the opposite direction, contributed still further to divest church history of its predominant polemic tone, and to promote a more impartial and dispassionate treatment of the subject. This is very apparent in the writings of the best historians, throughout the first half of the eighteenth century, as well among the Lutherans (Buddeus, Fabricius, Weismann) as among the Calvinists (Jablonski, Venema, Alphonso Turrettin, Lenfant, Beausobre, and Le Clerc or Clericus.) The same thing may even be affirmed, though in a less degree, of some Romish writers, (such as Orsi and Mansi.)

The danger now was that the controversial spirit would give place to one of cold indifference as to matters in dispute, even when the writer really adhered to orthodox opinions. This fear is even thought by some to have been realized, in the case of the next distinguished writer, who exerted a commanding influence both on contemporaneous and subsequent historiography. This was John Lawrence Mosheim, who died in 1755, after holding a conspicuous position, during many years, at Helmstadt and Gottingen. Besides a multitude of books and tracts on various subjects, more or less connected with church history, he published two which have never lost their place among the highest secondary or derivative authorities. One of these is his "Commentaries on the state of Christianity before the time of Constantine." The other is his "Institutes of

Ecclesiastical History, Ancient and Modern." Both have been translated into English, and the latter, although now comparatively little used in Germany, has long been a favourite text-book, both in England and America.

The works of Mosheim are distinguished, in addition to the absence of all warmth and passion, by a thorough knowledge of the subject, rare acuteness and sagacity in critical conjecture, and historical combination, great completeness and exactness as to the essential facts of history, extreme formality and clearness of arrangement, and especially by classical elegance of Latin style, in which respect he ranks among the best modern writers. This last attraction is, of course, lost in translation, being wholly wanting both in Maclaine's free and declamatory paraphrase, and in Murdock's accurate but awkward version. The writer last named has materially added to the worth of the original, considered as a storehouse of facts, but not to its beauty as a composition, by his numerous and often overloaded notes, which ought to have been wrought into the text of a new work, instead of being used to patch an old one. The contempt which some among us now affect for Mosheim, is in amusing contrast with the extravagant applause which he received from his most fastidious contemporaries, such as bishop Warburton, who speaks of his plan as the perfection of method, and its execution as exclusively entitled to the name of a church history.

The influence of Mosheim's better taste and temper may be traced in the next generation of historians, among whom, Baumgarten, Cramer, Pfaff, the two Walchs, and some others, have independent merits of their own, upon which we cannot dwell, however, but must hasten to the next important change in historical writing and investigation. This was occasioned by the rise of Neology or Rationalism in the schools of Germany. The reputed author of this movement was John Solomon Semler, Professor of Theology at Halle. Although educated in the strictest forms of Pietism, and never wholly emancipated from its influence, he did more, perhaps, than any other individual to shake the foundations of men's faith in the authority of Scripture, by calling everything in question, and suggesting doubts as to the genuineness and authenticity of almost every book in

the Bible. This sceptical criticism has been carried to much greater lengths by later writers, in reference both to Scripture and church history. Semler himself applied it to the latter, not in regular historical compositions, but in various confused ill written works, and still more through the intermediate agency of pupils and disciples.

The sceptical tendency, thus introduced into church history, had very different effects on different classes. In frivolous and shallow minds it created a contempt for the whole subject, and produced works of a satirical and scoffing tone, such as those of Spittler and Henke. In minds of greater depth and earnestness, even when destitute of strong faith in the truth of Christianity, it led to a laborious reconstruction of church history, by working up the original materials afresh and giving them a new shape, either in general works, such as the gigantic one of Schrœckh, or in special histories, like those of Planck, Stændlin, and others. To the latter class belongs an extensive literature of recent date, beginning near the end of the last century, and flourishing especially during the first quarter of the present. This is one of the good incidental fruits of the new impulse given to historical research by the sceptical or rationalistic movement, which produced a strong taste and demand for *monographs*, or thorough and minute investigations of particular doctrines, periods, or persons, derived directly from original authorities, and wrought up into separate and independent works. Besides the interest imparted to many distinct topics of church history by this detailed and thorough mode of treating them, these monographs were constantly storing up materials for new works of a general and comprehensive character, to fill the chasms or supply the place of those which had appeared before these new researches and accumulations were begun. This application of the fresh resources was not always left to other labourers, the very same persons sometimes taking part in both the processes, that is, distinguishing themselves as writers both of monographs and general church histories.

The most signal instance of this twofold labour and success is that afforded by Neander, whose name and character are now too generally known to need particular description. Of Jewish birth, but Christian education, this great man was a child in

spirit and in secular affairs, but in intellect a man, and in learning a giant. He was for many years an eminent professor at Berlin, where he died in 1850. Though now acknowledged to have no superior as a general writer on church history, he was first distinguished, in his early manhood, as the author of invaluable monographs or special histories, such as have already been described. The principal subjects which he treated upon this plan are, Tertullian, Julian, Chrysostom, and Bernard. Each of these works, besides a full biography of the chosen subjects, including a large share of contemporary history, contains a critical analysis of his most important writings. Near the close of the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the time seemed to be come for the reduction of these new or newly gathered stores to a complete and systematic shape in general church histories. The arrival of this critical juncture in the progress of historical science, may be said to have been indicated by the almost simultaneous commencement of two great works, which have been advancing towards completion ever since, the latest part of both being posthumously published. These two works, thus coeval in their origin and growth, moving in parallel lines for thirty years of slow but solid maturescence, are now unanimously reckoned, by all competent authorities, to be the masterpieces of the age in this department of historiography. That of Neander, which made its first appearance in 1825, had already been preceded, in the year before, by that of Gieseler. This distinguished writer, who for many years adorned the university where Mosheim died a century ago, was favourably known before the publication of his great work, not only as an eminent academical teacher, but also as a learned and sagacious historical critic. One of his ablest compositions in this period was a review of Neander's Tertullian, in which he developed his own theory of Gnosticism.

The two historians thus brought into juxtaposition, not only as contemporaries, but as competitors for the highest prize in one and the same calling, are equally remarkable for points of similarity and points of difference, being as much alike in some things, as they are unlike in others. Germans by birth and education, both had passed through the same process of gymnasial and academic training, which is very nearly uniform

throughout those countries. Both selected the same field for special cultivation, and pursued the same extensive course of private and professional reading. Their official positions and employments were perfectly analogous in the two leading universities of Germany. Besides this similarity of circumstances and of situation, and the singular coincidence of their appearance as professed historians, it is clear from their writings that they used the same materials, both being thoroughly and equally familiar with the oldest authorities, and the newest forms into which the raw material had been wrought afresh. To all this may be added an important likeness of a moral kind, their unimpeached integrity and truthfulness as witnesses, in scrupulously stating only what they knew or honestly believed, without exaggeration or embellishment. Amidst this sameness there are differences, no less striking, both of intellect and temper. Gieseler is distinguished by his calm dispassionate impartiality; Neander by his ardent zeal for truth and goodness. Gieseler's religion is unfortunately negative, though altogether free from antichristian bias; while Neander, although far below our standards of strict orthodoxy, always breathes a spirit of devout faith in the gospel, and of affectionate attachment to the Saviour. The books themselves, i. e. the two church histories, are as unlike as their authors, both in plan and execution. It is indeed a singular phenomenon that two men, born in the same country, trained up in the same schools, or at least under the same system, fed for years upon the same intellectual diet, and aiming at the same mark, should have hit upon methods so dissimilar and almost incommensurable, not in the result or execution merely, but in the original idea. The conception realized in Gieseler's work is that of an exquisite selection from the very words of the original authorities, arranged as notes and strung together by a slender thread of narrative. Neander's is constructed of the same materials, but digested in his own mind, and wrought up into a flowing homogeneous narrative, exhibiting the impress of his mind and character, in almost every page and every sentence. To use a favourite distinction, now no longer technical but popular, the one is as perfectly objective as the other is subjective, in its whole design and structure. It is more than a formal and external difference,

that in one the notes are everything, and in the other nothing. Gieseler disappears, or, to borrow an expressive French phrase, *s'efface*, behind the Fathers and Reformers, whose *ipsissima verba* he exhibits; while across the way, these self-same Fathers and Reformers pass before us, wearing the dress and speaking in the voice of Neander. Gieseler's purpose seems to be to enable every reader to construct the history for himself, while Neander furnishes it ready-made, but by the hand of a master.

It may be naturally owing to one or more of these peculiarities that Gieseler, although universally applauded and implicitly relied upon for facts and for materials, has founded no distinct school, and propagated no peculiar mode of writing history; whereas Neander has had many professed followers, who hold his principles, adopt his plans, and sometimes even imitate his style and manner. Among the most faithful, and yet most independent of these followers, may be mentioned Guericke, who carries out Neander's plan in a more compendious form, but with an almost bigoted attachment to the peculiar doctrines of Luther, and in a style so crabbed and involved, that we should not have hesitated to pronounce it untranslatable, but for the fact that an eminent teacher and accomplished writer of our own country, has achieved what we regarded as a sheer impossibility. We are far from regretting this exploit of Professor Shedd, and all the less, because we are persuaded that he must have made the work his own, so far as form and diction are concerned; and because we are glad to have a book made legible in English, which, in spite of its original uncouthness, has been eminently useful, as a vehicle, not only of the best historical knowledge, but of sincere piety, and sound religious sentiment in reference to all essentials.

Another writer, whom we should with equal confidence, although for a very different reason, have pronounced translation-proof, if he had not been actually Englished, is Hase of Jena, a man of genius and of cultivated taste, and an original and brilliant writer, but unduly partial to the esthetic and artistical relations of his subject, not so much a believer as an admirer of the gospel, and so often obscure from epigrammatic or laconic brevity, and from rather presupposing than detailing facts, that he is not more fit than Guericke himself for elemen-

tary instruction, although otherwise no writers can be more dissimilar and even opposite. Yet both these books have been translated in America; with what success we cannot say from our own knowledge, but from what we hear, by no means with the same ability.

If Hase, although largely indebted to Neander, can be scarcely reckoned a disciple or a representative of his peculiar school, this character belongs, by way of eminence, to Jacobi, less pietistical and orthodox than Guericke, but nearer to Neander in sentiment and spirit, and superior to both in clearness and simplicity of style and method. This advantage, with the fact that his work was first suggested, and afterwards commended to the public, by Neander himself, as the best compendious view of his own system, although far from being a mere abridgment, makes it matter of regret that it has not yet gone beyond a single part, or volume, extending only to the end of the sixth century. As other offshoots from Neander's stock, though very different, in some points, both from him and from each other, may be named Drs. Schaff of Mercersburg, and Lange of Zurich; but neither of these writers has yet brought his work below the apostolic age. In this they have been far outstripped by Kurtz, now Professor at Dorpat, but for many years a gymnasial teacher, which has given him a practical acquaintance with the wants of students, while his thorough knowledge of the Biblical History, on which he is the author of two admirable works, gives him a great advantage over some justly celebrated church historians. His facility and zeal as a maker of books have tempted him to vary their form and multiply their number to excess; but they are all rich in matter, clear in method, lively in style, sound in principle, though vigorously Lutheran in doctrine, and particularly suited both to academical and general use. Though indebted both to Gieseler and Neander for the impulse and direction of his own investigations, he may be considered as belonging, in a wide sense, to the school of the latter.

But the most striking proof of the influence exerted by these two great writers, is the frequent adoption, both of their materials and methods, by the latest Roman Catholic historians. The assimilation, in some instances, extends to liberality of

tone, and abstinence from all polemic violence, displaying no less policy than taste, this forbearance tending to insinuate the author's views still more effectually into the minds of unsuspicious readers. This effect is probably confined to German Papists, and is the more remarkable, because in Italy, and even in France, works of this class exhibit small improvement from the source in question, and retain the bigoted exclusive form, by which they have always been distinguished from the writings of Reformed theologians. Of the German school first mentioned, Alzog's "Universal History of the Church" may be taken as a sample; of the French, L'Homond's "History of the Church," as re-written by the Abbé Postel, for the use of schools and families.

Nor has this influence been unfelt in the British isles, where foreign, and particularly German erudition has been gradually superseding independent and original research, but not so far as to destroy the old English disposition *integros adire fontes.* Church history, of late years, has been chiefly cultivated in the Church of England and her two great universities, or by men instructed there, and almost always with the rare advantage of general culture, classical scholarship, and, if not an elegant, at least an idiomatic English style. Near the end of the last century, Joseph Milner, a clergyman of the evangelical or low-church party, and a man of greater piety and learning than sound judgment, wrote a history of the Church, which was afterwards continued by his brother Isaac, and has had extensive circulation both in England and America. This work makes practical religion or experimental piety the subject of church history, and passes over all that does not bear upon it. The plan is injudicious in itself, and very imperfect in its execution, doing credit to the author's own religious character, and generally edifying to congenial readers; but, as might have been expected, partial and one-sided, and exceedingly defective as a full view of the entire subject. Milman, now the Dean of St. Paul's, London, and previously well known as a poet, a historian of the Jews, and an editor of Gibbon, has also written a "History of Christianity to the abolition of Paganism in the Roman Empire," since continued in his "History of Latin Christianity." These works are distinguished by original and

erudite research, and by an elegant though not an easy style, and are free, to a great extent, from that apparent sympathy with German scepticism, of which the author's earlier writings contained traces. They have no claim, however, to the praise of having carried church history beyond the point where Gieseler and Neander left it.

Equally scholarlike and elegant, and still more Christian in their tone, but at the same time still more Anglican in sentiment and prepossession, although free from anything offensive in pretension or assumption, are the unfinished works of Robertson and Blunt. The latter is a posthumous collection of the author's academical lectures at Cambridge, where he was Professor of Divinity. The former, by a beneficed clergyman in England, is intended for the use both of general readers and of students in theology. Without stopping to characterize or more than name the special histories of Benton, Stebbing, and some others of less note, we may mention, as among the latest and best English works of this class, the History of the Christian Church during the Middle Ages and the Reformation, by the Rev. Charles Hardwicke, formerly of Cambridge, then of Harrow, now of King's College, London. The two volumes just referred to form part of a series of theological manuals for the use of candidates for orders in the Church of England, prepared by different writers, and now issuing at Cambridge. The two in question, besides other merits, show direct acquaintance with original authorities, and an intimate knowledge of the modern German literature on the subject, not without sufficient indications of the influence exerted on the studies and opinions of the writer by the two great church historians of the century. The only recent work of any reputation, which exhibits no apparent trace of this same influence, is the Ecclesiastical History of Palmer, one of the famous Oxford Theologians, republished in America by Bishop Whittingham of Maryland, and adapted to parochial instruction. This work, which is a small and slight one, without any pretension to original or independent value, although clear in method, and pure in style, is the only general church history with which we are acquainted, representing or proceeding from the Romish party in the Church of England.

Even this jejune enumeration may suffice to show the influence exerted by these two great writers upon those who have succeeded them, and also that Neander has an obvious advantage over Gieseler, as to popularity and imitation. This advantage, however, is of such a nature as to wear itself out by the lapse of time. The peculiar manner of Neander, once so much admired, and even copied, has already lost its novelty, and now strikes many as mere mannerism. The subjective character of his productions makes them subject to the same fluctuations and vicissitudes experienced by other fashionable styles and modes, not of dress only, but of thought and language. It is therefore not impossible that Gieseler, though less popular at first, may have a longer currency, or rather a more permanent position, on the shelves of scholars, and perhaps in the memory of general readers. A result still more desirable, is joint and equal popularity and influence, corresponding to the remarkable synchronism of their lives and labours. We should be sorry to see either wholly supersede the other, even in small libraries, as each is needed to complete, and, as it were, to rectify the other. When we are asked, therefore, which work we would recommend to ministers and students, the only answer we can give, is both. So far as the results of modern German speculation and research are concerned, no course of reading can be better than a successive or comparative perusal of these two works. And if any man will patiently master the authorities arrayed by Gieseler, under the guidance of that writer's cold and meagre but perspicuous and impartial narrative, and then follow Neander in his earnest and animating survey of the same ground, he will know about as much as German books can teach him. We have less hesitation in suggesting this course, as we think it a great error to study history as if it were geometry, by following the course prescribed in some one system, where the loss of one link makes the whole chain worthless. History can only be acquired by copious and discursive reading, and though rigid method may be needed at the outset, in laying the foundation and erecting the framework of the superstructure, the details of the latter must be filled in by a free and more flexible method, drawing materials from various quarters, and reconstructing the whole

science for one's self. We cannot but regard it as one reason of the little interest felt in the study of church history, that the student early learns to regard the very name of the science as synonymous with "Mosheim," "Milner," "Gieseler," or "Neander," and to look upon its vast and varied field as a forbidden ground, except where these distinguished guides may choose to lead him. If instead of simply reading one of these books through, and then occasionally hunting up a passage in the index, our young men were accustomed to survey the whole field for themselves, from different points of observation, and to use the text-books only as conveniences in pushing their inquiries further; such a method would not only be in perfect keeping with the very nature of historical study, and the unavoidable conditions of its prosecution, but would go far to resuscitate and make attractive what is now, to most professional as well as general readers, an insipid if not a repulsive study.

This method, far from superseding books of reference, would require a greater number and variety, and among these Gieseler and Neander will no doubt for many generations hold a lofty place, not only in their own land, but perhaps still longer in America and England, where foreign, and particularly German, products often have a kind of after-growth, and flourish most when they are just decaying in their native soil. At all events, there will be probably a steady and perhaps a large demand for good translations of these standard works, in anticipation of which, their preparation was long since begun, both in England and America. The best, if not the only complete English version of Neander, is the work of an American scholar, Professor Torrey, and does credit to the country, both by its literary and its typographical execution. Gieseler, after being partially translated twenty years ago by Francis Cunningham, of Boston, was republished in Clark's Edinburgh series of versions from the German, in a new form. The first volumes fell into the hands of Samuel Davidson, whose knowledge of German is much superior to his mastery of English, but whose version teems with blunders and rusticities. The plates of this work have been now subjected to the revision of Professor Smith, who, we need not say, is highly qualified to execute the whole task in a

manner much superior to that of Davidson, but who appears to have been under the necessity of merely rectifying the worst errors of his predecessor. We regard this as a thankless and unworthy task for such a scholar, and sincerely wish that he had been at liberty to do himself and Gieseler justice by a new translation, instead of patching up the failures of a writer, whose capacity in almost everything that he attempts, is in inverse proportion to his arrogant pretensions. But if this could not be, if the sole choice lay between a wretched version in its native wretchedness, and the same even partially corrected by an accurate and tasteful hand, our thanks are due to Dr. Smith for undertaking what was so far below him, and by this self-denying labour furnishing our public with at least a decent reproduction of the great historian. So far as the American editors and printers are concerned, these volumes answer every expectation, both as to neatness and exactness. What Professor Smith has added of his own, in the way of supplementary appendices, only makes us wish that he had given an original instead of a translated history.

The wish which we have just expressed is founded upon something more than personal or temporary reasons. We have more than once expressed our strong conviction, that the practice of wholesale translation tends both to weaken and to vitiate our English style, by flooding it with barbarisms and foreign idioms, and breaking down the necessary barrier between a native and outlandish diction. This impression has not been removed by the latest and best specimens of mere translation, which are mostly American, and still less by the blundering and unintelligible samples of the same stuff, which are mostly British. We never open such productions, good or bad, without regretting that the writers, in the one case, had not undertaken something better, and in the other case, undertaken nothing. If the only bad effects of these translations were in taste and style, they might still be justified as necessary evils, that is, as the only means of bringing the great mass of English readers into contact and acquaintance with works which are essential to the highest intellectual improvement and advantage. But this is just what we deny. We have no hesitation in affirming, that the best way to avail ourselves of

foreign aid, in adding to our own intellectual and literary stores, is not by importing their manufactured goods, often wholly unsuited to our wants and habits, and perhaps out of fashion in the place of manufacture, before they can obtain circulation in our market, but by large importations of the raw material, the naked product of outlandish industry, to be wrought up into domestic fabrics, carefully adapted to our own tastes and necessities. We often wonder that so many of our best minds should take pleasure in laboriously reproducing foreign works, in all their overgrown extent, with all their gross defects as to English and American theology, and with all their individual or national oddities of form and costume, some of which are afterwards renounced in subsequent editions; when the same amount of scholarship and talent, with a half or a tithe of the same labour, might have given us all that is really valuable, in a far more pleasing shape and manageable compass. It is not in the least flattering to say, that, in this sense, Dr. Murdock could have written a much better book than Mosheim, Dr. Torrey than Neander, Dr. Shedd than Guericke, and Dr. Smith than Gieseler. But while we deprecate the growing taste for mere translation from the German, we are so far from denying the extraordinary value of the historical literature locked up in that language, that we think it quite impossible for any man to master the great subject of church history, without direct or mediate access to the rich accumulations of the last half-century, not so much because new facts have been discovered, as because the old facts have been so completely overhauled, presented in new aspects, and in new combinations. With these impressions, we have sometimes wished, perhaps with an irrational yearning after the impossible, that some one might arise, to use a law phrase, *de medietate linguæ*, belonging, by experience and education, to both races, knowing the strong and weak points both of German and of Anglo-saxon modes and systems; too familiar with the former to fall down and worship them, simply because of their Teutonic origin; too well acquainted with the latter to consider them beyond improvement by additions from abroad. If one thus providentially prepared to operate in both fields to advantage, and to make them mutually supplement and perfect one another's cultivation, could be

gifted at the same time with a rare superiority to pretty theories and modish jargon, and with manly zeal for the essentials of the gospel, without pantheistic, puritanical, or popish leaning, he could do far more for us in this department, than any mere American or English scholar, and immeasurably more than any German of the Germans. It may perhaps be running this *chimera ad absurdum*, when we suppose our ideal church historian to be capable of writing in both languages, with ease and power, and of printing what he writes with due regard to the habits, tastes, prepossessions, of the race for which he writes, without attempting to thrust German food down English throats, or *vice versa*. If among the youth of either nation now in training, we had reason even to suspect that there was one who promised to assume and occupy this high but difficult position, we should be disposed to wait, if not too long, for his maturity, and in the meantime to express our hopes of his success, by saying, TU MARCELLUS ERIS!

ART. V.—*The Inspiration of Holy Scripture, its Nature and Proof.* Eight Discourses delivered before the University of Dublin. By WILLIAM LEE, M. A., Fellow and Tutor of Trinity College. New York: Robert Carter & Brothers, 530 Broadway, 1857, pp. 478.

IN our number for April we expressed a high opinion of the general merits of this work, and our conviction of the truth of the doctrine which it is designed to explain and defend. We wish now to call attention to the subject of which it treats. Happily the belief of the inspiration of the Scriptures is so connected with faith in Christ, that the latter in a measure necessitates the former. A man can hardly believe that Jesus is the Son of God, and worship him as such, without regarding as the word of God the volume which reveals his glory; which treats of his person and work, from its first page to its last sentence; which predicted his advent four thousand years before his manifestation in the flesh; which, centuries before his birth,