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Geo. Henry Jones.
ART. I.—*Recent Commentaries on the Song of Solomon.*

Das Hohelied untersucht und ausgelegt, von Franz Delitzsch, Dr. u. ord. Prof. d. Theologie zu Erlangen u. s. w. 1851. 8vo. pp. 237.

Das Hohelied von Salomo, uebersetzt und erklärt, von Heinrich August Hahn, Dr. Phil. Lie. Theologie und ausserordentlichem Professor der letzteren an der Königl. Universität zu Greifswalden, u. s. w. 1852. 16mo. pp. 98.

Das Hohelied Salomonis ausgelegt, von E. W. Hengstenberg, Dr. und Prof. d. Theologie zu Berlin. 1853. 8vo. pp. 264.

The Song of Solomon, Compared with other parts of Scripture. Second Edition. London, 1852. 16mo. pp. 230.

A Commentary on the Song of Solomon, by the Rev. Geo. Burrowes, Prof. in Lafayette College, Easton, Pa. 1853. 12mo. pp. 527.

It is remarkable that such a number of Commentaries upon this brief and difficult book should have appeared within so short a period, and in places so remote from each other. This circumstance, if it be not purely casual, resulting from the accidental direction of the studies of the individuals whose productions we have before us, would seem to indicate an extensive leaning in the church at present towards the study of the Can-

be unfair. Doubtless there is an eye all along to the fanaticism which too often causes periods of excitement to be followed by a low state of religion, and an ejection of the minister from his charge; and not unfrequently, a shutting up of the church—a temporary abandonment of public worship. This kept in mind, the reader will not suppose there is here any hostile feeling towards the special influences of God's Spirit, in a general awakening of attention to the concerns of the soul: but he will find many useful hints towards guiding young ministers during these gracious seasons, and securing the benefits without the frequent incidental evils.

The last lecture treats of the pastor's power and duty of instructing by his example. Here, too, we have an immense detail, the result of a long and laborious experience. The young pastor will do well to read the lecture over once a month, for the first two or three years of his ministry.

Such is the hasty and very imperfect sketch which we are able to present of this very interesting and valuable work. The publisher is entitled to credit for the handsome manner in which the volume has issued from the press. The biographical notice, which serves as an introduction, is well written and satisfactory. On the whole, we regard this work as highly creditable to its venerable author, and well adapted for a textbook on the subject of which it treats.

Charles Hodge.

ART. VI.—*History of the Apostolic Church*; with a General Introduction to Church History. By Philip Schaff, Professor in the Theological Seminary, Mercersburg, Pennsylvania. Translated by Edward D. Yeomans. New York: Charles Scribner, 165 Nassau street. 1853. pp. 684.

THIS work of Dr. Schaff having been reviewed in its original form in our Journal, we do not propose to enter upon any extended examination of its merits in its English dress. We may say, in a single sentence, that the Rev. Mr. Yeomans has executed his office of translator with great fidelity and success. It cannot be expected that any version should possess the freshness and idiomatic vigour of an original; but Mr. Yeo-

mans has certainly succeeded in producing a very satisfactory and trustworthy exhibition of his author. This we consider great praise, for it is an excellence not often attained.

The work of Dr. Schaff has already excited a great deal of attention, both in this country and Europe. This is *prima facie* evidence of its merit. It has also received the highest commendations from competent judges of every ecclesiastical and theological status. Its highest praise comes from its severest critics, whose censures assume the form of lamentation. The judgment, therefore, which we expressed upon the work on its first appearance, has been fully sustained by the general verdict. No one can deny that it is characterized by a thorough mastery of the subjects of which it treats; by clearness, order, precision, and conciseness of exhibition; by vivacity and eminent powers of discrimination and portraiture, and by a Christian spirit. Notwithstanding all these grounds of recommendation, it is regarded by many of our best and soundest men with a good deal of misgiving. It is suspected of containing insidious principles of error, only the more dangerous from the plausible and inoffensive manner in which they are presented, and from their association with so much that is true and important. These suspicions have taken the form of an apprehension of a Romanizing, or, at least, of anti-Protestant leaven, pervading the book. We are not surprised that such suspicions should exist. We think there is good ground for them both external and internal; that is, both in the status and antecedents of the author, and in the character of the book itself. We, however, no less believe that these suspicions are in many cases exaggerated, and that they rest, in some measure, on misapprehension both of Dr. Schaff's position and opinions. It is our object, in the few remarks which we propose to make, to state our own view of the case, and to show how far we think there is just ground of want of confidence in Dr. Schaff as a theologian. This is at once a difficult and a delicate task. It is delicate, because there is a very serious responsibility assumed in the public expression of an opinion adapted to weaken confidence in the soundness of such a man, and one for whom we feel personally an affectionate respect. It is a difficult task, because it is almost always

hard to understand and appreciate a mode of thought and statement foreign to our own. Dr. Schaff greatly misunderstood the American mind when he first came among us, and this misapprehension led him into serious mistakes. In like manner, we are unable properly to understand and appreciate the German mind. We cannot make due allowance for the influence which the peculiar philosophy and modes of thought and expression must exert over the manner in which the same doctrine is presented by minds subject from birth to different training. It is a small part of what is within him that any man can reveal by his words. A thought may lie in his mind, in manifold relations and associations, essentially determining its character, very different from those which its most appropriate expression may awaken in the minds of others. This is one fruitful source of misapprehension. There is another, much of the same kind. The reigning philosophy of any age or nation not only impresses itself upon the minds of those who consciously adopt its principles, but to a certain extent modifies the language and modes of thought of the public generally, and even of its opponents. The consequence is, that foreigners who study such philosophy, attach a meaning to phrases and modes of statement, wherever found, which belong to them in the system to which they owe their origin or prevalence. Thus the terminology of the pantheistic philosophy of Germany, to a good degree, affects the whole literature and theology of that country. We are very liable, on this account, to set down as pantheists men who have no affinity whatever with that specious form of atheism. Thus it has happened to the holy and humble Neander to be placed in the same category with the self-deifying Hegel; though it is probable neither Europe nor America contained a man who more thoroughly execrated Hegel's doctrine. Dr. Schaff has doubtless suffered from the same cause of misapprehension. His whole philosophical and theological training has been foreign to our own. His modes of thought and expression are German rather than English. His language, as interpreted strictly according to the system from which it is borrowed, often conveys a meaning inconsistent with his clearly expressed opinions, but on that account not the less adapted to be misap-

prehended. When to all this is added the imperfect knowledge of German philosophy and theology generally possessed by the readers of this book, it is not at all wonderful that he should have been in many cases unfairly condemned, or that the proper understanding of his position is a matter of no small difficulty.

Of the external circumstances which have tended to produce a suspicion of a Romanizing tendency on the part of Dr. Schaff, the most important is his association with Dr. Nevin. The latter gentleman has justly, as we think, forfeited entirely the confidence of the Protestant community. Under the disingenuous designation of "ultra-protestantism," he has, in his later writings especially, impugned and contemptuously rejected almost every principle which constituted the Protestantism of the Reformers themselves. This is done, too, with a degree of acrimony and contempt which shows his heart is thoroughly turned against every thing that deserves the name of Protestantism, and that his position in the Protestant Church is just as anomalous as was that of Dr. Newman when he published his famous Tract No. 90. To be associated with one who has publicly assailed Protestantism in its most essential principles, as Dr. Schaff has been with Dr. Nevin, justifies and even necessitates grave suspicions as to his own soundness. We fully believe that he differs essentially from Dr. Nevin, that he seriously disapproves of many of his principles and measures, and that he deeply laments the position in which his friend and colleague has placed himself and his associates. We believe also that he is withheld only by feelings of personal regard and affection, highly honourable to him as a man, from avowing publicly what he regards as a radical difference between Dr. Nevin and himself. The fact, however, that he voluntarily consents to be misapprehended, rather than appear to desert a friend or turn against a brother, does not render such misapprehension the less certain or injurious. So long as he not only fails publicly to avow his dissent from Dr. Nevin, but continues, as he does even in this his latest publication, to speak of him in terms of such high commendation, he has no right to expect that Protestants can regard him with confidence.

The relation in which these two gentlemen stand to each other seems indeed to be very generally mistaken. Dr. Schaff has been frequently represented in the public prints, as the master spirit, and Dr. Nevin as his neophyte. Everything German or Romish which emanates from the latter, has been attributed to the instigation and influence of the former. This we believe is an entire mistake. In the first place, Dr. Schaff is much the younger man of the two. When he came to this country, fresh from the university, he found Dr. Nevin a man in mature life, of established reputation and extended influence. He looked up to him, therefore, as a parent, or at least as an elder brother, and has always stood in this relation to him. In the second place, Dr. Nevin is much the stronger man. We do not say the abler, the more learned, or the superior man—but simply the stronger; stronger in will, in conviction and in feeling. In saying this, we no more intend to put the one above the other, than if we had said that Dr. Nevin were the taller of the two. The strength we speak of is a matter very much of constitution, but it gives power. It determines who shall lead and who follow. In the third place, every one who knows anything of Dr. Nevin's mental history, knows that he was thoroughly imbued with the principles which have at length brought forth their legitimate fruit, long before Dr. Schaff came to this country. The roads which lead to Rome are very numerous. Some men go there by the path of inward experience. Sensible of guilt, unable to save themselves, ignorant of the gospel or averse to it, they gladly submit themselves to a Church which promises to save all who acknowledge her authority and submit to her prescriptions. Others, as the Puseyites, take the road of history. Conceiving of the Church to which the promises belong, as a visible organized body, it is a mere matter of fact, what organization of professing Christians has the best claim to uninterrupted succession, to external unity, and to catholicity, or wide diffusion. Every one can see that these attributes are found pre-eminently in the Romish Church, and therefore, by all the force of logic, they are constrained to bow the knee to Rome. Another road, less frequented and less obvious, but not less dangerous, is the philosophical. There is a strong affinity between the

speculative system of development, according to which every thing that is, is true and rational, and the Romish idea of a self-evolving infallible Church. As God is the principle which unfolds itself in history, so the Spirit dwells in this external Church as its principle of life, and expands it outwardly and inwardly in all its forms of doctrine, discipline and worship. No one can read the exhibitions of the Church and of theology written even by Protestants under the influence of the speculative philosophy, without seeing that little more than a change of terminology is required to turn such philosophy into Romanism. Many distinguished men have already in Germany passed, by this bridge, from philosophical scepticism to the Romish Church. A distinct class of the Romanizing portion of the Church of England belongs to this philosophical category. Dr. Nevin had entered this path long before Dr. Schaff came from Germany to point it out to him. It is, therefore, a great injustice, as we conceive, to Dr. Schaff, to make him responsible for the opinions and measures of Dr. Nevin. They do not stand to each other in the relation of deluder and dupe, of manager and tool, of master and pupil. Dr. Nevin has doubtless thought and acted for himself, and, it is probable, would have made more rapid progress Rome-ward than he has actually done, had his German friend and colleague never come to America. Though we do not regard Dr. Schaff as being at the bottom of Dr. Nevin's Romanism, we nevertheless think that the intimate association between them, and the silence of the former as to the anti-protestantism of the latter, and his continued laudation of him as a historian and theologian, justly expose him to the suspicions of the Protestant community.

Another external circumstance which gives just ground for these suspicions is the relation in which Dr. Schaff has placed himself to the "Mercersburgh Theology." That system, as developed in the writings of Dr. Nevin, and in the Mercersburgh Review, is anti-protestant in its theory of Christianity or the nature of religion; in its idea of the Church, of the relative authority of Scripture and tradition, of justification, of the sacraments, and of the ministry. Dr. Schaff would not be responsible for the teachings of his associates on any of these

points, had he not volunteered, as he has frequently done, to make common cause with them, and to endorse that system as a whole. We do not know how he reconciles this course to his own mind; because it is certain that his own teachings, on some of the most important of the points just enumerated, are directly opposed to the Mercersburgh system. Still, if the Mercersburgh theology is anti-protestant, those who endorse it must be content to share its opprobrium.

There is, however, a deeper ground for the prevalent misgivings respecting Dr. Schaff, than either of those we have mentioned. That ground is to be found in his own distinctly presented and frequently avowed principles. Though he differs from Dr. Nevin in some important points, and is, as we conceive, a far sounder man, yet he agrees with him in others, where both are antagonistic to the true Protestant doctrine.

The two most important points in which Dr. Schaff differs from Dr. Nevin, are justification, and the authority of Scripture as the only infallible rule of faith. On both of these points he assumed, in his earliest publication in this country, ("The Principles of Protestantism," printed in 1845,) orthodox ground. To this he still adheres, for in his farewell address to the readers of his monthly magazine, the *Kirchenfreund*, November and December, 1853, p. 472, he says, his position in reference to the great question between Romanism and Protestantism, is now substantially what it was then. In that work he defines justification to be "a judicial, declarative act on the part of God, by which he first pronounces the sin-crushed, contrite sinner free from guilt as it regards the past, for the sake of his only begotten Son, and then (freely, Rom. iii. 24, without the deeds of the law, v. 28, by grace, through faith, and not of himself, Eph. ii. 8,) makes over to him, in boundless mercy, the full righteousness of the same, to be counted, and to be in fact his own. It is in this way, 1. Negatively, *remissio peccatorum*, and 2. Positively, *imputatio justitiæ* and *adoptio in filios Dei*." p. 61. In a note he quotes the Confessions of the Lutheran and Reformed Churches, and says especially of the answer to the 60th question of the Heidelberg Catechism, that it is "a most clear, complete, and valuable definition." That question and answer

are: *Quomodo justus es coram Deo?* Sola fide in Jesum Christum, adeo ut licet mea me conscientia accuset, quod adversus omnia mandata Dei graviter peccaverim, nec ullum eorum servaverim, ad hæc etiamnum ad omne malum propensus sim, nihilominus tamen, (modo hæc beneficia vera animi fiducia amplectar,) sine ullo meo merito, ex mera Dei misericordia, mihi perfecta satisfactio, justitia et sanctitas Christi, imputetur ac donetur; perinde ac si nec ullum ipse peccatum admissem, nec ulla mihi labes inhæreret: imo vero quasi eam obedientiam, quam pro me Christus præstitit, ipse perfecte præstitissem.— This doctrine, thus stated, he calls, and justly calls, “the life principle,” the *principium essendi*, of the Reformation. Would that all the impugnors of Dr. Schaff would adopt *ex animo* such language!

As to the second point, viz., the authority of the Scriptures as the only infallible rule of faith and practice, we understand Dr. Schaff to stand on Protestant ground. “The *formal*, or *knowledge-principle* of the Reformation,” he says, “consists in this, that the word of God, as it has been handed down to us in the canonical books of the Old and New Testament, is the pure and proper source, and the only certain measure, of all saving truth.” p. 87. In the Theses at the end of his work on Protestantism, this principle is stated thus: “The formal or knowledge-principle of Protestantism is the sufficiency and unerring certainty of the Holy Scriptures, as the only norm of all saving knowledge.” p. 182. After showing how one general council of the Church often contradicted another, he adds, “If there be then any unerring fountain of truth, needed to satisfy religious want, it can be found only in the word of God, who is himself truth; and this becomes thus consequently the highest norm and rule, by which to measure all human truth, all ecclesiastical tradition, and all synodical decrees. *Artic. Smalc. I. 2, 15: Ex patrum verbis et factis non sunt extruendi articuli fidei. . . Regulam autem aliam habemus, ut videlicet verbum Dei condat articulos fidei, et præterea nemo, ne angelus quidem.*”

Following the older theologians, he teaches concerning the Scriptures, 1. Their normal authority. 2. “Their sufficiency or perfection; of course not in an absolute sense, as containing

all that can be possibly known of God and divine things, but relatively, as reaching to all things necessary to salvation, as distinctly expressed in the symbolical books, (*continet omnia, quæ ad salutem consequendam sunt necessaria.*) All traditions, accordingly, unless they be mere consequences drawn from the Bible, are either positively false, or contain only subordinate or unessential truths. . . . A merely oral tradition, in the nature of the case, must be subject to change and distortion, making it impossible at last to distinguish truth from falsehood. . . . 3. Their *perspicuity*; not absolutely, again, as excluding all mystery, but so as that all things indispensably necessary to salvation may be known from the Scriptures, without the aid of tradition or councils, if only the proper conditions are at hand for the purpose." Those conditions are, "the general command of intellect and knowledge" necessary to understand any book, and the guidance of the Spirit. The Holy Ghost alone can properly interpret the Scriptures, and the Spirit as a divine teacher does not dwell exclusively in the officers of the church, but, "where the word is read and preached, there the Spirit lives and moves and creates light; that is, in other words, the Scriptures interpret themselves." In case of controversies, he admits, in common with other Protestants and our own Confession, the ministerial and subordinate authority of synods, but "no such ecclesiastical authority is permitted to draw its decisions from tradition, but always again from the Bible itself only; and thus the principle of its self-interpretation in the Holy Ghost remains unimpaired." p. 81.*

It cannot, with any show of reason, be denied that a man who holds fast these two great fundamental principles of Pro-

* On the ministerial authority of the Church in matters of faith, Dr. Schaff quotes Calvin, *Instit.* iv. 9. 13: "Nos certe libenter concedimus, si quo de dogmate incidat disceptatio, nullum esse nec melius nec certius remedium, quam si verorum episcoporum Synodus conveniat, ubi controversum dogma excutiat. Multo enim plus ponderis habebit ejusmodi definitio, in quam communiter ecclesiarum pastores, invocato Christi spiritu, consenserint, quam si quisque seorsum domi conceptam populo traderet, vel pauci homines privatim eam conficerent." "He then," adds Dr. Schaff, goes on to establish this view, in part exegetically, (from 1 Cor. xiv. 29,) in part historically; adding in the end, however, that the Holy Ghost may forsake an entire synod, so that the decisions of such a body are not necessarily free from error, as history shows. *Hoc autem perpetuum esse nego, ut vera sit et certa scripturæ interpretatio, quæ concilii suffragis fuerit recepta.*

testantism, justification by faith, and the supremacy and sufficiency of Scripture as a rule of faith, and judge of controversies, is still a Protestant. While, therefore, we admit that the relation in which Dr. Schaff stands to Dr. Nevin and to the Mercersburgh theology, as well as some of his own avowed principles, (as we shall presently show,) justly expose him to suspicion, yet we cannot but regard him as standing on very different ground from that occupied by many of his associates.

The anti-protestant principles of Dr. Schaff, as it appears to us, are either included in his theory of development, or are its legitimate consequences. That theory he and Dr. Nevin for a time held in common. But it contains antagonistic principles. When carried out, the one must eliminate the other. And the precise difference between Dr. Nevin and Dr. Schaff, as we conceive, is that the former has given himself up to that element of the system which necessitates a return to Rome; while Dr. Schaff has remained true to that feature of the theory, which enables him to look on Rome as a station long since past, in the onward progress of the Church, to which she can no more return than a man can become a boy. In order, however, to understand this subject, it will be necessary to ascertain what is meant by "development of the Church." In Dr. Schaff's exhibition of his doctrine there is much that is true, much that is common presented in new form, and much that is new, anti-scriptural, and anti-protestant. The plausibility of the theory arises, in a great degree, from this large admixture of what every one is ready to admit, with subtle principles which spoil and pervert the whole.

There is a form of the doctrine of development, or of the constant advance of the Church, which we presume all Protestants admit. Their view on this subject we understand to be substantially as follows: 1. Christianity is a system of doctrines supernaturally revealed and now recorded in the Bible. Of that system there can be no development. No new doctrines can be added to those contained in the word of God. No doctrine can ever be unfolded or expanded beyond what is there revealed. The whole revelation is there, and is there as distinctly, as fully, and as clearly as it can ever be made, without a new supernatural revelation. Every question, therefore, as

to what is, or what is not Christian doctrine, is simply a question as to what the Bible teaches. There is no analogy, consequently, between theology and other sciences. The materials of theology do not admit of increase. They are all in the Bible. The materials of human science are constantly accumulating, as new facts are brought to light and old assumptions corrected. Theology, therefore, as it existed in the mind of Paul, and is recorded in his writings, is precisely what will be the theology of the last saint who is to live on the earth. Whereas the astronomy of Pythagoras is as different from that of La Place, as the men are widely separated in time.

2. While Christianity, considered as a system of doctrine, is thus complete and unchangeable, the knowledge of that system as it lies in the mind of the individual Christian, or in the Church collectively, is susceptible of progress, and does in fact advance. Every believer, when he first receives the truth, receives it partially, and necessarily mingles it with the previous contents of his mind, which to a greater or less degree perverts and corrupts it. As he grows in grace, he grows in knowledge. The more the Spirit of God leads him into conformity with the truth, the more correct do his apprehensions become, the more is the dross of error removed, and the more fully does he coincide in all his conceptions of divine things with the infallible standard of the word of God. With this increase of knowledge there is connected a corresponding increase of holiness, and of power to influence those around him for good. This is matter of daily experience and observation, and is in accordance with everything taught in the Bible, on the progress of the life of God in the soul. This progress is neither uniform nor constant. In some days, or even hours, the Christian may grow more than in years of ordinary experience. Sometimes his course is backward; he loses ground in knowledge, in faith, in love, in zeal and obedience. From these backslidings he is recalled only by the power of the Holy Ghost. This restoration is commonly effected only through a deeper conviction of sin, and a clearer apprehension and more cordial reception of the truth than he had before experienced. He becomes thus a better man and a more advanced Christian than he was before. It was thus with Peter; and it is thus

that the Christian is led from strength to strength until he appears before God. No part of a believer's life is isolated. As the present is conditioned more or less by the past, so in its turn it conditions the future.

There is undoubtedly something analogous to this in the history of the Church. The Jews, when converted to Christianity, brought with them a large measure of their former opinions and feelings. It was a long process, continued for generations, to free the minds of Christians of Jewish origin and training, from this incongruous element. The gentiles, on the other hand, brought with them much of their heathen philosophy. The history of the Church for the first four centuries is, in a great degree, the history of the struggle against this corrupting element in its various forms. From the one or the other of these great sources, Judaism or heathenism, errors were constantly arising, and the great object of the Church was to discover, and distinctly to state the doctrines of the Scriptures as they stood opposed to those errors. In this way there was constant progress, an increase in knowledge of the word of God, and of a distinct and consistent view of its various doctrines. This progress had reference, in a remarkable manner, in different ages, to some one or more great truths of revelation, which were the subjects of perpetual conflict, until the mind of the Church was brought to a clear and comprehensive view of what was revealed concerning them. There the struggle rested, never to be revived. Progress in that time became impossible, because all that the Bible made known of any essential importance had been searched out and combined. The decisions of the first six general councils concerning the doctrines of the Trinity and of the person of Christ, remain fixed to the present time. The Church has not departed from or advanced beyond them in any respect. So also in the Augustinian period the great questions concerning sin and grace were discussed, and finally settled. Since then there has been neither retrocession nor advance. There is not a principle as to the nature of sin, the natural state of man, his inability, the necessity and nature of divine grace, included in the statements on these subjects in the symbolical books of the Reformation, which had not received the sanction of the

Church in the time of Augustin. The Synod of Dort and the Westminster Assembly do but repeat the same statements. When at the time of the Reformation the doctrine of justification was the main subject which agitated the Church, the decisions arrived at by the Protestant communions have never since been called into question by any body of orthodox believers. It is not intended that with regard to any of these great subjects much diversity of opinion and of representation has not prevailed among individuals and classes, but simply that the results arrived at have remained settled, and have never lost their normal authority. That authority rests not on the Church, but on the Scriptures. It was simply because it was seen and acknowledged that the decisions of the early councils satisfactorily combined the teachings of the Bible concerning the Trinity and the person of Christ, that they have ever since been acquiesced in. For the same reason the decisions of the Church regarding Pelagianism were sanctioned at the Reformation, at Dort, and Westminster.

It is impossible to deny that there has in this sense been progress in the knowledge of the Scriptures on the part of the Church. The contrast between the indistinctness, inconsistency, and diversity of statement regarding the nature of God and Christ during the ante-Nicene period, with the uniformity and clearness which have characterized all ecclesiastical teachings on those subjects ever since the Synod of Constantinople, is undeniable and undenied. The same remark applies to the other great subjects above referred to. It is a matter of familiar experience, that our views, prior to any special examination, of some particular doctrine, are vague and undefined, but after we have been led to a special and careful study of the word of God respecting it, our knowledge becomes distinct, and our convictions settled. As this is true of Christians individually, it is no less true of Christians collectively, or of the Church. When from the rise of error or from other providential circumstances, the Church has been led to make some particular doctrine the special subject of investigation and controversy, for years or even centuries, it would be strange indeed, even on natural principles, and without regard to the promise of Christ to guide his people into the knowledge of the truth, if

clearer knowledge and firmer convictions were not the result. Such results, as already remarked, become the permanent possession of the Church, and are never lost. They are held as part of the faith of the true Church, no matter how corrupt or heterodox the outward church, or body of professing Christians, may become.

Besides the progress above described, effected, as it were, by distinct stages, there is also in the course of ages a general advance in the knowledge and purity of the Church. The evangelical churches of the present day are more enlightened, freer from superstitious observances, from the dregs of Judaism and heathenism, than at any previous period of history. The churches founded by the apostles were filled with Judaizers. The Christians of Jerusalem were so zealous for the law of Moses, that Paul was hardly safe among them, and he feared they would not even receive at his hands the contributions of their gentile brethren for the relief of their poor. Even Peter was afraid at Antioch so much as to eat with the gentiles. The epistles of the New Testament afford abundant evidence how much false doctrine and superstition the early Christians brought with them into the Church.

Again, if we compare the writings of the apostolic fathers, Clemens, Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius, Polycarp, and Papias, with those of the Reformers, the difference is as great as between the story-books for children and the highest productions of learning and talent. It is an undeniable fact, that the fifteen centuries preceding the Reformation produced no work which admits of comparison for correctness, clearness, and comprehension in the exhibition of scriptural truth, with the Augsburg or Helvetic Confessions, the Thirty-nine Articles, or the Heidelberg or Westminster Catechism. To deny the advance of the churches of the Reformation beyond those of the early centuries, would be as unreasonable as to deny the superiority of our present modes of travelling to those in use a hundred years ago. It is not less certain that the evangelical churches of the present day are in advance of the churches of the Reformation. The wonder is, not that the Reformers brought out with them so much of the superstitions and errors of Popery, but that they brought out so little. The subjects to be com-

pared are not the nominal Christians of our day with the real Christians of that day; but the true people of God of the one period with his true people of the other. If we compare the Rationalists of Germany with the early Lutherans, the advantage is immeasurably in favour of the latter. But if we compare our purest churches of this period with the purest of that, the advantage is all the other way. It would shock any genuine Protestant of our age to enter one of the old Lutheran churches, with their images, crucifixes, and altars. It would be impossible for Luther now to refuse the name of Christians to his reformed brethren, because they denied the doctrine of consubstantiation. Nor would any of the reformed now venture or desire to teach what Calvin, Beza, and Turretin taught of the union of the Church and State, and of the power of the civil magistrate in matters of religion. The progress of the Church, as above stated, we do not understand any of the most strenuous of the opposers of the theory of development, to deny. It is a historical fact which does not admit of denial.

3. In perfect consistency with this view of the progress of the Church, it is the common doctrine of Protestants that a later age may in every respect be inferior to a previous one. As in the individual Christian's life, there are often periods of backsliding, during which he is in a far worse condition spiritually than he was before, so in the Church there are periods of decline and decay, and even, so far as the external Church is concerned, of apostasy. The tenth century was far behind the second, and the state of the Romish Church before the Reformation tenfold worse than what it was in the days of Clemens Romanus. In like manner, the present state of Germany is immeasurably below its religious condition in the time of Luther. In all these cases we must make a distinction between the true and nominal Church, between sincere and professing Christians. The former may retain their integrity in the midst of the degeneracy and apostasy of the latter. In maintaining the progress of the Church in knowledge and purity, Protestants do not understand by the Church the body of professing Christians, but the true body of Christ. The true Church may attain its highest state of spiritual excellence,

in the midst of the general defection of the external body. This will probably be realized in a remarkable manner when Christ comes to judgment. He may hardly find faith on the earth, as it was hard to find during the tenth century, but believers, who shall then be looking for the coming of the Lord, may be standing at an elevation which the Church has never yet reached.

4. The Church is always equally near to Christ and to the holy Scriptures as the source of life. It does not derive its resources mediately through those who have gone before, but directly from the Lord. The illustration of a stream constantly receding from its source and increasing in volume, is essentially fallacious. No less so is the illustration drawn from a tree, as that figure is applied by the advocates of the new theory of development. According to their view, the present race of Christians have no connection with Christ but through the Church extending back eighteen centuries, just as the water of a river at its mouth is connected with its source only by the intervening stream. In like manner, the topmost leaves of a tree are connected with the root, only through the branches and the trunk. To dissever the leaf from its branch, is to dissever it from the root. Thus an individual Christian comes into connection with Christ only through the Church, and separation from the Church is of necessity separation from Christ. In opposition to this we maintain that Christ is present to the Church in all ages and places, as the soul is present in the body, equally and entirely in every part. The individual believer gets his life by immediate union with Christ, and not through the Church. We are not separated from Christ as we are from Adam, and partakers of the nature of the former as we are of the latter, only through a long chain of intervening links, which fails if one be gone. This topic we shall have occasion to refer to again. We advert to it now only to bring into view an important feature of the Protestant doctrine on this subject. Instead of the Church of one age being dependent for its life upon those which precede it, and obliged to gain access to Christ and the truth through them, we all have direct access to Christ and his word. We go to him for life, and to his word for knowledge. Should the Bible be left on a

populous island, and its inhabitants be brought by the Spirit of God to a saving knowledge of its truths, their union with the Redeemer would be as real and as vital as ours. We are, indeed, not separated from the past in our religious, any more than we are in our social and civil life. The political state of a nation in one age is in a great measure determined by its previous history. And so, too, the condition of the Church in one age is largely influenced by ages which have gone before. But this is not inconsistent with what has just been said. Spiritual life is not made over to the individual from his spiritual predecessors, with all its intellectual contents, just as human nature is made over to him from his ancestors with all its modifications as peculiar to his family, age or nation. This again is consistent with the admission that every age and denomination has its peculiar form of religious life, which is in fact transmitted. This only proves that spiritual life as derived from Christ is modified by the peculiar training to which the recipient is subjected, so that the piety of a Moravian, a Jansenist, or a Seceder, has its characteristic type. This is a fact which may not attract the attention of those who have been conversant with Christians of only one class. But those who have seen much of Christians of different countries and of different Churches, cannot fail to have been struck with two things: first, the remarkable agreement between them in all essential matters of doctrine and experience; and secondly, with the strongly marked peculiarity due to their denominational training. This is an interesting and important subject, and admits of manifold illustration and confirmation. But it cannot be here pursued.

The true doctrine of Church progress, then, as it is held by the great body of enlightened Protestants, we understand to be, 1. That Christianity, as a system of doctrine, is contained in the Bible in all its completeness, and is utterly incapable of any development. 2. But as the converts to Christianity bring with them many of their former opinions and prejudices, the elimination of these foreign elements is a work of time, and progressive. And as the doctrines of the Bible are to be gathered by a comparison and combination of all the scattered teachings of the Scripture concerning them, it has only been

by protracted examination and controversy that the mind of the Church has been brought to a comprehensive knowledge and settled conviction relating to them. The knowledge thus obtained remains a secure and unalterable possession. Thus it is historically true that the Church, in the first six centuries, arrived at a full and satisfactory statement of what the Scriptures teach concerning the Trinity and the person of Christ, which has never since been altered. Then, by a like process, the teachings of Scripture concerning sin and grace, were definitively settled; and then concerning justification. The truth on all these subjects was indeed always in the mind of the Church, and was stated with more or less distinctness by individuals. But this was in the midst of great diversity, vagueness and contradiction, very different from the clearness and comprehensiveness ultimately arrived at. Thus it is that the Church at the time of the Reformation was far in advance, as to knowledge and purity, of the Church of the early centuries.

3. While the true Church is thus, on the whole, advancing in knowledge and purity, the outward Church may be, and often has been, in a state of great corruption, both as to doctrine and manners, so as to sink far below its condition in previous ages.

4. The Church of the present does not derive its life by way of transmission from the Church of the past, but immediately from Christ by his word and Spirit, so that while inheriting the results and attainments of former ages to aid her in understanding the Scriptures, her faith always rests immediately on the word of God.

There is another form of the doctrine of development which it is necessary to distinguish from that of Dr. Schaff. It supposes that of the truths of Christianity some are revealed expressly in the Scriptures, some are there only implicitly, or in embryo, and some are not contained in the Bible at all. It is the office of the Church to teach what the Scriptures expressly reveal; to unfold gradually the germs of truth to their full compass, and to add new articles of faith by giving to matters of opinion the sanction of divine authority. This is the theory of some Romanists and of many Anglicans. Thus, from the simple religion of the New Testament, has the vast system of the Romish theology and hierarchy been gradually evolved, by

a natural process of divinely guided development. Out of the simple direction to anoint the sick with oil, has grown the sacrament of extreme unction. Out of the directions of the New Testament about receiving and excluding members from church communion, have grown the sacrament of penance, the doctrine of satisfactions, of indulgences, and purgatory, of prayers and masses for the dead. Out of the prominence of Peter has been developed the supremacy of the Pope. Thus what was once a twig is now an oak, or rather, an upas tree. As the New Testament is a development of the Old, so the present church system is a development of the New. The doctrines of the Trinity, the incarnation, the sacrifice of Christ, the resurrection, and eternal life, lie only potentially, it may be said, in the Old Testament; they are clearly unfolded in the New. The whole Bible is the record of the gradual development of the original promise, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head." From the beginning to the close of the New Testament period, this process of development was carried on by a succession of inspired men, raised up, from time to time, to reveal new truths, or to unfold old ones. Since that time it has been carried on by an inspired, and therefore, an infallible church. It is freely admitted by the advocates of this theory, that many things now essential are not revealed in Scripture at all, or at most, only in the way of hints or intimations. Among these things they have the candour to include the three orders of the ministry, the government of the Church by bishops, the doctrine of apostolic succession, &c. We mention this theory, not for the purpose of discussion, but simply to distinguish it from that of Dr. Schaff, with which it seems in some cases to be confounded.

In endeavouring to present a view of Dr. Schaff's theory of historical development, we shall not confine ourselves to what he says in the book under review, but refer also to his earlier work written expressly on this subject, and to his *Principles of Protestantism*.

1. The first remark we have to make respecting it is, that it is new. It is confessedly a departure from the orthodox Protestant view of the subject. According to the orthodox Protestant historians, he says, "The Church continued to be some-

thing complete in its nature from the beginning, not needing nor admitting any proper development. All activity in the sphere of doctrine, was apprehended only under the form either of a vindication or denial of truth, as orthodoxy or heresy. The orthodox was always stable, always agreeing with itself; the heretical appeared as the subject of perpetual change; so that the history of doctrine resolved itself at last into a mere history of heresy. . . . The entire Protestant system was supposed to be found immediately and literally in the Bible, even in the Old Testament itself, and in the practice and life of the first period of the Church; so that the whole intermediate history was made to sink in fact into an unmeaning episode."* This view of history our author rejects. He distinguishes the "stand-point of organic development" as the modern view of the subject. "The orthodox treatment of history, as well as the rationalistic, came to a dissolution by the irresistible process of their own development, under the one sided tendency which belonged to each."† There is, therefore, a conscious departure on the part of Dr. Schaff from the Protestant method of regarding history, and especially the history of the Church; and this, as he himself is aware, involves of necessity departure from the Protestant view of the nature of Christianity, and consequently of the Church.

2. A second remark on this theory is, that it rests on a pantheistic basis. It owes its origin to the modern pantheistic school of philosophy, and has been introduced into general currency in Germany by the more or less devoted adherents of that school. It is not intended by this remark to intimate that all the advocates of this theory of development are pantheists. Dr. Schaff says there is "a pantheistic feature which runs through the whole system" of Popery,‡ without intending to represent all papists as pantheists. In like manner we say there is an element of pantheism which underlies this whole theory, and gives it its distinctive character. This may become more apparent in what follows. It is enough now to refer to

* *What is Church History? A Vindication of the Idea of Historical Development*, p. 50.

† *Ibid.* p. 81.

‡ *Principles of Protestantism*, p. 73.

the fact that our author himself refers to Schelling, Hegel, and Schleiermacher, as the great authors of this theory; of whom the two former are admitted pantheists, and with regard to the last, it was ever a matter of doubt on which side of the line he really stood. Having spoken of Herder as preparing the way for modern historiography by his "apprehension of it as a living spirit, a process of organic development," he says, the turn taken at that time in philosophy "served to bring to clear consciousness, and systematic order, the ideas irregularly thrown out by Herder and his spiritual allies. Schelling overcame the stand-point of critical reflexion as established by Kant, and the subjective idealism of Fichte;* planted himself on the ground of realism and the objective reason, and applied himself, with the fond partiality of his younger years, to the speculative study of nature, under the view of a self-unfolding organic process. His disciple and successor, Hegel, carried the principle of a dialectic development, with the most amazing energy of thought, into every sphere of the philosophy of spirit. We wish not to endorse Hegel's theology (theory?) of development without qualification, but whatever may be thought of it, one thing is certain. It has left an impression on German science that can never be effaced; and has contributed more than any other influence, to diffuse a clear conception of the interior organism of history, as a richer evolution continually of the idea of humanity, as well as a proper respect for its universal and objective authority, in opposition to the self-sufficient and arrogant individualism of the rationalistic school. . . . According to the whole stand-point of this philosophy, history is a self-evolution of the absolute spirit, and hence absolutely rational throughout;† the massacre of St. Bartholomew's and the French revolution included! From this, of course, Dr. Schaff shrinks. He does "not endorse Hegel's theory of development without qualification." He admits that this philosophy "makes the individual the blind organ of the world-spirit; evil is held to be the necessary medium for reach-

* A very mild term for a system according to which, self is the sole existence in the universe, and all things else, nature, God, are only as we think them into being.

† *Historical Development*, p. 75.

ing good, and thus the idea of guilt and moral accountability is necessarily lost." Still, he says, "It has led the way for many to a historical and churchly spirit, and proved an admirable help towards the overthrow of common rationalism, and a thorough speculative understanding and defence of orthodoxy." In his work on the Principles of Protestantism, Dr. Schaff says: "Speak as men may against German transcendentalism, as the word passes here in a wholesale way, this at least no one acquainted with the subject can deny; that at the very time when the most celebrated theologians cast away the cardinal evangelical doctrines of the incarnation and atonement, as antiquated superstitions, Schelling and Hegel stood forth in their defence, and claimed for them the character of the highest reason; and that while the reigning view saw in history only an aggregate of arbitrary opinions, a chaos of selfish passions, they taught the world to recognize in it the ever opening sense of eternal thoughts, an always advancing development of the idea of humanity and its relations to God. Such views must gradually overthrow the abrupt, revolutionary, and negative spirit which characterized the last century, restoring respect for the Church and its history, and making room for the genuine power of the positive."* This is a remarkable passage when it is considered that the incarnation of which these philosophers speak is simply the revelation of the absolute spirit in man. What the Bible teaches of the Son of God, they say is true of the race. Mankind are God manifest in the flesh. But the important point, for our present purpose, is the sanction it gives to the Hegelian idea of history, in the form in which it is here presented, as "an ever opening sense of eternal thoughts; an always advancing development of the idea of humanity."

In tracing the origin of his theory of development, Dr. Schaff proceeds: "Of much more account than the philosophy of Schelling and Hegel, for the formation of German theology, has been the influence of Schleiermacher, the greatest theological genius, we may say, since the Reformation. . . . There is not to be found now a single theologian of importance, in

* Principles of Protestantism, p. 150.

whom the influence of his great mind is not more or less to be traced. History, to be sure, was not his sphere. . . . Still, however, by his profound doctrinal and moral views, he has influenced indirectly the treatment of historical theology also, to a most important extent. The productive, strictly evangelical element in his system, is found in this, that he placed the person of Christ, as the Redeemer and author of a new life, in the centre of theology; put emphasis on the idea of communion in religion; and in this manner opened the way at last for a churchly tendency. He forms a supplementary counterpoise over against the Hegelian thus far, that he fastens his eye sharply upon the original and specific in Christianity, and instead of starting from the idea, makes religious experience rather the fountain of dogmatic knowledge."* We hope and believe that Schleiermacher became a theist and a Christian before his death, but the thoroughly pantheistic ground of his philosophy and theology is acknowledged even by such men as Dorner. In what Dr. Schaff calls his "masterly Discourses on Religion,"† the name of God, we believe, does not once occur. The whole book is a hymn of praise to the "Holy Universe," and the author sacrifices clouds of incense to the manes of Spinoza. The principles of the reigning philosophy in Germany, in passing through the hands of Schleiermacher into the sphere of theology, did not lose their pantheistic character. Certain primary principles, modes of thought and expression, having their origin in that philosophy, have passed over to a whole class of writers, especially of the school of Schleiermacher, which give a distinctive character to their theology. You may pass from reading Twisten or Ullmann to the writings of Nevin and Schaff,‡ without a jar. You find the same thoughts, the same modes of statement, and the same forms of expression. The essay from Ullmann, printed as an introduction to Dr. Nevin's "Mystical Presence," might have been written at Mercersburgh, and the "Mystical Presence"

* Historical Development, p. 77.

† Principles of Protestantism, p. 147.

‡ We refer here to Dr. Nevin's earlier works, such as his *Mystical Presence*, and also to Dr. Schaff's earlier American publications.

itself might have emanated from Heidelberg, without exciting the least surprise.

The pantheistic genesis of the theory of organic development is historically certain, and is in fact distinctly traced by our author himself. The internal evidence of its origin is, however, no less clear. The pantheistic idea of history, as the self-evolution of the absolute spirit, is transferred to the Church, which is the organic development of the theanthropic life of Christ. It is impossible to understand the writings of Drs. Nevin and Schaff on this whole subject without a knowledge of the pantheistic philosophy; neither can it be adopted, without adopting many of its principles.* It is perfectly intelligible, therefore, how the Hegelian philosophy led the way, as Dr. Schaff says, to "a churchly spirit," as it led men to look on the Church as the development of Christ, very much as that philosophy regards the universe as the development of God.

3. A third remark on Dr. Schaff's theory is, that it involves a false view of the nature of Christianity, which is the source of far-reaching consequences. Christianity, it is said, is not a doctrine, it is not a rule of conduct, it is not a feeling, but a life. It is a new creation, a new principle, or law introduced into the centre of humanity, to be as leaven, gradually diffused through the whole mass. Christianity is not, therefore, a system of truth divinely revealed, recorded in the Scripture in a definite and complete form for all ages, but it is an inward living principle, an entirely new form of life. This life is something supernatural. It is the human life of Christ, or, as in him the human and divine are one life, it is the theanthropic life of the Redeemer. This is Christianity objectively considered; as it passes over, in the way of historical development, to men and exists in them, it is subjective Christianity.

* We repeat here what was said before in the text, that we do not intend to represent the gentlemen above mentioned as pantheists. There is a great difference between holding principles of pantheistic origin and tendency, and embracing the whole system. Dr. Nevin is abundant and malignant in his denunciation of the rationalistic and infidel principles of those whom he calls Puritans, but even he has not as yet ventured to pronounce all Puritans infidels. We regard Dr. Schaff with great respect as a Christian man, though we cannot but think that he has brought with him into theology many of the elements of anti-christian and anti-theistic philosophy.

The doctrine is, that as we are partakers of the nature of Adam, so we are partakers of the nature or life of Christ. Our nature as depraved in Adam, Christ assumed into union with the divine, so as to form one life, truly human, though raised to a divine power. He has thereby healed and redeemed that nature, and by participation thereof alone are we made partakers of his salvation. Christianity is, therefore, human nature healed, elevated, and rendered divine, by union with the divine nature; objective and perfect in the person of Christ, subjective and gradually developed as it exists in his people. This is the idea of the nature of Christianity presented in the Essay translated from Ullmann, prefixed to Dr. Nevin's "Mystical Presence;" it is unfolded at length, and "scientifically," in that work itself; it is distinctly avowed in Dr. Schaff's Principles of Protestantism, in his "Historical Development," and also, so far as the occasion called for it, in the work before us. The "Preliminary Essay" just referred to, is a discourse on the distinctive character of Christianity. Its object is to prove that "the life of Christ is Christianity." "Its complete sense and full objective value are marked, only when all is referred to the person of Christ, in which God appears united with humanity, and which by its very constitution accordingly carries in it a reconciling, redeeming, quickening, and enlightening efficacy. Thus apprehended, Christianity is in its fullest sense organic in its nature. It reveals itself as a peculiar order of life in Christ, [as humanity and deity united in one life,] and from him as a personal centre, it reaches forth towards man as a whole, in the form of true historical self-evolution, seeking to form the entire race into a glorious kingdom of God." p. 43.*

The distinction between individual and generic life, is much insisted on by these writers. "The distinction between an individual and a general life in the person of Christ," they

* On another page the Essay says, "The epoch formed by the theology of Schleiermacher has at least carried us irrevocably beyond the conception of Christianity, as being either merely doctrinal or merely ethical. . . . Christianity is a divine life, the principle of a new creation, which unfolds itself continually with free inward necessity, by its own force, and according to its own law." p. 26. "It is regarded as the absolutely perfect religion, because it unites the divine and human fully as one life."

say, "is just as necessary as the same distinction in the person of Adam; and the analogy is at all events sufficient to show, that there may be a real communication of Christ's life to his people, without the idea of any local mixture with his person."*

Again: "He took our nature upon him; but, in so doing, he raised it into a higher sphere, by uniting it with the nature of God, and became thus the root of a new life for the race. His assumption of humanity was something general, and not merely particular. The word became flesh; not a single man only, as one among many; but *flesh*, or humanity in its universal conception. How else could he be the principle of a general life, the origin of a new order of existence for the human world as such?" *Ibid.* 211. If the Logos became incarnate, it is argued, in the context, only in Christ as an individual, it would have no significancy for us. He became incarnate in humanity, and thus raised it into union with the divine nature so as to form one life.

Dr. Schaff says also on this point, "Christ is not merely a single man, among other men; he bears at the same time a universal character, as the Saviour of the world. Hence the evangelist says, not, ὁ λογος ἀνδρωπος ἐγενετο, which would denote merely a human individual; but σαξξ ἐγενετο, to show that he assumed humanity, or the general human nature. . . . The Son of God became man not for his own sake, but for ours; and for us he still continues man in eternity. His humanity then must avail to our advantage; only by means of it, can we be permanently united to the divine nature. Only through our participation in its imperishable vitality [the vitality of Christ's humanity, *i. e.*, of humanity as elevated by its union with the divine nature,] is the power of sin and death gradually eradicated, and a new glorified body, which shall be like his own, prepared for our use. . . . The specific character of Christianity consists in this, that it is the full reconciliation and enduring life-union of man with God, continuing in the person of Jesus Christ. The life of Christ, which is neither simply divine, nor simply human, but divine-human, flows over by the different means of grace to believers, so that, as far as their new nature reaches,

* *Myst. Prcs.*, p. 161.

they do not live themselves, but Christ in them.”* This life of Christ “is in all respects a true human life.” “Humanity stood revealed in his person under its perfect form. Not a new humanity discovered from that of Adam, but the humanity of Adam itself, only raised to a higher character, and filled with new meaning and power, by its union with the divine nature.” It is this divine-human life, as it existed in Christ, which passes over to his people. “In this way they all have part in his divinity itself; though the hypostatical union, as such, remains limited, of course, to his own person.” As the humanity of Christ is the indispensable medium of our participation in his person as divine, it must be his whole humanity, body as well as soul. “The life of Christ is one; to enter us at all, it must enter us as a totality.” “The life to be conveyed to us in the present case, we have just seen to be in all respects a true human life before it reaches us. It is the life of the *incarnate* Son of God.” “Either the life of Christ is not formed within us at all, or it must be formed within us as a *human* life; must be corporeal as well as incorporeal; must put on outward form and project itself in space.” Christ’s divine nature is at the same time human in its fullest sense, and wherever his presence is revealed in the Church in a real way, it includes his person under the one aspect as well as under the other. . . . We distinguish between his universal humanity in the Church, and his humanity as a particular man, whom the heavens have received unto the restitution of all things.”†

It is not necessary to continue these quotations. The theory of Christianity as a life is sufficiently unfolded. Humanity, as it existed in Adam, and has flowed down to his posterity, is fallen and depraved. This fallen humanity was assumed, though without sin, in union with the divine, in the person of Christ. In virtue of this union, the divine and human become one life, which in all respects is truly human; the union with the divine only raising it to perfection. This divine-human life is perfect and complete in the person of Christ; imperfect and progressive in his people. *Humanity* is our nature as it ex-

* Historical Development, p. 36.

† The statements in the above paragraph are to be found in Chap. III. Sec. 2, of the “Mystical Presence.”

isted in Adam, and possessed by us as his descendants. *Christianity* is our nature as it existed in Christ, and is communicated from him to us. Objectively, or as it exists in him, it is stable; subjectively, or as it exists in us, it is constantly unfolding itself. By birth we become partakers of the humanity of Adam; by regeneration, we become partakers of the humanity of Christ. "*Christianity is the life of Christ,*" and that life, though united to the divine, continues human, and enters us as a human life.

This view of the nature of Christianity must very seriously modify our whole doctrinal system. First, as to the person of Christ. Here, in the first place, all dualism as to soul and body is denied.* In the second place, the human and divine natures are in him so united as to be one life. The human is divine, and the divine human. It is one divine-human life, which, however, does not cease to be "human in all respects." How this is to be reconciled with Scripture or with the faith of the universal Church, we do not know. What meaning is attached to these statements by others, it is not for us to say. But if we believed that Christ's human and divine nature are united in one life, and that life human, we should either believe that human and divine are identical, God and man one, *i. e.*, that men are God, and humanity a form of divinity, and become pantheists; or we should believe that the union of the two natures in Christ was nothing beyond the presence of God in the hearts of his people, and be Socinians. And to this complexion the matter, we doubt not, will come at last, notwithstanding the supreme complacency and sense of superiority with which the advocates of this whole system look down on other men.

Secondly: this view of Christianity must modify our views of the whole method of salvation. Our nature, corrupted in

* "Soul and body, in their ground are but one life; identical in their origin; bound together by mutual interpenetration subsequently at every point; and holding for ever in the presence of the self same organic law. . . We have no right to think of the soul (body) as a form of existence of and by itself, into which the soul as another form of such existence, is thrust in a mechanical way. Both form one life. The soul to be complete, to develop itself at all as a soul, *must* externalize itself, throw itself out in space; and this externalization is the body."—*Mystical Presence*, p. 171.

Adam, has been assumed into union with the divine. By that union, human nature in Christ triumphed over the principle of evil introduced into it by Adam. This is redemption. The human nature thus healed, ennobled, and elevated, is communicated to his people. This is regeneration and sanctification. On the ground of this renewed human, or in other words, this "divine-human" nature, introduced into us, we are accepted of God. This is justification. This is an exact and fair statement, to the best of our understanding, of the form in which these great doctrines are held by the advocates of this view of Christianity. They are not our inferences, but their own mode of statement of these vital truths. How far they differ from the statements contained in all the Protestant Confessions, none of our readers need to be informed. This is the historical development which Protestant theology has undergone since the Reformation.*

* On this subject Dr. Schaff says: "Adam is the natural root of humanity, from which the vital sap flows into all its particular branches. Only on the ground of such an organic conception of the relation of Adam to his posterity, can the church doctrine of original sin and its imputation have any rational sense. And so also on the supposition of the indwelling of the incarnate Word in the Church, a like intimate, or rather far more intimate mystical life-union of Christ with believers, that the cardinal doctrines of atonement, the imputation of Christ's merit, and justification through faith, can be successfully maintained against Socinian and Rationalist objections."—*Historical Development*, p. 35.

"The value of Christ's sufferings and death, as well as of his entire life," says Dr. Nevin, "in relation to men, springs wholly from the view of the incarnation now presented," that is, viewing the incarnation as a general fact, not the union of the divine with the human nature in the person of Christ merely, but the union of the Logos with the race, *i. e.*, genuine human nature. "The inward salvation of the race required that it [the race] should be joined in a living way with the divine nature itself, as represented by the everlasting Word or Logos, the fountain of all created light and life. The Logos, therefore, became flesh, that is, assumed humanity into union with itself. It was not an act which was intended to stop in the person of one man, himself to be transplanted soon afterwards to heaven. . . The object of the incarnation was to couple human nature in real union with the Logos as a permanent source of life."—*Myst. Pres.* p. 166. "The incarnation is supernatural; not magical, however; not fantastic or visionary; not something to be gazed at as a transient prodigy in the world's history. It is the supernatural linking itself to the onward flow of the world's life, and becoming thenceforward itself the ground and principle of the entire organism, now poised at last on its true centre." p. 167. This is the key to the whole system. The Logos became incarnate, not in Jesus of Nazareth only as an individual man, but in human nature. To partake of Christ's benefits we must partake of the incarnation, *i. e.*, of that nature in which God is incarnate. The atonement is not something external; "it is immanent in our nature itself." p. 166. "Whatever there may be of merit, virtue, efficacy, or moral value in the mediatorial work of Christ, it is all lodged in the *life*, by the power of which alone this work has been accomplished, and in the pre-

Thirdly: If Christianity, in the sense explained, is a life, it must be subject to "organic development," which is the law of life. "Only what is dead is done." "The plant is possessed of real life, and is the subject thus of a development which begins with the seed, forms itself from this into root, stem, branch, leaf and blossom, and becomes complete in its fruit. Here we have progress constantly from the lower to the higher; but still nothing is revealed that was not contained potentially in the germ." Man exists first as an embryo; "after his birth he makes the course of childhood, boyhood, youth, manhood, and old age. In all these changes he is *man*, and preserves thus in development the united elements of his nature; but in all, at the same time, he is yet different, inasmuch as his general nature takes continually a more definite form, and reveals itself in a higher and more perfect way. Still even the highest stage, the life of the old man, is but the full development of the life that was originally present in the child. This development we denominate regular and organic; since it follows with necessity an inward life-force, proceeds with equal, steady order, and continues true to the original nature of the man, till in the end it has brought the whole fulness of it into view. The German language, which is uncommonly rich and philosophical, has an admirable word that expresses all that is comprised in this idea of organic development. It is the word *aufheben*, which is so much used, and we may say, so much abused also in the Hegelian philosophy. It includes three meanings, namely, *to abolish*, *tollere*; *to preserve*, *conservare*;

sence of which only it can have either reality or power." p. 191. "The moral relations of Adam, and his moral character, are made over to us at the same time. Our participation in the actual unrighteousness of his life, forms the ground of our participation in his guilt and liability to punishment. And in no other way, we affirm, can the idea of imputation be satisfactorily explained in the case of the second Adam." p. 170. In a note, he says, "A fallen life in the first place, and on the ground of this only, imputed guilt and condemnation." So, as he argues, a restored life, "the divine-human life," and on the ground of this imputed righteousness and salvation. We do not know that Dr. Nevin now entertains the views on which he laid so much stress in 1846. He has certainly changed his position materially since that time. Then he could say the Pope is "justly styled Antichrist." (See his sermon appended to Dr. Schaff's Principles of Protestantism, p. 204.) Now he considers such a sentiment proof of the lowest state of degradation of Christian and churchly feeling. (See Mercersburg Review, Jan. 1854.) We should consider the exchange of the system unfolded in the "Mystical Presence" for doctrinal Romanism, in many respects a real advance.

and to raise to a higher state, elevare. All these senses are wonderfully combined in the idea with which we are now concerned. We may say, with the fullest truth, of man, that in every higher stage of his existence, his previous life is in this threefold view *aufgehoben*. The child is abolished in the young man, and yet is preserved at the same time, and raised unto a higher stage of life. The temporary outward form is abolished; the substance, the idea is preserved; not, however, by continuing to be what it was before, but by mounting upwards to a more exalted mode of outward existence."* Nothing could be clearer than this exposition. With no less clearness the theory is applied to the Church. Its development is not merely its external increase, nor its internal progress considered as an increased influence on society and the world, but it is organic. "It is no mechanical accumulation of events, and no result simply of foreign influences. Certain outward conditions are indeed required for it, as the plant needs air, moisture, and light, in order to grow. But still, the impelling force in the process, is the inmost life of the Church itself. Christianity is a new creation, that unfolds itself more and more from within, and extends itself by the necessity of its own nature. It takes up it is true, foreign material also, in the process, but changes it at once into its own spirit, and assimilates it to its own nature, as the body converts the food required for its growth, into flesh and blood, marrow and bone. The Church accordingly, in this development remains true always to her own nature, and reveals only what it contained in embryo, from the start. Through all changes, first Greek, then Roman Catholic, then German Evangelical, she never ceases to be still the Church. So the oak also changes, but never becomes an apple-tree. The expression *organic* implies further, that the stages of development, like the links of a chain, or better, like the members of a living body, are indissolubly bound together. Just because the Church does unfold itself from within, as now affirmed, obeying its own life-law throughout, the process itself must form a whole in which the several parts mutually complete each other." "The development in question includes the

* Historical Development, pp. 83, 84.

threefold form of action, which has been already described as expressed by the German word *aufheben*. Each new stage negates the preceding one by raising its inmost being to a more adequate form of existence." *Ibid.* pp. 91, 92. This development of the Church proceeds "by dialectic opposites or extremes." "Freedom from sin and error may be predicated of Christ and the Church triumphant, but not of the Church militant. So long, accordingly, as the elements of a still unrenewed life continue to work in her constitution, her development must necessarily include hard struggles and conflicts. Fanatical opposition to images produced image worship. Scholasticism gives rise to mysticism; the formality of the English Church to Puritanism; dead orthodoxy to Pietism. The truth lies in the middle. "The main stream of development, though full of turns, always moves forwards. We say purposely the main stream, which was formed first by the Greek-Roman universal Church; then by the Romano-German Catholicism; and since the Reformation appears in evangelical Protestantism. Along with this there are side currents that may dry away entirely. Large churches also that once formed the main stream of history may sunder themselves from the historical movement, and then stagnate and waste away in dead formalism. This is the case with the Greek Church, since its separation from the West, and with those sections of the Roman Church since the Reformation, that stand in no connection whatever with Protestantism." *Ibid.* p. 107.

"Every other view of Christianity," says the *Mercersburg Review*, January 1854, p. 49, "than that of a living and life-giving power, freely unfolding itself in the world by its own activity, and organizing for itself an outward form from the elements with which it is here surrounded, suitable to its own wants, and to the necessities of each particular age and nation, falsifies the history of the Church. If Christianity is not such a power so acting, then it must be a system fixed, determined and complete externally, as well as internally, in all respects. It must be not only one and identical with itself, but also the same unchangeably and in all particulars, in outward aspect, as well as in inward substance, in every period and country. From the start, it must have been fully and completely defined

in regard to doctrine, to feeling, to ethical principles and practice, to worship, and to all the various modes in which its activity is exerted. For being divine, it must be perfect, and, therefore, unchangeable, in every particular essential to its nature. The changes which have taken place in the Christian Church, its government, worship, doctrinal views and practice, consequently, must all be regarded as mere human changes, produced not at all by the action of the Christian religion, or any movement in the Church, but solely by the fleshly will of man. They must be looked upon, therefore, as altogether corruptions. And taking the Christianity of the primitive times as our model of perfection, we must make that of the present age to conform to it outwardly and inwardly and in every particular."

Our readers we think will agree with us, that making Christianity a life—the divine-human life of Christ, has far-reaching consequences:—1. It confounds and contradicts the scriptural and church doctrine as to the person of Christ. 2. It essentially modifies the whole scheme of redemption, both as to its nature and application, as we have already shown. 3. It involves the doctrine of organic development, which overturns all the established views of the nature of revelation and of Christian doctrine. Revelation can no longer be understood as the supernatural objective communication of divine truths, but the elevation of human nature to a higher state, by which its intuitions of spiritual objects become more distinct. The "religious consciousness," "feeling," "the inward life," "the *Gottesbewusstseyn*," or whatever it may be called, is the source of doctrinal knowledge. Christian doctrine is not a definite form of truth revealed in the Scriptures, but the variable form in which the Christian consciousness or life expresses its cognitions. Different systems of theology are not to be distinguished as true and false, but in a two-fold manner; first, as more or less adequate and free from admixture; and secondly, as expressions of different forms of religious experience, or developments of different germs of religious truth. Dr. Schaff says that Schleiermacher, the acknowledged master, "makes religious experience the fountain of dogmatic knowledge." He himself says, systematic theology "unfolds for the under-

standing the present posture of the church, with her faith and life, and exhibits always the latest self-consciousness, or in other words the religious spirit of the age." In another place, he says, "Theology is the scientific apprehension of religion."* It is the variable form in which Christianity, considered as an inward life, expresses itself to the understanding. In Christ, this "divine-human life" was perfect, and therefore, all his manifestations of it in the form of knowledge, feeling, or expression, were perfect. In this sense Christianity is something stable and unchangeable. But this same life as communicated to believers is feeble, and imperfect, and therefore all its manifestations, whether in the form of doctrine, discipline, or worship, are also imperfect. We get our knowledge not directly from the Scriptures, but it is included in the life which we receive from the Church. Christianity, moreover, being a life, assumes different forms under different circumstances, and at different periods, just as human life passes through various stages from youth to old age. The state of the Church in the early centuries as to her doctrines, discipline and worship, was the proper state for that period; not perfect, not free from evils, but still the genuine and proper form of Christianity. So her state during the middle ages was the true and proper form for that period. The Papacy was a legitimate development of what is included in Christianity. This period again was imperfect, beset with evils, through which the Church struggled to a higher state. The Reformation was a real advance; the Church then entered on its manhood. The past was *aufgehoben*. What was evil was thrown aside; what was true was preserved, and raised to a higher state. So the theology and religious life of the Reformation has experienced another *aufheben* into the theology of Schleiermacher and the evangelical Church life of Germany. The older Protestants, as Dr. Schaff says, regarded "the Church as something complete in its nature from the beginning, not needing nor admitting any development. All activity in the sphere of doctrine was apprehended only under the form of a vindication or denial of the truth, as orthodoxy or heresy. The orthodox was stable,

* Historical Development, p. 78, 28, 90.

always agreeing with itself. . . . The entire Protestant system was supposed to be immediately and literally in the Bible." In opposition to this, the theory teaches, that the Church was not something complete at the beginning, either in doctrine, discipline, or worship. Christian doctrines do not differ as true and false, orthodoxy and heresy. What is orthodox is not stable, always agreeing with itself. The Protestant system is not contained in the Bible, but is the legitimate development of what is therein contained. It must have a living connection with all that goes before. The idea that Protestantism is a true form of Christianity, and the Papacy and church-life of the middle ages an apostasy, is as incongruous as a living branch, a dead trunk, and a live root in a tree. The only possible way of defending Protestantism is to make Christianity a life, which unfolds itself in different forms, each true and suited to its time; first the Greek, then the Roman Catholic, then the Evangelical German.

In virtue of this view of Christianity, Dr. Schaff is enabled and required at once to speak of the Romish Church in terms so different from those used by the Reformers, who no more regarded Popery a legitimate development of Christianity, than the idolatry of the Hebrews was a development of the religion of Moses; and at the same time to turn his back upon Rome as something past. Judaism was something good enough in its day; but it has been superseded by Christianity. Popery was the actual and only form of Christianity during the middle ages; but Protestantism has reached a higher point.

This is the anti-Romish feature of the scheme, which must be allowed its due force, whatever points of affinity the theory may have with Romanism in other respects. Puseyism, as Dr. Schaff argues at length, looks back, and wishes simply to reinstate what is gone. He acknowledges the past, but looks forward to the future. He anticipates a state in which the Church shall be neither Romish nor Protestant, but when both forms shall be *aufgehoben* into something better than either.

As the conception of Christianity as a principle or life, the divine-human life of Christ, leads to unscriptural views of his person; modifies essentially the scheme of redemption, and the

mode of its application; involves the theory of organic development, with all its consequences; so, finally, it includes a new and thoroughly anti-Protestant view of the Church.

The Church, according to this theory, is a living organism as much as a tree or the human body. Its life principle is the "divine-human" nature of Christ, centring in him, but not confined to his person. Humanity, united with divinity as one life, belongs to him as an individual, but also to his people. It is the ground of their common life. The Church is, therefore, the continuation of Christ's earthly life. It is the historical development of his divine-human nature; so that, in the strictest and truest sense, the Church is the continuance of the incarnation. The Logos is united, not to the man Christ Jesus only, but with human nature, as historically developed in the Church.* All this is sufficiently apparent from the quotations already made. It is not necessary to prolong this already unduly extended article by a multiplication of proofs. The theory is clearly presented in the following passages from Drs. Schaff and Nevin.

* To understand what the Mercersburg writers mean by this, it may be well to advert to their view of personality, and of the relation of individual to general life.—"Personality unites in itself the presence of a spiritual universal life, which is strictly and truly the fountain of its own activity in the form of intelligence and will, and a material organization as the necessary medium and basis of its revelation."—Dr. Nevin in the *Mercersburg Review*, 1850, p. 559. The Church thus consists of many persons, with a common "spiritual universal life," which life is the humanity of Christ. "His person is the root, in the presence and power of which only all other personalities can stand, in the case of his people, whether in time or eternity. They not only spring from him as we all do from Adam, but continue to stand in him, as an all present, everywhere active personal life. . . . The whole Christ lives and works in the Church, supernaturally, gloriously, mysteriously, and yet really and truly, always, to the end of the world."—*Myst. Pres.* p. 169. On that page the following passage is quoted from Olshausen's *Comm. John* xiv. 20. Die Persönlichkeit des Sohnes selbst, als die umfassende, nimmt alle Persönlichkeiten der Seinigen in sich auf, und durchdringt sie wieder mit seinem Leben, gleichsam als der lebendige Mittelpunkt eines Organismus, von dem das Leben ausströmt und zu dem es wiederkehrt.

The 6th and 7th Theses on the Mystical Union, as given by Dr. Nevin, are—"The new life, of which Christ is the source and organic principle is in all respects a true human life." And, "Christ's life, as now described, rests not in his separate person, but passes over to his people, thus constituting the Church, 'which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.'"—*Myst. Pres.*, p. 167.

The former says: "The definition of the Church as the body of Christ implies, that as the life of the parent flows forward to the child, so the Church also is the depository and continuation of the earthly human life of the Redeemer, in his threefold office of Prophet, Priest, and King. Hence she possesses, like her founder, a divine and human, an ideal and real, a heavenly and earthly nature;" only with this difference, that the nature is perfect in Christ, and imperfect in her.

"The ultimate scope of history is this, that Christianity may become completely the same with nature, and the world be formally organized as the kingdom of Christ; which must involve the absolute identity of Church and State, theology and philosophy, worship and art, religion and morality; the state of the renovated earth, in which God will be ALL in all. In relation to single Christians, the Church is the mother, from which they derive their religious life, and to which they owe therefore constant fidelity, gratitude, and obedience; she is the power of the objective and general, to which the subjective and single should be subordinate. Only in such regular communion, and regular subordination can the individual Christian be truly free; and his personal piety can as little come to perfection, apart from an inward and outward communion with the life of the Church, as a limb separated from the body, or a branch torn from the vine."*

"Christ," he says, "dwells in the Church as an organic unity of different personalities and powers, as the soul in the body; and he acts through it as his organ, just as our soul, by means of the body itself, acts and exerts an influence on the world." The promise, "Lo, I am with you," &c., he says, does not mean, "My Spirit, or my consolation, or my truth, is with you always, but I, that is, my whole person, in which divinity and humanity are inseparably joined together. We must admit then the presence of the Redeemer in the Church—invisible and supernatural, of course, but none the less real and efficient on this account—in his glorified personality, with all the powers that belong to it, whether as human or divine."†

* Principles of Protestantism, p. 178.

† Historical Development, p. 32.

The way in which Christ's human nature is present, as to the soul and body, everywhere and at all times in the Church, is explained by a reference to the distinction between individual and generic humanity before mentioned. "The life of Christ, which is neither simply divine, nor simply human, but divine-human, flows over by the different means of grace to believers. . . . All this involves the uninterrupted presence of Christ, the God-man, in and among his people. His absence would rob us of the root of our religious existence, from which all living sap is derived into the branches. . . . In the Church, Christ carries forward, so to speak, his divine-human life, heals the sick, wakes the dead to a new existence, takes even young children in his arms by baptism, gives believers his atoning flesh and blood to partake of in the Lord's supper, speaks by his word, and ministers comfort, peace, and blessing, to all that seek his grace, &c., &c." *Ibid.* p. 36.

"The whole humanity of Christ," says Dr. Nevin, "is carried over by the process of the Christian salvation into the person of the believer, so that in the end his glorified body, no less than his glorified soul, will appear as the natural and necessary product of the life in which he is thus made to participate."* "Partaking in this way of one and the same life, Christians, of course, are vitally related and joined together as one spiritual whole; and this whole is the Church. . . . The union by which it is held together, through all ages, is strictly organic." p. 199. "Individual Christianity is not something older than general Christianity, but the general in this case goes before the particular, and rules and conditions all its manifestations. So it is with every organic nature. . . . The parts in the end are only a revelation of what was previously included in the whole. . . . Whatever the Church becomes by way of development, it can never be more in fact than it was in him from the beginning. . . . The unity of the Church then is a cardinal truth, in the Christian system. It is involved in the conception of the Christian salvation itself. To renounce it, or lose sight of it, is to make shipwreck of the

* Sermon on the Unity of the Church, appended to the Principles of Protestantism, p. 197.

gospel, to the same extent. There is no room here for individualism, or particularism, as such. An individual man dissociated entirely from his race, would cease to be a man. And just so the conception of individual or particular Christianity, as something independent of the organic whole, which we denominate the Church, is a moral solecism, that necessarily destroys itself. . . . We are not Christians, each one by himself, and for himself, but we become such through the Church." p. 200. "The life of Christ in the Church, is in the first place inward and invisible—but to be real, it must also become outward." p. 201.

The Church which is thus declared to be the continuation of the incarnation, the form in which the divine-human nature of Christ is continued and manifested in the world, is an outward, visible, organized, historical body. This idea pervades the entire system. The whole discussion is about the development of this outward visible body. It is this historical body, with its doctrine, discipline, and worship, of which these writers speak, and which they assert to be the body of Christ, the outward manifestation of his theanthropic nature; and which, having his nature as its life principle, has all his powers, and exercises his offices on earth of prophet, priest, and king; determining truth, imparting life, forgiving sins, communicating holiness, and securing heaven. These are essential and plainly inculcated features of the doctrine of the Church involved in this theory of Christianity, and of historical development.

More particularly, the theory teaches—1. The unity of this historical Church, both as to space and time. That is, there is but one Church on earth—the existing historical Church includes all Christians now living:—and secondly, the Church of all ages is the same. There can be no solution of continuity. The Church of the Nicene period, of the middle ages, of the present time, is one. In all these periods it has remained the living body of Christ. The outward has always been a revelation of the inward, and that inward is the divine humanity of Christ—it is his human life. Thirdly, as to the nature of this unity, it is organic. The Church is one, not from sympathy, or similarity, or contact, merely, but from participation of the same life. As all individual personalities

are the manifestation of a spiritual and universal life, which is the ground of their existence, and source of their activity, so the different persons of which the Church consists, and the different forms in which it appears, are only manifestations of the human nature of Christ, as it develops itself historically in the world.

2. The theory of course teaches that this outward historical Church is perpetual. This is involved in its unity considered as sameness throughout all ages. The idea of an apostasy of the Church is as horrible as the assumption that Christ himself should cease to be, or to be true to his nature; for the Church is Christ; it is the historical form of his human and divine nature. It therefore cannot fail, either ultimately or at any one period. To teach that the outward visible Church apostatized during the middle ages, is to teach that the head and feet in the human body may be alive, and all between be dead.*

* This is the reason why the Mercersburg Reviewers can hardly refrain from the use of profane language when speaking of this point. "Protestantism sets the whole process aside, overleaps the entire interval between the sixteenth century and the first, abjures antiquity clear back to the beginning, and claims to be a new and fresh copy of what Christianity was in the day of the apostles. . . . To make the Reformation a rebellion, a radical revolution, a violent breaking away from the whole authority of the past, is to give it a purely human, or rather *diabolical* character. It comes then just to this, that either the rebellion was diabolical, or else the ancient Church, back to the second century, was the work of the *Devil*, and not Christ's work."—*Mercersburg Review*, 1852, p. 25. "Without the idea of development, the whole fact of Protestantism resolves itself into a lie."—*Ibid.* p. 35. The Review says deliberately "that a Christianity which is not historical, not a continuation organically of the life of the Church," is false. To make the Church before the Reformation apostate, "is at least but a decent name for infidelity." According to this view, Dr. Nevin says, "Protestantism must be held to turn Catholicism into a wholesale lie. What if the so-called Church had existed before only under this form? It shows simply that the so-called Church was unworthy of the name, and represented in truth, not the kingdom of Christ, but the cause of Antichrist. So far as the Church was concerned, in its outward, historical organization, Christianity must be taken to have proved a failure; the gates of hell had prevailed against it for a time; it had become the synagogue of Satan." What if this state of things extended back to the early ages? According to this system, he says, "It only shows that the Church had been a synagogue of Satan all this time. To yield a thousand years here to the Devil, is no more difficult for the principle before us than it is to yield a hundred."—*Review*, 1854, p. 103. "The whole case is plain enough. The Christianity of the second, third, and fourth centuries . . . differed altogether from modern Protestantism, and led fairly and directly towards the Roman Catholic system." This is the simple fact. There are but two ways of reconciling this fact with Protestantism. The first is, "to treat the Church of the first ages as a wholesale falsification of Christianity in its apostolic form." "This,

This perpetuity of the Church necessarily involves perpetuity in doctrine, organization, worship, and discipline, in all that is essential. Though the oak, from the acorn to the full grown tree, may expand itself, it remains true to its nature—it never becomes an apple-tree. So the Church never reveals anything not contained in embryo in its original state. Accordingly it is asserted that “Nicene Christianity bore no resemblance to Protestantism. It carried in it all the principles of Romanism.” “Nicene Christianity, the system which the fourth century inherited from the third, was not Protestantism, much less Puritanism; bore no resemblance to this whatever, but in all essential principles and characteristics was nothing more nor less than Romanism itself.”—*Review*, 1852, p. 14. During that period, it is said, the fathers knew nothing of the Bible and private judgment as the principle of Christianity, and only source and rule of faith; they acknowledged the central dignity of the bishop of Rome, believed baptismal regeneration, the mystery of the real presence, purgatory, prayers for the dead, veneration of relics, the continuation of miracles, glorified celibacy, voluntary poverty, and the monastic life. The prelatical and pontifical system was then in full force; the eucharist was regarded as a real sacrifice, and to have the force of an atonement; the Church was regarded as imbued with supernatural power, and the ministry a true priesthood. Dr. Nevin (in the last number of the *Review* in a short notice signed “N.”) says, “The inquiry, after all, regards the Church and Christianity as a whole; for it is not possible to separate these from the Papacy during the middle ages. Christianity and the Church existed all that time under no other form.” The idea that the popes, cardinals, bishops, and other ecclesiastics of that period, who in so many cases, according to the testimony of Roman Catholic writers themselves, were heretical, lewd, treacherous, murderous, were the chief organs of the “body of Christ,” controlled by his life, and authorized to determine the doctrine, discipline,

however, is only another name for infidelity.” The second way is, to admit the Church of the middle ages, and under the Papacy, to have been a genuine form of Christianity, and to maintain that Protestantism is the continuance of the same life, a genuine development and fruit of the previous form of Christianity; which he evidently considers *posterous*.

and worship of the Church, is so monstrous a delusion, that its adoption seems to argue judicial blindness. The papacy of the middle ages had no more affinity with Christianity, than the idolatry of the Hebrews with the religion of the Old Testament. And it might just as well be argued that the worship of Baal was legitimate and right, because it so long was the public form of religion in Judea, as that the Papacy was a genuine form of Christianity, because it alone prevailed for centuries in the West.

3. This theory further supposes that the Church is imbued with supernatural power. Being the continuation of the incarnation, it is "the bearer of the truth," the organ through which all the benefits of redemption are communicated. The theanthropic life of Christ is carried over by its ministrations to believers; its ministers have more than earthly power; its sacraments have inherent objective efficiency. We become Christians only by union with this outward body. A man, it is said, dissevered from the race ceases to be a man, so a Christian separated from the Church ceases to be a Christian.

No man can hold and carry out this theory of the Church, without becoming a Romanist. The formal idea of Romanism is that of an outward historical institution, which is the body of Christ, his representative on earth, clothed with his powers as prophet, priest, and king; which is one, perpetual, incapable of apostasy, whose ministers and sacraments are the exclusive channels of grace and salvation, and out of whose pale no one therefore can be saved. As this theory of the Church arises from considering Christianity as a divine life, historically carried forward in a visible organization, it must exclude the idea of any such development as can save the cause of Protestantism. There may be such a progress as conserves the past; such an advance as Dr. Nevin finds between the fourth and fifth centuries and the sixteenth, the former period including all the elements of the latter, but never such a progress which of necessity rejects the past, in its peculiar outward historical form. Protestantism is in its very nature a denial and rejection of those very principles which Dr. Nevin teaches gave character to the religion of the Nicene period. The supremacy of the Pope, the authority of tradition, salvation by sacraments

as distinguished from salvation by faith, subjective justification, the priesthood of the ministry, the sacrifice of the mass, the power of the church to forgive sin, purgatory, the merit of works and especially of uncommanded works, as celibacy, voluntary poverty, and monastic obedience—against these doctrines one and all, Protestantism is a protest. It pronounces them anti-scriptural and anti-christian. If those doctrines are true, Protestantism is of necessity false. But these doctrines constitute the distinctive religion of Rome; and the religion of Rome, it is said, is the religion of the middle ages, and of the Nicene period. To adopt such a view of the Church, therefore, as forbids the admission of apostasy, *i. e.*, that forbids the assumption that those doctrines rejected by Protestants are false, necessitates the rejection of Protestantism. It has, therefore, we doubt not, been rejected by the whole Nevin division of the Mercersburg school.

In an early part of this review we remarked that the theory of Dr. Schaff included incompatible principles. Those principles are the doctrine of development, and the doctrine of the Church. These cannot cohere. The one must exclude the other. If the outward visible church be the living body of Christ, it never can assume an anti-christian form. It never can in its doctrine, organization, discipline or worship reveal anything which is not included in the life of Christ. It may not in all respects be uniform, or free from foreign admixtures, but it must remain true to its nature. Its whole characteristic life cannot at one period be what at another period is rejected. Truth is permanent. What was true during the Nicene period, cannot be false in the Protestant period. There may be a difference as between more or less perfect; but not a contradiction. The oak cannot become an apple-tree. The idea, therefore, of an outward historical Church, incapable of defection, such as the theory calls for, is inconsistent with such development as the theory calls for. *No* cannot be developed out of *yes*. Polytheism cannot be an expansion of the doctrine that there is but one God. We are reduced to the absolute necessity of admitting that the outward Church, during the middle ages, departed from the pure gospel, or of giving up the cause of Protestantism. The Mercersburg gentlemen put the case in

their peculiar way, when they say, "It comes then just to this, that either the rebellion [the Reformation] was diabolical, or else the ancient Church back to the second century was the work of the Devil, and not Christ's work." This is their dilemma, not ours. We do not hold to an entire apostasy of even the outward Church before the Reformation. It is an historical fact that (excepting the Arian ascendancy,) the inspiration of the Scriptures, the doctrine of the Trinity, the true divinity and humanity of the Saviour, the fall of man, redemption by the blood of Christ, and regeneration and sanctification by his Spirit, were held by the Church universal. These are not the doctrines of Romanism as distinguished from Protestantism. These are not the points against which the Reformers protested, and as to which they declared Rome apostate and anti-christian. The doctrines rejected by Protestants are those above enumerated, which Dr. Nevin affirms belonged to the Church as far back as the second century, and the rejection of which as false and anti-christian, he says, is tantamount to turning Catholicism into a wholesale lie. Now the dilemma is this: one element of Dr. Schaff's theory, viz., that which determines the idea of the Church, requires that we should regard those doctrines as true; while another element, viz., that which makes Protestantism a development of Romanism, requires us to pronounce them to be false and anti-christian. No man can hold both sides of this dilemma. He will either give up that idea of the Church, and adhere to Protestantism; or he will adhere to the idea of an outward Church, incapable of defection, and give up Protestantism. In other words, the Mercersburg theory of development is utterly incompatible with the Mercersburg idea of the Church. Dr. Nevin, therefore, has evidently given up the theory of development. It admits of no progress. The religion of the early Church, he says, was in all essential points identical with that of the middle ages, nay, was "Romanism itself." There has been no development in the case, and therefore, on his system, "Protestantism resolves itself into a lie." And this we doubt not is his conviction, and the conclusion to which he has been long labouring to bring the readers of his various publications. The authorities of the Romish Church, we as little doubt,

desire him to remain where he is, so long as he can plead their cause with so much greater advantage than he could as an avowed Romanist.

Dr. Schaff, on the other hand, has just as evidently given up the idea of the Church, in order to adhere to that of development, and to save Protestantism. That is, he admits the defection of the Church before the Reformation. He acknowledges that the whole array of doctrines rejected by the Reformers is effete and obsolete. Those things are passed away. But this is just what the other wing of the Mercersburg party says is to turn Catholicism into a wholesale lie, and make the ancient Church "the work of the Devil." As Dr. Schaff has thus far remained true to that principle of his theory, which enables him to look back on Rome as defunct, we trust and hope he may be carried further and further from the whirlpool which has engulfed so many who venture within its outer circles. There is, we think, good ground for this hope. His later writings evince a great improvement. This noble history reveals only here and there traces of principles which are made offensively prominent in his earlier works. Were it not for his antecedents and his associations, his history would excite but little uneasiness, notwithstanding the blemishes to which we have referred. We confess, however, we feel no little concern about the future. The pantheistic philosophy of Germany is a broad road, leading Rome-ward. Many of the best Christians of that country also, alarmed by the union of the liberal with the atheistic party, have turned to despotism in the State, and to something like infallibility in the Church, for protection. They are afraid of the liberty wherewith Christ has made them free, and desire again to be entangled in a yoke of bondage. Still "the Lord knoweth them that are his."

Ein' veste Burg ist unser Gott,
 Ein' gute Wehr und Waffen;
 Er hilft uns frei aus aller Noth,
 Die uns jetzt hat betroffen.