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ART. I.—*A Residence of twenty-one years in the Sandwich Islands; or the Civil, Religious and Political History of those Islands; comprising a particular view of the Missionary operations connected with the introduction and progress of Christianity and Civilization among the Hawaiian people.* By Hiram Bingham, A. M., Member of the American Oriental Society, and late Missionary of the American Board. Hartford and New York. 1847. pp. 616.

It is possible that among the readers of Mr. Bingham's volume are some who read, at the time of its appearance, the history of that voyage of Captain Cook, Clerke and Gore, which gave to the world the first information of the existence of the Sandwich Islands. To much younger persons, however, as well as to these, the two works must appear in wonderful contrast, even when superficially consulted. Between the times of King Terreeboo, when to be publicly invested with a linen shirt was a high mark of royalty; when the solemn offering of swine, in the successive stages of the living, strangled and baked animal, was the most distinguished honour that could be returned to the foreign "Orono," and that too as a religious sacrifice—and the times of the

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- ART. V.—1. *Wissenschaftliche Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte.* Ein Compendium der gesammten Evangelienkritik mit Berücksichtigung der neuesten Erscheinungen bearbeitet von Dr. A. Ebrard. Frankfurt a. M. 1842. Svo. pp. 1112.
2. *Chronologische Synopse der vier Evangelien.* Ein Beitrag zur Apologie der Evangelien und evangelischen Geschichte vom Standpuncte der Voraussetzungslosigkeit. Von Karl Wieseler, Licentiat und Privatdocent in Göttingen. Hamburg. 1843. Svo. pp. 496.
3. *Versuch zur Herstellung des historischen Standpuncts für die kritik der neutestamentlichen Schriften.* Eine Streit-schrift gegen die Kritiker unserer Tage von Heinrich W. J. Thiersch. Erlangen. 1845. Svo. pp. 443.
4. *Beiträge zur Evangelien-Kritik,* von Dr. Friedrich Bleek. Berlin. 1846. Svo. pp. 284.
5. *Kritische Untersuchungen über die Kanonischen Evangelien, ihr Verhältniss zu einander, ihren Character und Ursprung.* Von Dr. Ferdinand Christian Baur, ordentl. Professor der ev. Theologie an der Universität zu Tübingen. K. v. O. w. K. Tübingen. 1847. Svo. pp. 626.

THE New Testament, like the Old, has a well defined class of historical books, apart from the detached and incidental statements of fact in the prophetic and doctrinal divisions. The Historical Books, properly so called, are five in number, the Four Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles. Taken together they contain the history of a period little less than sixty-five years. The only difference of their contents is that the Gospels are the history of the life of Christ on earth, the Acts that of his church in its first organization and extension. The closing point of the Gospels and the starting point of the Acts are one and the same, viz. the ascension of our Saviour. This gives to the whole history a character of perfect continuity. At the same time it affords a convenient principle of subdivision.

The word *εὐαγγέλιον*, denoting good news or glad tidings, is employed in the New Testament history to signify the annunciation of the Messiah's advent, and of the new dispensation or economy which he came to establish, under the name of the kingdom of heaven or of God. As the first preaching of Chris-

tianity necessarily turned much upon the personal history of our Lord himself, it was natural that his history, when recorded, should receive the general name of εὐαγγέλιον. Whether it is ever so applied in the New Testament itself, may be considered doubtful. Some have imagined that when Paul says, more than once, *according to my gospel*, he not only uses the word in this sense, but applies it specifically to one of the four gospels now in our possession. This, however, is a mere conjecture. The designation of these four books as Gospels is traditional but very ancient. The titles form no part of the text, but run back far beyond the reach of our investigations. The oldest form appears to be the one retained in most modern versions, *the gospel according to Matthew, Mark, &c.*, which does not mean, as some seem to imagine, that they were not really the authors of the books, but simply penmen, i. e. passive instruments by which they were reduced to writing. The meaning rather is that, although four in number, they are really one history; that Matthew did not write one gospel, Mark another, Luke a third, and John a fourth; but each a different form of the same gospel, hence called by one of the Fathers εὐαγγέλιον τετραμόρφον.

This designation leads us to consider more attentively one of the most striking features in the gospel history or life of Christ. While every other extended portion of the sacred history, both before and after, is presented to us in a single narrative, or at most in two, as in the case of Kings and Chronicles, the concurrence of three being restricted to a few limited periods, this important chapter in the history of the church is spread before us in four different shapes, all alike canonical and presenting the same evidence, inward and outward, of divine authority. The final cause or providential purpose of this singular arrangement, if not wholly inconceivable, would lead us too far into speculation to admit of being here discussed. Some light however will be thrown upon it by the proposed examination of the mutual relations which these books sustain to one another.

The points of resemblance are, that they all contain the life of Christ, and especially the record of his public ministry, beginning with his baptism and brought down below his resurrection. They are also alike in exhibiting the same Christ, as to character and doctrines and the main points of his history. The at-

tempt made by some ingenious Germans, in our own day, to establish a difference and indeed an incongruity between the Jesus of John's gospel and the Jesus of the other three, is one of the most signal failures upon record in the annals of fanciful and paradoxical speculation. The alleged discrepancies are absolutely nothing in comparison with those between the Socrates of Xenophon and Plato, or the Napoleon of the French and English writers.

But with this remarkable agreement in the general there are still more remarkable differences of detail, from which arises the main difficulty in the vindication and interpretation of the gospel history. Had the four books been only so many paraphrases of the same substantial narrative, the difference of language might only have served to clothe the matter with an agreeable variety. Had the facts recorded been precisely the same, but in a different arrangement, the mere difference of order would have created no more difficulty than that of expression. But in point of fact, these four books, notwithstanding their resemblances, are as really distinct compositions as any four books in the world upon one and the same subject. Each contains something found in neither of the others, and that not only as to form but substance. Some things are found in only two and wanting in both the others. But besides all this, what is common to two, three, or all the gospels, is often variously expressed, and introduced in different connexions, and in some cases with an account of the accompanying circumstances, which, at first sight, is not only different but contradictory.

In making these comparisons, it soon becomes obvious that the variations of the four from one another, both in general and particular, are very far from being equal. The first two, according to the usual arrangement, are, in almost all points, nearer to each other than either of them is to the third or fourth. The third, however, is immeasurably nearer to the first and second, in the general character of its contents, as well as in detail, than it is to the fourth, which is thus left standing by itself, as less like any of the rest than they are like each other. We thus obtain a twofold classification of the gospels, one of which divides them equally, combining Mark with Matthew, and Luke with John; the other placing Matthew, Mark, and Luke, in common contrast with John. The latter division is

the most important, and the one most commonly adopted by the modern writers, who habitually call the first three the Synoptical Evangelists, because they admit, to a great extent, of being arranged and exhibited in parallels, while a large part of the matter contained in the fourth gospel has nothing corresponding to it in the other three. This distinction has no doubt been pushed too far in theory, and in practice has led to a distorted view of the whole subject; but the principle on which it rests is a sound one, and a knowledge of it is necessary to a correct understanding of most modern writers on the life of Christ.

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Before proceeding to inquire more particularly into this mutual relation of the gospels, it will be convenient to advert to the testimony of tradition as to their names and order; not as finally conclusive, but as furnishing a hypothesis, from which we have neither right nor reason to depart without necessity. Nothing indeed can be more unreasonable than to reject a tradition, intrinsically credible, simply because its truth is not demonstrable. And yet this is the principle, on which the reasoning of the German neologists most commonly proceeds. That a fact is attested by an ancient uniform tradition, instead of being recognized as *prima facie* evidence of its correctness, seems to be with them a reason for rejecting it, and for giving the preference to any new view of the matter, which is not absolutely impossible and self-contradictory. The necessary tendency of all such reasoning is not to establish any one historical theory at the expense of every other, but to discredit history in general. The only alternative presented to us is, to renounce all history as fable, or to hold fast to the testimony of historical tradition, until forced to abandon it.

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the testimony of historical tradition

With this view of the matter, we cannot but feel some degree of interest in the traditional nomenclature and arrangement of the gospels. As to the first point, the tradition is a uniform one; no names whatever are connected, in ancient usage, with the gospels, but the four which we attach to them. As to the order, there is more variety. Some ancient versions, and some Latin Fathers, place Matthew and John, or John and Matthew, first as being apostles, while Mark and Luke, or Luke and Mark, stand after them as being merely apostolical, i. e. the pupils and companions of apostles. Another arrangement, mentioned by one of the Greek Fathers, puts together in the

first place the two gospels which contain the genealogies, i. e. Matthew and Luke. But with these exceptions, the whole current of tradition sets in favour of our usual arrangement, and of its being founded on chronology. It may indeed be represented as the unanimous voice of all antiquity that Matthew wrote first and John last, and even with respect to Mark and Luke, the testimony is scarcely less explicit. Origen says expressly, that Matthew was the first in order, Mark the second, Luke the third, and John ἐπιπᾶσι. Various attempts have been made in modern times to discredit this tradition, each of the gospels, in its turn, being proved to be the oldest or the latest, according to the exigencies of the case. Some of the grounds, on which these several opinions rest, will be considered in another place. For the present it will be best to assume the old arrangement as the true one, until it can be brought to some more decisive test than that of fanciful conjecture.

It is a much more serious question, how the seeming inconsistencies of these four narratives may be removed, and their contents proved to be harmonious. This is a subject which has exercised the minds of the ablest interpreters of scripture from the earliest times. The progress of inquiry and discussion has however shown the necessity of a previous question—namely, how can the resemblance and the difference of the gospels be accounted for, without denying the veracity of either? Some of the older writers were contented with referring the effect to inspiration. But as inspiration did not supersede the influence of circumstances or individual peculiarities, it still remains a question, how four historians of the same events, even admitting them to be inspired, were led to tell the truth in forms so various, and sometimes seemingly so inconsistent, while at the same time they agree in minor points where discrepancy might have been expected.

Another and a larger class would solve the difficulty by supposing that the subsequent writers made use of the earlier books and thus became, in some degree, assimilated to them. Under this general hypothesis various particular conjectures have been entertained; one writer supposing that Mark followed Matthew, and that Luke made use of both; another that Luke followed Matthew, and Mark both, &c. &c. This theory, in one or another of its modifications, has proved satisfactory to most of

the earlier writers; but the modern critics have found it insufficient to account for the omissions and additions on the part of the later and dependent writer.

This has led to the hypothesis of a common source, from which, and not from one another, the four gospels have derived their striking points of similarity, while their independent use of it accounts for their no less striking points of difference. The first form in which this hypothesis presents itself is that of a common written source, or original gospel, now no longer in existence, but from which the four still extant are derived. However plausible and simple this hypothesis may seem when first propounded, it was soon found to be encumbered with great difficulties, to remove which other secondary suppositions became necessary, the increase of which, to meet the growing exigencies of the case, has furnished one of the most striking illustrations of the complexity of error, as compared with the simplicity of truth. Eichhorn, the leading advocate of this opinion, finding that the simple supposition of an *Urevangelium* was insufficient to account for coincident expressions, proceeded to add to his original idea, a succession of imaginary transcripts, versions, and interpolations, till he reached the number twelve. Thus besides the Aramaic *Urevangelium*, he assumed a Greek translation of it, then an altered text both of the version and original, then a mixture of two or more, &c. The extravagant length to which this theory was carried by Eichhorn in Germany and Herbert Marsh in England, has had the salutary effect of making the whole thing ridiculous, and adding new weight to the fatal objection, urged from the beginning, that if such a gospel ever existed, its disappearance and the silence of antiquity respecting it, are far more unaccountable than anything to be explained by supposing its existence.

This gave new credit to the doctrine of Schleiermacher, that the resemblances and differences of the gospels are to be ascribed, not to one common source, but common sources or materials. He supposes that long before a continued or complete history was attempted, particular facts or discourses were reduced to writing, and that out of these detached reports the extant gospels were compiled. But, although in a less degree, the objection still lies against this theory, as well as that of Eichhorn, that it assumes the existence of writings, which are

not now extant and of which we find no mention in antiquity, except in a dubious phrase of Papias, upon which Schleiermacher puts a meaning altogether different from the obvious and common one.

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A third solution, proposed by the modern German school of critics, is that of Gieseler, who supposes that the substance of the gospels was preserved for many years by oral tradition, and at last reduced to writing in the different forms which had arisen in different places, or under the influence of different leaders. He even goes so far as to suppose that the preachers who were sent forth by the apostles were taught to relate the gospel history in certain forms of speech, some of which were common to the different schools or methods, which accounts for even verbal coincidences, while the diversities are such as would naturally spring from the diversity of schools and methods. The objection to this theory is not so much its assuming the existence of an exclusively oral tradition for so long a time, as its want of agreement with the specimens of apostolic preaching recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. From these we learn that their discourses were not purely historical, but argumentative; that their object was to prove the Messiahship of Christ; and that they fastened upon those points of his history which contributed to this end, passing by the rest, or taking it for granted, as already known, at least to Jewish hearers. In conformity with this state of the case, a distinguished Roman Catholic writer, not long since deceased, Hug of Freyburg, in his Introduction to the New Testament, reproduced, in a new form, the abandoned doctrine of a mutual dependence and a direct influence of one evangelist upon another. His ingenious argument in favour of this doctrine involves a multitude of minute details, which cannot of course be presented here; but the outline of his theory deserves to be recorded, as well on account of its intrinsic value, as because it constitutes a necessary part of the history of opinion on this subject.

He supposes that for many years after Christ's ascension the details of his history were familiar to the people of Palestine, and that the preachers of the gospel merely singled out the facts on which they wished to found their arguments and exhortations. But as that generation passed away, and the Jewish commonwealth approached its end, the detailed knowledge of

the history was in danger of being lost, which could only be prevented by an authoritative record. To give this record the required authority, it was obviously necessary that it should proceed from an inspired apostle, in the choice of whom we may suppose that some regard would be naturally had to his previous habits and qualification for the task. Now several of the twelve we know to have been fishermen, and most of the others, it is natural to suppose, were equally illiterate. The only one of the number whose professional employments are known to have accustomed him to writing, is Matthew the Publican, who in that capacity had been under the necessity of keeping registers and accounts. Now to this apostle a uniform tradition ascribes a long continued ministry in Palestine, and another still more uniform the authorship of the first of the four gospels. He would however naturally frame his work, not with any reference to the usages or rules of historical composition, but to the wants of the church and of the ministry. If, as we have seen to be most probable, the apostolic preachers took for granted the details of Christ's biography as known to their hearers, and only drew upon them for arguments in proof of his Messiahship, it was natural that Matthew, in the case supposed, should form his work upon the model of this oral preaching, making it not so much a history as a historical argument, and merely adding the details, which the oral preachers took for granted. Such, in Hug's opinion, is precisely the character of Matthew's gospel, one obvious design of which is to establish Christ's Messiahship by comparing the events of his life with the prophecies of the Old Testament. Hence his arrangement is not strictly chronological, but puts together things which are connected logically or in reference to his argumentative design.

This gospel would of course soon gain currency and general circulation, and as other apostles were still living and engaged in active labour, they would naturally use the book in their instructions, or at least refer to it, commenting on it, and completing its statements from their own recollection. For such a task none would be better qualified or more disposed than Peter. If he did undertake it, we may readily suppose that as to many points he would enrich the narrative with new details, and this recension of the first gospel would of course be reduced to writing, sooner or later, by himself or others. And as Peter's course

of life had not been such as to prepare him for literary labour, it is natural to inquire whether there was any one specially connected with him, upon whom the labour might have been devolved. Now we learn from the Acts of the Apostles, that the house to which Peter immediately resorted after his release from imprisonment, was that of a woman named Mary; and that this woman had a son named John Mark; and in the first epistle of Peter, Mark is mentioned as being with him and as joining in his salutations, which makes it not improbable that Mark was his amanuensis upon that occasion. Now to this same John Mark the tradition of the early church unanimously ascribes the composition of the second gospel, and with equal unanimity represents it as having the authority of Peter, although with some variety of statement as to its having been dictated by him, or sanctioned by him after it was written, or composed after his death from recollection of his oral teaching. This tradition is confirmed by the internal character of the gospel, which often adds to Matthew's general statements such details as would be apt to dwell in the memory of an eye and ear witness of Peter's ardent and observant character. As to the variations, Hug accounts for some of them by supposing that Mark intended to reduce Matthew's argumentative narrative to a more historical form, and therefore transposed some events so as to bring them into more exact chronological order. This theory of the origin of the second gospel destroys two common assumptions of the older writers, viz. that Mark is an epitome of Matthew, and that Matthew is the standard of chronology, to which the other gospels are to be assimilated.

The church was now in possession of two gospels, stamped with apostolical authority. In the second of these a step had been taken towards the construction of a regular history. To complete this would of course be an object of effort and desire with many. As the number of attempts increased, the necessity must arise of some authoritative work adapted to the same end, i. e. giving a still more complete view of the history as such, than either of the previous gospels. Such a work is that of Luke, the preface of which speaks of various attempts as having been already made to complete and arrange the history. The body of the work too gives the early life of Christ with a minuteness wholly wanting in the earlier gospels.

Thus far the histories had been framed with reference merely to the wants of the infant church, while still united and of one mind. But in a very few years a new form became necessary, in consequence of heretical perversions and schismatical divisions. The character and work of Christ began to be questioned or misrepresented. It was desirable therefore that his history should be written with express view to vindicate his claim to be the Son of God. So far as we know, only one of the apostles lived to see these changes. This was John, who succeeded Paul at Ephesus, and lived to an extreme old age, in the very focus of heretical and heathen speculation. To him all antiquity ascribes the last of the four gospels, which declares itself to have been written for the very end above described. John xx: 31.

We have thus the genesis of our four gospels hypothetically accounted for—the first, a historical argument to prove the Messiahship of Christ, with a detail of facts which had before been preserved by tradition—the second a recension of the same, more historical in form and chronological in order, and with many particulars supplied by Peter's recollection—the third, composed under Paul's authority, and designed to supersede unauthorized attempts at a complete biography—the fourth to vindicate the sonship and divinity of Christ in opposition to nascent heresies, by the last survivor of the apostolical body.

This theory of Hug is to us the most satisfactory that has ever been proposed, when considered as a whole, and without insisting on the truth or necessity of all its suppositions in detail. It does not exclude Gieseler's doctrine of an oral tradition, but assumes it till the close of the first generation after the events, which is as far as it can be reasonably carried. The objections made to the theory of succession and dependence by some later writers do not strike us as conclusive. The main one is that if Mark read Matthew, Luke Mark, and John Luke, we cannot account for their omitting so much which they found recorded by their predecessors. But this objection rests upon the false assumption, that each expected and designed to supersede his predecessors by completing what they had left unfinished. The correct supposition seems to be, that each subsequent writer expected those before him to retain their place in the sacred canon and to be in the hands of all Christian readers, which left him

at liberty to retain just as little or as much as suited his own special purpose. That each gospel after that of Matthew was meant to be exclusive of the others, and that each was intended merely to supply what the others had omitted, are opposite extremes, alike untenable. Assume the first, and it becomes impossible to account for the existing variations; assume the second, and it is equally impossible to account for what is common to them all. The correct idea is, that each subsequent writer wrote with a distinct understanding that his book was to accompany but not to supersede the others, and yet each wrote a book complete in itself, and in reference to its specific purpose.

What this specific purpose was in either case, forms part of a more general inquiry as to the characteristic and distinctive features of the four evangelists, including their peculiarities of plan, style, tone, and spirit. The old interpreters, and the great mass of ordinary readers, are disposed to overlook such diversities and to regard the gospels as in these respects alike. But the contrary is rendered a priori probable by the very existence of four gospels. Why should there be more than one, if they were not intended to exhibit different phases and to make different impressions of the same truth, one and indivisible? { This antecedent probability is confirmed by a minute investigation of the gospels, one of the good effects which has resulted from the modern critical and even skeptical discussions of the subject. That the old and popular opinion was erroneous, and that the gospels have their marked peculiarities, compared with one another no less than compared with other writings, may be satisfactorily proved by a comparison of their style and diction. This is the more conclusive because founded upon slight diversities, which no writer could have studied or intended, and which no reader would observe, unless comparing the four books for the special purpose of detecting such peculiarities.

From the striking results of this induction we shall offer a few samples. The adverb τότε *then*, as a connective particle, is frequent in the gospels, and a cursory reader might suppose that it was equally frequent in all four; yet a careful comparison has shown that the word occurs in Mark but six times, in John ten times, in Luke fourteen times, i. e. in all three thirty times while in Matthew alone it occurs nearly ninety times, i. e. thrice as often as in all the others put together. In like manner, Mark

uses the adverb *εὐθέως* in his first chapter oftener than either Luke or John in his whole gospel. The preposition *σύν* is used by John but twice, by Matthew thrice, by Mark five times, and by Luke (in his gospel and the Acts together) seventy-five times. The word *χάρις* is unknown to Matthew and Mark, and occurs in all John's writings only four times, while Luke (in his two books) has it twenty-four times. The cognate words *σωτήρ*, *σωτηρία*, and *σωτήριον*, which occur seventeen times in the writings of Luke, are not found once in Matthew or Mark, and only twice in John. The verb *εὐαγγελίζομαι* is used by Matthew once, by John and Mark not at all, while Luke employs it five and twenty times. The verb *ὑποστρέφω* occurs thirty-one times in Luke and Acts, once in Mark, and not at all in John or Matthew. The double *ἀμὴν* (verily, verily) at the beginning of a sentence occurs twenty-four times in the gospel of John, and no where else in the New Testament.

Can these peculiarities be accidental? The more unimportant in themselves, the more unlikely to be studied or intentional. Indeed they seem to have escaped all readers until modern controversy brought them within the scope of microscopic criticism. To us, these facts, and a multitude of others like them, seem conclusively to settle two points. The first, and most important in itself, is the unity of the several gospels, as opposed to the idea of fragmentary compilation. The other, bearing more directly on the subject immediately before us, is the fact, that the evangelists have marked peculiarities, which may properly be made the subject of investigation.

These peculiarities are not confined however to the use of certain words and phrases. They extend to the whole shape and structure of the books. There has been no little speculation as to the precise design of each evangelist and the specific class of readers whom he had in view. There can be no doubt that the attempt to distinguish has, in this as in all like cases, been carried to excess. But it is equally clear that the distinction is a real one. The fact that Mark frequently explains Jewish usages, while Matthew never does, is almost sufficient of itself to prove, that the latter wrote for Jewish and the former for Gentile readers. This conclusion is confirmed by the comparative frequency with which Matthew cites the Old Testament. Luke, unlike the others, wrote both his books with

primary reference to an individual reader, named Theophilus. But whether he was a Jew or Gentile, is a matter of conjecture and curious speculation, which will probably never be determined. In John the line of demarcation seems to vanish, probably because he wrote when Jews and Gentiles had long been merged in one new body, and the divisions which existed were not so much national as doctrinal.

Connected with this subject of characteristic differences between the gospels is that of their original language. The obvious adaptation of the first to Jewish readers agrees well with the tradition that it was originally written in Hebrew, i. e. in the Aramaic dialect vernacular in Palestine. The ancient writers are remarkably unanimous in their assertion of this fact, which is therefore commonly received. Some have supposed however that it may have arisen from an idea that what was written for Jews must be written in Hebrew; whereas Greek was almost universally understood even in Palestine. No one of the Fathers professes to have seen the original Matthew. All quote the Greek now extant. Some of the latest writers, influenced by this fact, yet unwilling to reject so clear and constant a tradition, have combined the two by supposing that Matthew wrote first in Hebrew, but afterwards rewrote the book in Greek for a larger circle of readers, and that this second edition gradually displaced the other. There is also an old tradition, but neither so ancient nor so extensive as the other, that the gospel of Mark was originally written in Latin. As to John and Luke, there is no diversity of judgment or testimony. With respect to this whole subject of the points of difference between the gospels, it is chiefly important to avoid extremes. The attempt to make everything characteristic and distinctive, is as unreasonable as to overlook the points of difference altogether.

But how are the contents of these four gospels to be wrought into one coherent narrative? This question has been agitated from the earliest times. The first harmony of the gospels (Tatian's Diatessaron) is no longer in existence. The oldest extant is that of Augustin. In the middle ages Gerson is eminent as a labourer in this field. Among the Reformers, Calvin gave particular attention to the harmonizing of the gospel narrative. In the age succeeding the Reformation, the most noted names are those of Osiander and Chemnitz or Chemnicus. In later times

the harmonies are almost innumerable, the last and one of the best being the work of an American scholar.

Of more importance to our present purpose than the titles or succession of particular harmonies, are the principles on which they have been framed, and the means employed to overcome the difficulties of the subject. The oldest writers seem to have recognised and exercised the right of transposition and new combination. But Osiander and his followers rejected this method as derogatory to the inspiration and infallibility of the sacred writers. They assumed it as a principle, that exact chronological order is essential to the truth of history, and that this order is observed and equally observed by all the four evangelists. Where the same thing appears to be assigned to different dates by two or more of them, this theory compels us to regard the identity as only apparent, and to assume the repeated occurrence of events almost precisely similar. This is not only unnatural and without analogy, but founded on a false assumption. Chronological order is not essential to the truth of history. A biographer of Bonaparte might bring together in one chapter all the facts of his domestic history; in another his military progress; in a third his legislative and administrative acts, &c. Another might present the very same facts in the order of their actual occurrence. Yet the first would be as true as the second and as really a history, though not so chronological. { The fallacy arises from the common but gross error of confounding chronology with history, the science of dates with the science of events. } A merchant's ledger is as true a history of his transactions as his day-book, though the order be entirely different.

The inconveniences of this hypothesis were found on trial to be so extreme, that a later school of harmonists, with Chemnitz at their head, returned to the more natural and reasonable freedom which had been practised by Augustin, Gerson, and Calvin. In carrying out the principle, the question soon arose, what is the standard of chronological exactness? Some assumed one of the evangelists as strictly chronological in order, and tried to assimilate the others to him. But this method, being doubly arbitrary in its principle—first, in assuming that one alone was chronological throughout, and then in determining which one it was—must of course be precarious and diver-

sified in its results, according as the honour of priority in this respect was given to Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John.

From this by reaction sprang an opposite extreme, that of denying all attention to chronology in any of the gospels, and leaving the arrangement of the facts to the caprice of the interpreter. Bengel deserves the praise of having first clearly laid down and applied a rule, by which both of these extremes might be avoided. His principle is this, that we are not to assume that either of the evangelists gives us the precise chronological order of events, unless he says so, or affords some intimation of his purpose. Two facts succeeding one another without any such intimation, may have been chronologically successive, and must be so treated if nothing appears to the contrary. But they may also not have been so, and therefore if another writer states them in a different order, there is no contradiction, although it may be difficult in that case to determine the true order, which for that very reason may be looked upon as unimportant. If for example one historian should say that Taylor conquered the Mexicans at Buena Vista and at Palo Alto, a reader without other means of information, might reasonably conclude that the former victory was first in date. But if he should read in another author, that Taylor conquered the Mexicans at Palo Alto and at Buena Vista, he would remain doubtful as to the priority. There would however be no contradiction, but a mere ambiguity. And even if the second writer said that Taylor conquered the Mexicans at Palo Alto and *afterwards* at Buena Vista, this would decide the question of chronology, but it would not discredit the authority first consulted, which states the facts as truly as the other, though with less chronological precision which it does not undertake to give. Again: the statement that the battle of Buena Vista was *after* that of Palo Alto, might by itself be understood to imply that no other battle intervened. But if a third authority declared that the victory of Monterey was between the others, this would be perfectly consistent with the second statement, although more explicit.

These supposed cases will illustrate the varying practice of the four evangelists in reference to the chronological order of events. Sometimes they are merely put together, without any chronological specification. Sometimes one event is said to have happened after another. In other cases it is said or indi-

rectly represented to have followed it immediately. In comparing the four narratives, it is plain that they could contradict each other only when two or more employ this last mode of statement. That is, if one says that *a* was immediately followed by *b*, and another that *a* was immediately followed by *c*, the accounts are contradictory. But if one says that *a* was followed by *b*, and another that *c* intervened between them, there is no contradiction nor even inconsistency, because an event may be remotely followed by another, and yet immediately by one entirely different. And yet it is from discrepancies of this last class that the chronological objections to the truth of the gospels are almost exclusively derived; whereas the other case of two irreconcilable exclusive statements nowhere occurs.

This principle of Bengel has been carried out with great ingenuity and skill by Ebrard, who makes it the basis of a detailed chronological arrangement of the gospel history. It is indeed applied by all the modern writers of authority, with a surprising uniformity in the general results, although with many variations as to minor points. So far as our inquiries have extended, every question as to the succession of events, which is at all material to the history, has now been satisfactorily settled. Those which remain are for the most part such as neither can be nor need be certainly decided. If this be so, the harmonizing of the gospels has been brought to a high degree of perfection.

This affords us the occasion to say something on a point of some importance. The legitimate use of Harmonics is threefold, apologetical, exegetical, and historical. Their apologetical use is to prove the consistency and truth of the narratives by bringing them into juxtaposition. This alone is not in all cases sufficient without explanation, but it furnishes the necessary basis and material for the vindication of the sacred history. The exegetical use of harmonies is to make the narratives illustrate each other, one supplying what another omits, or stating clearly what it states obscurely. The historical use may be considered as included in the exegetical or as one of its results. By bringing all the testimony at one view before us, it enables us to digest the whole into a comprehensive narrative, adapted to our own wants, and not merely to the primary purpose of the sacred history itself.

With respect to all these ends, it is sufficient that the Harmony be used as a book of reference, and this we take to be its legitimate use. Its abuse consists in substituting this artificial arrangement for the gospels in their proper form, in the habitual reading of the scriptures. This would be inadmissible even if the narratives were identical in plan and purpose, because their admission to the canon would still show that they were meant to be separately used. How much more is this the case when each has a distinctive character, the unity of which must be destroyed by mixture with the rest. We have seen reason to conclude that the gospels are not mere histories but historical arguments. This is particularly true of John and Matthew. Each, as a whole, was intended and adapted to produce a definite impression, which can only be marred and falsified by a mechanical amalgamation.

The necessity of this effect has been exemplified in English literature and within a very few years. Few books in our language have acquired greater popularity than Boswell's *Life of Johnson*. However little respect may be felt by the reader for the writer, the work itself is universally regarded as a masterpiece of personal history. Nay the very defects of the author contribute to its excellence, by making it as correct a picture of himself as of his subject. The book has perfect unity. From the beginning to the end we find the same Johnson and the same Boswell. After the work had been a favourite of the public more than forty years, a distinguished public man, of more reading than good taste, John Wilson Croker, prepared a new edition, in which all the other histories of Johnson are incorporated piecemeal into Boswell's text. The result is that the amount of curious information is perhaps more than doubled, but the charm of the biography is gone; its unity and individuality are utterly destroyed; and the final compound, though invaluable as a storehouse of facts, is almost unreadable. This recent and familiar case may serve to illustrate the effects which must arise from a sheer substitution of the best digested harmony for the four gospels as the Holy Spirit gave them, and the canon of Scripture has preserved them. Let them still be read as independent narratives intended to produce their own distinct impressions, whatever aid we may derive from harmonies in proving their consistency or in expounding their contents.

These remarks have reference only to the reading of the gospels as a part of scripture, in which no tampering with the text should be allowed. The considerations stated do not militate at all against the framing of a continuous narrative for our own use or that of others from the combination of these several testimonies. But in so doing, instead of attempting to retain the words of the original record, it is better to depart from them, and thus to keep our own imperfect digest of the matter altogether separate from the form in which it has been clothed by inspiration. Had only one such narrative been given, nothing more would have been necessary than to expound it. But as four have been given, it becomes us to leave them as they are, and yet to frame a digest of the facts which they record, but not to merge the former in the latter. Such a digest of the gospel history would be eminently useful in popular instruction. A thorough and masterly exhibition of the life of Christ could not fail to be one of the most interesting and attractive means of ministerial influence. Of all the ways in which it may be used, by far the most effectual, in our opinion, is by weaving into a connected narrative the facts contained in all the four evangelists, according to the best harmonic methods and the last results of sound interpretation, but without parade of learning or unnecessary reference to disputed points. This method strikes us as decidedly superior to any other that could well be practised. If you take up a single gospel and interpret it, you give the people only what they have already or may have at pleasure, while at the same time the form of detailed exegesis is apt to be repulsive. If you adopt an apologetic method and avow your purpose to defend the gospel against all attacks, the polemic tone of the discussion renders it less edifying, and without extraordinary skill more doubts will be suggested to your hearers than either you or they can solve. If on the other hand, you make it your object to exhibit all the facts in one connected narrative, you give them what they have not in the text of scripture, and what they cannot procure for themselves without great labour, if at all, while at the same time you have the opportunity of settling many difficulties without any formal discussion by the very form of statement and the arrangement of your facts. The simple statement of a fact in its true connexion may require a previous exegetical investigation, of which no part

is subjected to the senses of the hearer or the reader. In prosecuting this design, as the matter must be drawn from all the gospels indiscriminately, and without exclusive reference to either as a standard, a well digested harmony will be found a useful guide, and we are happy to be able to recommend the cheapest and the most accessible—that of Dr. Robinson, published both in Greek and English—as the best with which we are acquainted. From the order of that work a popular lecturer would seldom have occasion to depart, and might therefore refer his hearers to it as a kind of syllabus, containing not only the plan but the materials of his instructions.

With respect to the principles on which the teacher should proceed in digesting these materials, we need hardly say, that he must necessarily assume the inspiration of the gospels and their consistency with one another. This gives of course a complexion to the subject wholly different from that of works in which the contrary rule is followed, viz. that the writings shall be assumed to differ, until they are proved to be agreed. This leads us to conclude with some account of the skeptical opinions which have become current in our own day, with respect to the evangelical history or Life of Christ. Of these we should not speak at all, if by that means our readers would for the first time be apprised of their existence. But as these opinions are industriously propagated, not only in Europe but among ourselves, not only in learned but in popular works, such scrupulous reserve becomes both inexpedient and impossible.

Towards the close of the last century a great revolution took place in the theological and biblical literature of Germany. Some of the leading scholars of that country lost their belief in the divine authority and inspiration of the scriptures, while they still continued to make them the subject of learned investigation. In this they differed from the French and English Deists, whose attacks upon the Bible were for the most part as illiterate as they were spiteful. In reference to the gospels, one of the first effects of this unhappy change was the appearance of the so-called natural method of interpretation, which maintained the historical truth of the narrative, but denied its supernatural facts, which must therefore be explained away. Thus Paulus, one of the most eminent leaders of this school, maintains, that when Christ is said to have walked upon the sea, it means that

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he walked round it; and that when Ananias fell down dead, it was in consequence of Peter's stabbing him with a concealed weapon. The same writer, or another of the same class, understands by the narrative of our Saviour's feeding the five thousand, that he set the example of hospitality to his disciples, and they to such of the multitude as had provisions, until all were fed. These instances will show, better than any description, the character of this school of interpreters. Their violent wresting of the scriptures was but a desperate struggle between unbelief in miracle and inspiration, and a desire to maintain the credit of the gospels as mere history. The absurdities to which the attempt led soon showed that the two things were incompatible, and that the only rational alternative was to admit the miracles or to deny the truth of the history, in whole or in part.

The next step was to deny it in part. Another school arose, of which DeWette may be represented as the leader, who received the statements of the gospel in their obvious and true sense, but rejected all that was miraculous as myths or fables. To this school many thanks are due for exploding the unnatural method of interpretation practised by their predecessors, and for the labour which they have bestowed upon the philological interpretation of the gospels. But they were obviously inconsistent in rejecting one part of a narrative as fabulous, and receiving all the rest without a scruple as historical, as if fictitious writers only dealt in supernatural events, and as if whatever is not impossible must needs be true. It was not to be expected that this unphilosophical and arbitrary doctrine would continue long to satisfy the minds of men who had renounced all faith in miracle and inspiration, as being not merely unreal, but impossible.

Accordingly there now arose a third school of interpreters who rejected the whole history as fabulous. At first, they were contented with a skeptical denial of the possibility of ascertaining what was true and what was not true in a history, of which some parts, as they supposed, were demonstrably incredible. By degrees however, the incredible parts became greater and greater and the residuum which might by possibility be true diminished in proportion, till at last the only truth acknowledged was a fine thread of authentic narrative, with a huge mass of fable strung upon it, and by some even this scanty remnant of reality

was mythified, and the whole regarded as a fiction. Strauss, the able leader of this whole school, undertook to show the genesis or organic development of the myths which constitute the gospels. The germ of all he supposed to be the Jewish doctrine of a Messiah, founded on misinterpretation of the Old Testament prophecies. Jesus, whom he acknowledged to have really existed, claimed to be this Messiah, and his followers gradually fabricated incidents in proof of this pretension, till by long accretion, their oral tradition took the form now reduced to writing in the gospels.

Upon this captivating theory several later writers have endeavoured to improve, but with indifferent success. One supposes the extant gospel history to have been produced by turning the parables of Jesus (a Jewish teacher) into literal narratives relating to himself. To illustrate moral changes, he related once a parable in which water was miraculously changed to wine, and this was afterwards, with or without design, transformed into the history of such a miracle wrought by himself, &c. Another writer of this school regards the gospel history as a fictitious illustration of rabbinical maxims, still recorded in the Talmud. A third goes to the opposite extreme of denying the existence even of a Messianic doctrine among the early Jews, and supposes the gospel history to have grown out of internal conflicts and disputes between the Jewish and the Gentile Christians. Further enumeration or description would be useless: what has now been said will serve to characterize this whole system of opinion, if it is entitled to the name. It is easy to perceive how it has gradually spun itself out of the original error of rejecting supernatural events as incredible and insusceptible of proof by any evidence whatever. <There is also a gradual decrease of reverence for the narrative and for Christ himself. The *natural* interpreters were led into all their absurdities by their desire to vindicate the truth of the history without believing the extraordinary parts of it. The *rational* interpreters admitted the history to be sometimes false, but still maintained that it was true at other times. The *mythical* interpreters, regarding the whole as fiction, and Christ himself as an imaginary personage, lose of course even that small remnant of respect for him and his biographers, which appeared to be retained by their predecessors.> The lowest representatives of

this school may be said to treat our Saviour with contempt; they deny the perfection of his character, the wisdom of his teaching, and the purity of his moral system; they even ridicule his words and actions. And thus, by a natural process of development, the German form of unbelief at last approximates, in tone and spirit, to that gross and frivolous infidelity of France and England, from which at first it seemed to stand aloof.

The whole tendency of these opinions, it will be perceived, is negative. They pull down without attempting to build up. They are contented with destroying all certain ground of belief. Another school has now arisen which attempts to do the positive part of the same work. The leader of this forlorn hope is Baur of Tübingen, a man of great ability and learning, but perverse and self-sufficient in a rare degree. Like Ewald in the books of the Old Testament, he discovers in each of the first three gospels two or more distinct compositions, one the original framework or foundation of the history, the others incorporated with it afterwards. These elements the critic claims the power of distinguishing, and his strength is chiefly spent in exercising this discriminative power, but in a way which to all except himself seems wholly arbitrary and gratuitous. He admits the unity of John's gospel but denies its apostolic origin, and represents it as a pure fiction, designed to illustrate the one favourite idea of a divine λόγος, borrowed from the Greek philosophy. This view of the fourth gospel is the more remarkable, because the unbelieving critics had for half a century or more regarded it with special favour, as the only genuine and truly apostolic gospel, by comparison with which the others must be judged, and to whose authority, in case of discrepance, their credit must be sacrificed. The sudden turn here made by Baur, and the confidence with which it is defended by himself and his adherents, may suggest a doubt, if nothing more, as to the certainty of all such reasoning, if such it may be called, whether used by himself on one side, or by his predecessors on the other side of the same question.

As to the refutation of these doctrines, it is not to be effected in detail but in the principle. They all rest on the assumed impossibility of miracle and inspiration. If this πρωτον ψευδος is not acknowledged as self-evident—for they attempt no proof of it—its specific applications and remoter consequences cannot shake our faith. Another view of all such

speculations, which to us is reassuring is, that they may be applied with equal plausibility to any other case whatever, not excepting the most recent and familiar history, of which we are ourselves the witnesses, or of which we can no more doubt than we can doubt our own existence. If then such reasoning proves that the events recorded in the gospels never happened, it may be used to prove that nothing ever happened at all; and we may surely be contented with a certainty as great as can exist in any other case whatever.

That the premises from which we draw this inference are true, any man may determine for himself, by an endless variety of experiments. Without going out of our own history, we might prove, by the fair use of this German calculus, that our Revolutionary War is a mere fiction either accidental in its origin, or meant to shadow forth certain doctrines or disputed questions in the politics of later days; that such a revolution never could have sprung from an occasion so contemptible; that the stamp-act is a mythus occasioned by the discussion of the question of international copy-right; that the character of Washington is unnatural and evidently feigned as the exponent of a great idea; that Franklin is an emblem of philosophy combined with practical sagacity; Witherspoon of civil and religious wisdom in harmonious combination; Lafayette of European chivalry allied with American patriotism; that the character of Benedict Arnold is as clearly fictitious as that of Judas Iscariot, &c. &c.

If the illusion should in this case seem to be unduly favoured by the lapse of time, it would be easy to effect the same thing in relation to the very latest chapter of our history, and to prove, in the most conclusive German style, that a war, like that of the United States with Mexico, is a sheer impossibility, except as a philosophical mythus. Who can believe that such a force was conveyed to such a distance and at such expense for such a cause as that assigned? Who can believe in the rapid succession of victories by two invading armies, with scarcely an attempt at effective resistance? The triumphant march from Vera Cruz to Mexico is stamped with every attribute of fable. The plan of the battle of Contreras was a subject of dispute between two generals for months; it consequently never was fought. The very names of the generals in this pretended war are almost all significant, and therefore evidently not historical.

Who can believe that the conqueror of Mexico happened to be named *Winfield*? The very appropriateness of the title shows that it was given to him *ex eventu*. This suspicion is confirmed by the co-existence on the roll of such names as Taylor, Wool, Worth, Twiggs, Pillow, Quitman, Shields, every one of which, with very little twisting, may be turned into an emblem or a symbol, and thus made to prove the whole affair a myth. However trifling this may seem, we solemnly affirm, that after carefully examining the gospels, with a view to the objections of this school of critics, we can find no argument employed by them which may not be applied to our contemporary history, not only with as much, but with greater plausibility. A kind of reasoning therefore which demonstrates every thing demonstrates nothing. A storm or an earthquake is to be dreaded because it may destroy one place while it leaves all others standing; but no one trembles at the revolution of the earth, because by moving every thing alike it shakes down nothing. There is no unfairness in comparing the ultimate discoveries of the German skeptics with the English caricature which represents a crowd of malcontents vociferating "No corn laws!" "No excise!" "No house of lords!" and one more thoroughgoing and consistent than the rest crying out "No nothing!"

In the foregoing pages we have simply stated, no doubt somewhat crudely, the impression left upon our minds by a perusal, more or less attentive, of the latest works upon this interesting subject. We have made no attempt, of course, within such limits, at exhaustive fulness or at systematic order. We have not even had a constant or exclusive reference to the works named at the head of the article, less for the purpose of defining our own subject than for that of marking some important steps in the progress of investigation and discussion for the last seven years. That the works enumerated are all German, is because the publications on the subject, during the same period, in other languages, and especially in English, so far as our information goes, either take no notice of the latest forms of unbelief, and of the specious reasoning by which they are commended to the common mind, even in England and America, or err in the opposite extreme of misplaced admiration and feeble concession. Of the five books named, the first three are substantially defensive of the truth, the fourth a kind of neutral estimate of both

sides, and the fifth a learned and ingenious specimen of the skeptical criticism in its latest and most fearless exhibition.

In this, as in other parts of sacred learning, we still venture to indulge the hope that the results of German industry and talent, confused and noxious as they now may seem, are yet to furnish the material for invaluable additions to our literary stores, adapted to that purpose, not by foreign but by native hands. Even in reference to the historical part of scripture much remains to be accomplished. The humblest Christian and the most conceited smatterer may agree in the opinion that the gospel history is a field long since exhausted in the Sunday school and Bible class, and that all the subsequent discussions are mere garbage. But even garbage has been known to enrich the field which former harvests seemed to have exhausted; or to change the figure, even the slain carcasses of heresy and paradox have yielded nutriment to faith and reason, so that "out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness."

SHORT NOTICES.

ART. VI.—*Bishop Hughes Confuted.* Reply to the Rt. Rev. John Hughes, Roman Catholic Bishop of New York. By Kirwan. New York: Leavitt, Trow & Co. 1848.

Bishop Hughes made a great mistake in noticing Kirwan. His letters could not be answered, and anything written about them, and especially to their author, not being an answer, must be a failure. We presume there never was a case of controversy, in this country, where the advantage was so entirely on one side, or as to which public opinion is so unanimous. Kirwan is completely victorious, and bishop Hughes as completely discomfited.

There are various legitimate methods of controversy. Kirwan, in the first instance, adopted one of the safest and the most effective. He undertook to exhibit Romanism in its practical operation on himself. This he did simply, truthfully, and therefore powerfully. All that Bishop Hughes had to say, in