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- ART. I.—1. *The Directory for the Worship of God in the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, as amended and ratified by the General Assembly in May, 1821.*
2. *The Book of Common Prayer, and Administration of the Sacraments, and other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the use of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States of America.*

IF any feel amazement at the variety of forms in which the religious sentiment of Christians seeks expression in mental and bodily exercises, while, in all the cases, the God who is worshipped, the end of the worship, and the spirit which guides the worshipper are the same, they have but to consider this obvious and significant fact: That the spirit of God in the mind of man expresses itself in the various languages, and the various forms of thought and of actions familiar to the persons who are the subjects of his operation. The different forms of Christian worship are different languages employed to express one and the same sentiment of religion.

The people of different nations, under their various forms of social organization, differing from each other in their climates, their education, and their occupations, and having little assimilating intercourse with one another, have their various forms of expressing respect and disrespect, love and hatred; while the

of the church in this country with devout gratitude and hope. The names of Thomas Hastings and Lowell Mason, will be held in long remembrance, from their association, not perhaps with the original and fruitful genius like those which produced "The Messiah," or "The Creation," but with such a combination of musical genius and skill, with sound practical views of the high office of music in Christian worship, as has given the church a powerful impulse in the way she should go. The general style of church music to which they have given their valuable sanction, has already diffused a charm through the stated worship of many thousand congregations, and is destined to attend the progress of the Christian assembly towards the attainment of what all devout minds, by nature, conceive as the perfection of the sacred song;—the union of all voices in a perfect harmony.

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ART. II.—*Evangelische Kirchen-Zeitung.* Herausgegeben von C. W. Hengstenberg. Dr. der Phil. u. d. Theol. der letzteren ord. Professor an der Universität zu Berlin. Jahrgang 1845.

GERMANY, more perhaps than any part of the world, has of late years been the seat of religious agitations. The leading parties, or the principal elements in the struggling mass, are the German Catholics, the Rationalists, and the advocates of the standards of the church. The subdivisions under these heads are almost endless. The fermentation is the product of so many conflicting principles that it is no easy thing to form any intelligent conception of the religious state of that interesting country. We propose from the sources within our reach, to give some account of the more important movements which have marked its history during the past year.

Our readers are all aware of the hopes almost universally excited by the first appearance of Ronge. The absence of any decisive evidence that the Spirit of God was the source of his convictions and declarations, and the want of any clear indication of either a knowledge or zeal for evangelical truth, gave rise from the beginning to many misgivings. But as the movement in the first instance was in the right direction, as Ronge's protest

was against error and tyranny, and as the first declaration of faith made by the German Catholics asserted the supreme authority of the scriptures and the doctrines common to the whole church, it is not wonderful that favourable anticipations were entertained. These hopes however were soon dissipated, as it became more and more apparent that Ronge and his party were endeavouring to emancipate themselves not only from the errors and oppression of Rome, but from the gospel itself. This remark is intended to apply to the general character of the party, for no one is disposed to question that it includes men of very different principles and aims. Dr. Hengstenberg, though from the beginning an open and even an extreme opponent of the whole movement, does not hesitate to admit the truth of the following paragraph from a recent work by Dr. Ullmann. "No impartial observer," says that author, "can deny that the mass of those who have withdrawn from the Romish church, is composed of very different materials. There are among them some truly pious men, who long for the liberty of the gospel, who separated from the visible head of the church of Rome, in order to be the more intimately united to the invisible head of the church universal. Others are intelligent, honest men who feel the need of some better means of moral and religious growth than they had heretofore enjoyed. Others doubtless desired in freeing themselves from the church of Rome, to free themselves from all ecclesiastical restraints, and to give themselves up to general notions of civilization, human progress, virtue and perfectibility. And others there are, who form the advance guard of the movement party, men who are destitute of principles, opposed to all authority, and ready to take part in every scheme of agitation." Hengstenberg admits the presence of all these elements, remarking however as to the first, that a piety which includes so little of the power of "judging of spirits" can hardly be any thing more than a susceptibility for good and a natural fear of God. But the important question, he says, is, what is the governing element? What is that which forms the character and determines the influence of the whole movement? That the irreligious, rationalistic element is the governing one, Hengstenberg considers plain for the following reasons. In the first place, though the party in general terms say they wish to abide by the scriptures, yet in these days when language has lost its

ordinary meaning, and the most orthodox terms are employed in teaching heresy, this amounts to nothing. The real position of the party to the scriptures is apparent from their Leipzig confession, according to which not only the interpretation of the Bible, but the question whether it is to be regarded as historical or mythical, is left open. The fact that that confession passes over almost entirely the events of Christ's life, and makes no mention even of his resurrection, shows that its authors had no serious intention to adopt the scriptures as their rule of faith. This is still plainer from the work published by Ronge at Dessau in 1845. This little book, which consists of collections from the scriptures, is designed not merely for use in public worship, but to serve as a substitute for the Bible. In the preface, he calls on the wealthier portion of his disciples to furnish their poorer brethren with "this gospel." He says he has selected those passages which condemn tyranny over faith and conscience; those which declare the mere profession of doctrine (*Wortchristenthum*) insufficient; and those which serve to confirm Christian doctrine, especially the love of our neighbour, and which enjoin the spiritual and moral elevation of men, and the improvement of their physical condition. The book is made up of passages which have a polemical bearing, and of such as appear to allow an interpretation favourable to the Fourier community theory. The gospel here appears simply as a new Law, of its precious kernel there is scarcely a trace. The declarations against the Pharisees are freely quoted, but there is not a single passage relating to the divinity of Christ, and scarcely one relating to what he has done for us. Of the history of Christ nothing is given beyond what must be read on feast days; there is no miracle, no healing of the sick, brought forward. The weary, the heavy laden, the tempted find in this gospel, designed only for the happy, no consolation. What there is of power in these disjointed fragments, is in a great measure spoiled by a modernised, and, in many cases, designedly perverted translation. For "Holy Spirit" is regularly substituted "holy disposition." Even Matt. xii. 3, incredible as it may seem, is rendered, "Whoso speaks against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but he that speaks against the disposition that is pure and holy, to him it shall not be forgiven, neither in this life nor that which is to come." 2 Cor. xiii. 13, is rendered, "The salvation of our

Lord Jesus Christ, love to God and the communion of the holy disposition be with you all." "From all this," says Hengstenberg, "it is plain that a congregation which receives from its leaders such a patch work as this, is not far from renouncing the scriptures altogether, and that it is a piece of wretched hypocrisy to say that they are founded on the word of God. Our church is, in this respect, nearer to that of Rome, who gives even to its laity more of truth than is presented in this book of Rouge's."

Another indication of the real spirit of this party, is found in the fact that the daily press, the organ and mouth piece of the world, every where has hailed it with delight and aided its progress. The press knows what it is about, and it is to be lamented that Christians, instead of looking at things as they really are, allow themselves so often to be influenced and carried along by the spirit of the world, and then have to excuse themselves with the humiliating confession, "we did not think."

Again, he appeals to the personal character of the leaders. There is no depth, no earnestness, no power in them. Every thing about them is superficial, common, pelagianish. Contrast Rouge's declaration that he wished "to bring up the young to independence of thought and action," with Luther's dictum, "If you let a youth grow up out of his own soil, you will have a real devil on your hands."\*

With regard to the speeches and writings of the German Catholics Dr. Ullmann has truly said, "Through them all there appears a superficial humanitarian principle; a certain antipathy to every thing historical and positive, a lively sympathy with the religious and moral abstractions of the day; and it can scarcely be unjust to say, that if they would speak out, the majority would confess themselves more or less determined Rationalists."

It is, however, by adverting to the history of their several confessions, that the character of this party is most clearly seen. The first confession emanating from Schneidemühl and Berlin, was of a Christian character. That this did not fairly represent the spirit of the movement, is plain from the joy with which the Breslau confession was hailed, which was composed according to the taste of Bretschneider, who gave the two fold evidence to

\* As every thing Luther ever said is untranslatable we give his own words: So du einen Jungen in seiner Sode aufwachsen lässtest, wird ein wahrer Teufel daraus.

the German Catholics, "Make your confessions short," and "Set forth your faith only for what it is, that is, the faith of the present generation, *your* faith;" as though a faith not conscious of its own eternal perpetuity was worthy of the name. The whole Christology of this confession is crowded into the sentence, 'our Saviour, who by his doctrines, life and death has redeemed us from the bondage of sin,' and to this is prefixed the declaration that freedom of investigation and interpretation must be restrained by no outward authority. This seemed to be as far as any community, claiming to be Christian, could go, but the Leipzig confession took a further step into emptiness. Even the shadow of a Christology which was found in the Breslau declaration, disappears; nothing is left but a profession of faith 'in Jesus Christ our Saviour.' This miserable production met with almost universal acceptance; only here and there a congregation availed themselves of the liberty allowed them to add to this meager formula. The uselessness of such attempts was soon manifest. In Berlin the effort to join the first confession to that of Leipzig, failed; and after warm disputing it was decided to abide by the latter as it stood. And finally the failure of Czerski to produce a reaction and to give a more Christian character to the movement, proves its true nature. In the Provincial Synod of the German Catholics at Marienwerder, it was unanimously resolved to abide by the principles adopted at Leipzig, and with like unanimity the Synod declared against Czerski, and determined that if he would not consent to these terms and withdraw his objections, he should no longer interfere in their ecclesiastical concerns. Only a few hundred persons have taken part with Czerski, showing how decided and self-conscious is the anti-Christian spirit of the party. The conclusion to which Hengstenberg arrives after this survey is, that the German Catholic movement is only an outbreak of the anti-Christian spirit of the age, manifesting itself in the Romish church, because its corruptions gave the movement a plausible excuse; because the authority of that church presses more upon its members; because intolerance and arrogance provoke opposition; because that church has been for years the object of attack by the public press, and because less liberty of opinion is there allowed than among the Protestants and there was less hope, from the external power of the Papacy, that the infidel movement could there gain ascendancy.

The hope has often been expressed that good may still come of this movement. Having cast off the chains of popery, we may hope that the truth may gradually gain access to the people. We are ourselves inclined to cherish this hope; not on the extreme and unchristian ground, that infidelity is better than popery, but that the former is less powerful and durable than the latter. A community can live as Papists, but not as infidels. The children of these German Catholics will be either Romanists or Protestants. They cannot stand where they are, and the probability is, that having once escaped from the thralldom of the Pope, the majority will find their way into some Christian church. Hengstenberg, whose account of this matter, we are condensing, looks at the matter in a different light. "Can men, he asks, gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? As the germ decides the character of a tree, so the beginning of any religious movement, if it has a distinct character, determines its progress and its end." He sees also in the purely democratical character of the constitution adopted by the German Catholics, another reason for despairing of their improvement. Every thing seems devised to deprive the clergy of influence. The provincial synod of Silesia declared the independence of the several congregations to be the foundation of their constitution. The clergy, who are to bear no other title than preacher, have no vote in presiding at the meetings of the congregation or local synods, and they cannot sit as delegates from the congregations in provincial synods. In the synod at Breslau, "all cure of souls" was denied to them. There, and also at Stuttgart, the right of voting was granted to widows, married women, and to maidens. So much the better, in our judgment. This democratical character of the movement, bodes good. The people, and especially the women, cannot live on infidelity. We do not believe, indeed, that a community thus organized can long sustain a separate existence, but the freer it is, the more hope there is of dissolution in that form and of the assumption of a better.

Dr. Ullmann is disposed to give these new Catholics the credit of honesty. As they ceased to believe in the doctrines of Rome, he honours them for renouncing their allegiance to her; and intimates that those hostile to the doctrines of the Evangelical church, would do well to pursue a similar course. To this Hengstenberg replies, the German Catholics have not only left

their own church, but undertaken to found a new one, and to set forth a new confession. If a man has no inward bond to any church, he acts most honestly when he remains in the church within whose pale he was born. In that case he makes no profession, separation becomes a duty, only when explicit profession is required; and even in that case, it would be better to allow himself to be excommunicated, than voluntarily to withdraw. Is it not dishonest to feign a zeal for the church, to pretend to be concerned for its welfare, and to desire to found a pure society when a man cares nothing about the matter? The Leipzig confession is itself dishonest, when it professes faith in the Holy Ghost, meaning thereby not what the whole Christian church understands, but "good disposition." How much is implied in: I believe! How much is required honestly to say: I believe in God, as the maker and preserver of the world. The man should tremble, who ventures to say: I believe in Jesus Christ our Saviour, unless he believes in his true and perfect Godhead, for only on that assumption is he a Saviour or an object of faith. The very name of this new church is dishonest. The Jansenists had a right to call themselves Catholics, for they held the catholic faith; but this body rejects not only what is Romish but what is Christian. For what purpose then can the name catholic be retained but to deceive themselves and others? If they would be honest, the leaders at least of this movement, ought to acknowledge that their object is not to found a church, but an anti-christian society, which only for a time out of regard for the weak brethren and for fear of the civil government, assumes the guise of a church. That this is the real state of the case, is evident to any one who notices the public worship of these people. They make a miserable figure in the church. It is only when they get to the tavern that they feel themselves at home. There in the midst of feasting, ringing of glasses and calling of toasts, we could acknowledge a certain geniality in them, did we not remember they just before had been arrayed as clergymen, and dispensing the Lord's supper.

The future of this new church may be divined from the past. It has as yet found entrance only where unopposed. It has no strength to triumph over resistance. Its members are almost confined to the middle classes in the cities. It owes all its success to the daily press, a most uncertain ally. As soon as a new



subject of interest arises, this will be forgotten. The people will soon get tired of monotonous declamations against popery, and go elsewhere. The public will more and more see the inconsistency between infidelity and a church. It is only in Germany, where such a thing is no novelty, that the incongruity of such a combination could for a moment escape detection. The inordinate admiration of the heroes of the movement will soon be turned into contempt, and the new church will then be left to its own resources, and it will then be seen whether it can find the means of living.

Our author goes on to remark that as far as the Romish church is concerned, much depends upon the mode in which they deal with these new opponents. If they act on the principle involved in the words of Augustin, *christianus mihi nomen, catholicus cognomen*, they may gather strength from the conflict. But if they reverse the matter, and make the Catholic more prominent than the Christian, and fight this battle with Romish instead of Christian weapons, they will find that although they may triumph over their present weak antagonists, they will raise up others a hundred fold more formidable. In our days, says our author, it is hard enough to maintain the common faith of Christians, which has in its support the witness of the Holy Ghost in the heart, as to the traditions of men, blessed is the church that is free from them. If in this spirit we turn to the pastoral address of Princebishop of Diepenbrock, Breslau 1845, we shall receive a melancholy impression. It is from beginning to end Romish instead of Christian. It begins with the assurance that the bishop is in fellowship with the Pope, the central point of Christian unity, from which rays of light are shed over the earth. Then follows a long detail of the usual arguments for the authority of the Romish see; then an account of the seven sacraments; then mention is made of "the only saving church, and finally of the virgin Mary, to whose intercession the church looks for safety. In the conclusion there is something which at first view looks like Christian truth. "Humble faith" says the Bishop, "and pure love, Fenelon truly declared to be the sum of Catholicism;" but we are immediately informed that "humble faith is that which receives the doctrine of the infallible church, and pure love is self-denying obedience to that doctrine in all the relations of life." One would think the bishop considered himself to be writing

against men who received the common faith of Christendom as expressed in the three œcumenical creeds, and rejected only the peculiar doctrines of Rome, whereas they reject not Popery only, but Christianity.

Our author next notices, "The Mission of the German Catholics, Heidleberg' 1845," by Gervinus, a work which from the celebrity of its author, and from its falling in with the governing spirit of the age, has produced a great impression. The Christian faith, according to Gervinus, is superannuated; the church's day is over. Such a bond, as three hundred years ago, one half the German nation formed with Luther, can never be formed again. For centuries after his time, there appeared no history which was not instinct with faith, and in which every thing was not viewed in a religious light. All science, art and literature were imbued with the same spirit. It is in vain to expect that this Lutheran faith can ever be revived, or that another with like power can take its place. Those in our day who think so are strangers and pilgrims from a former age. Any new orthodox church must now play the subordinate part of a lost sect.—The Goethes and Schillers, the Vosses and Jean Pauls, the Winklemanns and Wielands, the Fosters and Lichtenbergs, have all cast off the shackles of doctrinal Christianity, and the cultivated part of the nation have followed their example. To attempt to bring them back, would only provoke a retort like that of the old Normans, who said, 'They would rather be in hell with their brave companions, than in heaven with the monks. The problem of our time is not to found new churches, but to heal the national wounds inflicted by the old ones. We must have a broad system of universal toleration, which shall supercede this strife for particular confessions, and introduce a national church union. This problem cannot be solved, without the assistance of the state. The civil authority should set forth the vaguest possible confession of faith, and require all to submit to it. Under this all comprehending rule of faith, the minor and stricter associations should not be allowed to exist. The German Catholic church has the high vocation of showing on a small scale, what should be done on a broad one. Its true significancy is not religious, but patriotic and politic. We may see in this movement the germ of a new revolution to last for centuries. True there is much reason to fear that the German Catholics, will be found

unequal to their calling. It is essential to success that the people should be pure, and their leaders sincere and earnest. Things have already occurred which seem to portend an abortive birth from the labouring mountain.

To all this, Hengstenberg remarks, first, that it truly sets forth the alienation of the great body of the educated classes from the church; and he thence infers the infatuation of those who, under existing circumstances, are calling for a democratical, by which he means, a presbyterian organization of the church. Secondly, that the writer correctly apprehends the nature of the Ronge movement, as not religious, but anti-christian. It is merely a new free-masonry. In this respect also he shames those pious people who refuse to open their eyes to the real state of the case. Thirdly, he remarks on the effrontery with which the writer avows that the spirit of the world is the spirit of God. He is thoroughly pantheistic; to him whatever is, is the product of reason; of sin, he has no conception. His confidence that all is over with the Christian faith rests on this pantheistic view. That faith, however, has conquered more formidable enemies than her present opponents, and that she is still to conquer, we may well hope from the progress she is now making in every land, and even in Germany, which to the writer, is the whole world. But admitting that the triumph of infidelity is definitive, it would only show that the last day is near at hand. Fourthly, as to the love and tolerance of which the infidels talk so much, we may learn something from what is now going on in Switzerland, and from the writer's own remarkably frank declaration. "The state," he says, "has nothing to do but to exclude the extreme parties from the common church union, to prevent all foreign (Roman) interference, and to forbid all secret religious exercises in associations and corporations; and then to incorporate, i. e., to take under the shield of its sanction, only those who adopt the vague confession of the new church." Here we see the very spirit which in the canton de Vaud has shut up all the places for prayer. Whoever does not submit to the despotism of an infidel state, whoever remains faithful to the creeds of the church, is not to be allowed to worship God; but as this he must in conscience do, the only remedy is the dragoons. Such, according to Hengstenberg, are the love and toleration of pantheistic infidelity.

Having thus followed the main stream of the new Catholic movement, our author turns to the "Protestant or Christian Catholics." Over the rise of this party, he sincerely rejoices, acknowledges they have already accomplished much good, and wishes them blessings and success. He however dissents from those who think that this party should at once be acknowledged as a separate church, for which opinion he gives the following reasons. Their numbers are comparatively small; they are divided among themselves; on the one hand, Czerski and his congregations, and on the other, the Berlin Protestant Catholics. The party has no controlling responsible leaders; it has no original, independent character of its own. It has every appearance of being the result of the influence of the "evangelical church" (i. e. the United Church of Prussia, formed by the union of the Lutherans and Reformed,) but not yet fully imbued with its spirit. This is a case in which it is wise to act on the counsel of Gamaliel, often as that counsel is misapplied.\* Every thing is in favour of waiting. How little room there is between the Romish and Evangelical churches, for new ecclesiastical organizations, is proved by the history of the Jansenists, who, with all the elements of life which they possessed, were not able to accomplish a durable ecclesiastical existence. The case would be very simple if the Protestant Catholics would adopt, as for a while they seemed inclined to do, the Augsburg Confession. Then they could be acknowledged as a part of the Evangelical church, and every liberty allowed them as to their organization and mode of worship. To the formal adopting of that confession, however, they have not been able to bring themselves; partly because they have not entirely freed themselves from the Romish doctrine; partly because of their fondness for the name of Catholic, and partly because they fear their influence on their former brethren would thus be weakened. Of one section of the Protestant Catholics it is stated, "The assembly of ministers and deputies of the Christian Catholic congregations of Schneidemühl and Thorn, has not adopted the Augsburg confession as a creed, (*Grundlage des glaubens,*) though they avow their agreement therewith, and have entered into a friendly relation-

\* BENGEL on Acts, v. 38, 39; *Causae apertae bonae assentiendum, aperte malae resistendum, sed in re subita, nova et dubia, eximie salutare est Gamalielis consilium.*

ship thereto. Still they have the purpose of framing their own confession, and of adopting a form of government and worship for themselves, and intend to retain the name of a Christian Catholic religious communion." Under these circumstances they cannot be acknowledged as "a communion friendly to the Augsburg Confession." Every thing depends on the question, whether, as in the case of the Polish Moravians, to which they refer, their difference from that confession is merely formal, or whether it is essential. If the former, then the ecclesiastical and civil authorities would be justified in acknowledging them on the ground of the Augsburg Confession as a Christian church. The investigation of their own confession is the more necessary, as by their own acknowledgment, their assent to our confession was a matter of constraint. They say they took this step "as the only means of securing a recognition from the state." Their confession is still in a forming process; serious changes have been effected in it during the past year, and therefore any immediate recognition would be premature.

Besides this movement outside of the evangelical church, others of still greater interest have been going on within its pale. Our readers have doubtless heard of the "friends of light," who have their representatives and organs among the Germans in this country. They are the extreme left of the Rationalists; the aggressive portion of the party that has long renounced its faith in the standards of the church. Its most prominent leaders are three pastors, Uhlich, Wislicenus and König. These men introduced a plan of agitation and combination. Holding, until forbidden by the government, public meetings at various points, at which full utterance was given to their anti-christian sentiments. Dr. Guericke of Halle, who belongs to the strict Lutheran party,\* was present at the time of one of those meetings, and sent an account of its proceedings to Dr. Hengstenberg's Journal, by which means the information was widely diffused. In this narrative, Dr. Guericke states that the pastor, Uhlich, a man of shining gifts and called the "protestant apostle" by his party, delivered, as president of the convention, a discourse with great skill and power, in which he specified as doctrines which

\* At the time of the union of the Lutheran and Reformed churches in Prussia, a portion of the Lutherans refused to accede to that union.

were to be rejected, "that of original sin, of atonement by the blood of Jesus, the trinity, the divinity of Christ, and the doctrine of the church (for the church is chargeable with all the misery that is in the world,) and all science not founded on common sense." The Pastor Wislicenus, having ascended the desk, delivered a discourse on the text "Ob Schrift? Ob Geist?" "Scripture? or Reason?" in which he openly rejected the authority of the Bible as a rule of faith. In the course of his speech he said, "We do not believe that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of a virgin, but we believe he was born just like any other man."\*

As there is nothing in all this that the Rationalists had not said a hundred times before, it is not at once apparent why the avowal of such sentiments should all of a sudden produce so general an excitement. The explanation of this fact, may perhaps be found in a measure in the following considerations. In the first place Rationalism had hitherto been in a great measure confined to the learned, to the universities, or to writings not immediately addressed to the people. In the present instance there was a direct appeal to the people, a formal declaration that instead of attempting to secure the seats of learning, they would direct their effects to the masses. "For a long time," says König, "it was considered one of the rules of war that one fortress after another must be taken. Modern heroes have disregarded this rule, and been victorious. Our universities are the fortresses, with their orthodox garrisons more or less numerous. Their heavy artillery of Fathers, Schoolmen and Confessions, we allow to rest in peace. We will turn these old bulwarks, and press into the heart of the land. The heart of the land is the people."† Again, it must be remembered that of late years a great change has been going on in Germany. The Rationalismus vulgaris, as it is called, has been losing caste. It has no representatives except a few old men, in any of the theological faculties, except that of Giessen. Unbelief has taken a much more profound and scientific form; more really infidel no doubt, yet less suited for popular effect, at least as it had been presented in philosophical and theological works. At the same time a very great increase has been going on in the number and zeal

\* Kirchen Zeitung, Juni, 1844. s. 363.

† Quoted in the Kirchen Zeitung, Jan., 1845. s. 34.

of the friends of evangelical doctrine. The number of those therefore who would be wounded by the open avowal of infidelity in the church, is far greater now than it has been for years. This avowal of infidelity coming from pastors, who daily repeated the creeds, and being made in a promiscuous assembly of clergy and laity, of educated and uneducated men, of citizens and peasants, was adapted to produce a much stronger impression than any similar declaration contained in learned works or public journals. Besides this, we doubt not, much of the effect produced is due to the conviction that bad as rationalism is, pantheistic atheism is unspeakably worse. So long as this pantheism was confined to books, which few would read, and still fewer understand, the evil might be borne. But when it came to be popularized and adopted by pastors in their addresses to the people, it was felt that such men ought no longer to be tolerated in a Christian church. Such at least is the best solution we can give of the general excitement produced by this new outbreak of rationalism.

It is indeed not to be doubted that the "Friends of Light" or "Protestant Friends," (for they assume and receive both titles,) include in their ranks all classes of opponents to the doctrines of the church. But we think it can as little be doubted that as pantheism or self-deification, is the prevailing form of German infidelity, it is the governing spirit in this association of unbelievers. "When Hegel," says Ulrici in Tholuck's *Anzeiger*,\* "within his impenetrable system, in the obscure language of his philosophical terminology, and double tongued dialectics, set forth the proposition: God and man are one, God comes to self-consciousness only in the human soul, the history of the world is the history of God,—it concerned only certain philosophers and votaries of science by profession. But when Strauss with fluent tongue, announced the same propositions, applied them to theology, and with clearness and discrimination deduced their consequences, they produced universal commotion. They were hailed, on the one hand, as a new gospel, and denounced on the other as a revival of heathenism. Those consequences were; That not Christ, but mankind is the true Son of God, the absolute identity of the divine and human natures; that the development of

\* See *Literarischer Anzeiger*, 1845, No. 34.

the religious human consciousness, is the continual self-revelation of God; and hence the newest, the present spirit of the world, is ever the truest and the best; the old, simply because old, is of no account. These conclusions Feuerback enthroned when he declared: Theology is nothing but anthropology, and religion, so far as it believes in the existence of an independent divine Being distinct from the human soul, is an illusion." If the publication of such doctrines by Strauss, a theologian, in a theological work, produced a general commotion among theologians, their adoption and proclamation by pastors among the people might well arouse the indignation of pastors who still believed in God and Christ.

Dr. Hengstenberg states\* that as he was correcting the sheets of Dr. Guericke's account of the meeting at Köthen, he received a visit from a member of the Pastoral conference, then in session in Berlin. To him he gave the account to lay before the conference prior to its publication. There it excited the greatest feeling, and from that meeting the excitement was propagated through all parts of the church. This excitement was increased by the publication of a work by König in which he declared it to be a sin and folly to pretend to feed the people with the Augsburg confession, ridiculed the blood of the atonement and the confession of sin read every Sabbath from the altar, and profanely declared, "We do not fear the wrath of God, and seek no means of propitiation." It would be strange indeed, if the faithful servants of a church could calmly sit still and hear the most sacred doctrines and services of that church thus profaned by those who still acted as its pastors. They did not sit still, but united themselves in every part of the country in declarations against such an abomination. These declarations proceeded from a number of voluntary associations of pastors, from several synods, and from numerous individual clergymen. The substance of these protestations, was, that those who held the doctrines of the "Friends of Light," put themselves out of the pale of the Christian church; and if ministers they ought not to be allowed to retain their offices. This was evidently the drift of these communications, which appeared from time to time, in Dr. Hengstenberg's Journal. We translate one of them as a specimen of

\* See Zeitung, Jan. 1845. s. 36.



the whole, though they differ much in their language and explicitness. "We the undersigned feel constrained, by our office and conscience, in common with many of our dear brethren, in various provinces of our common country, to declare before God, our congregations and the whole church, that we can no longer regard as rightful ministers of this church and faithful stewards of the mysteries of God, those men, who in recent times, (such as Wislicenus, König and others,) partly in public assemblies, and partly through the press, reject the Bible as a divine revelation, and the only source and rule of our faith; who boldly deny the divinity of our blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and renounce the fundamental doctrines of our evangelical church; and we commiserate the congregations which in their most precious interests are committed to such men.

"Since however, at the present time, apostacy from the word of life and from our holy faith is so great and so general, and since the temptations to depart from saving truth are for every one, who ceases to watch and pray, so dangerous, though we would not on this account excuse the errors of these men and of their followers, we would the more earnestly and importunately pray that God would speedily open their eyes, that they may sincerely repent, acknowledge the evil and scandal they have occasioned, and confess before the whole world, with us and all believing Christians, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father."

It is encouraging to know that such declarations have been signed by upward of a thousand clergymen. And even this number does not indicate the whole strength of the evangelical party, as many who fully sympathized with the subscribers doubted the expediency or propriety of such public renunciation of fellowship with ministers in their own church.\* As these declarations were looked upon, if not exactly as excommunications, yet as tending to invoke the interposition of the government, they gave great offence not only to those against whom they were directed; but to many others. The impression was

\* Some even of the avowed members of the evangelical party came out openly against those declarations, giving as their reason, that when one minister had any ground of complaint against another, he should deal with him privately, and if unsuccessful, appeal to the authorities immediately above them, and not until this method also had failed, should such public measures be adopted, confounding private offences, with the case of public declarations of infidel opinions.

very generally received that the evangelical party, of which Hengstenberg is the acknowledged head, and his *Journal* the organ, were desirous of securing the strict imposition of the Augsburg Confession as a term of ministerial communion. And as the government was known to be friendly to this church party, serious alarm was felt lest the authorities might attempt to enforce such a measure. As great latitude had ever been allowed in Germany in receiving the symbols of the church, just as has ever been the case in England, the apprehension of a new mode of proceeding, in the existing state of things, was well suited to produce uneasiness. It was this apprehension, more than any thing else, which seems to have induced many, who have been regarded as pious and believing men to take part against Hengstenberg and his *Journal*. Certain it is, that during the past year, he and it have been the objects of unexampled denunciations and obloquy, even magistrates and church authorities openly joining in the effort to curtail or destroy his influence.

The most remarkable exhibition of this spirit took place in Berlin on the 15th of August, 1845. A protest was drawn up, directed against Hengstenberg's *Journal*, which was signed by eighty-seven men, many of them of great distinction and influence. They were generally disciples of Schleiermacher, embracing others, however, who had been long recognised as among the zealous advocates of the truth. Thus three parties were formed; that of Hengstenberg, composed of the more determined adherents of the standards of the church; that of the "Friends of light" including all shades of avowed unbelief; and this middle party composed chiefly of the followers of Schleiermacher. The protest of this last mentioned party, having made its appearance in August, was reviewed and answered by Hengstenberg the following October. Of that answer we submit to our readers the following brief outline.

The school of Schleiermacher consists of two divisions; the one composed of those who by his influence were brought to Christ, and then from Him, the only true Master, learned the truth. The other consists of mere disciples, who are as anxious to maintain the wood, hay and stubble of their master's system, as the truth which it contains, yea, who regard the former as their most precious treasure. To the first of these divisions belong many of the most distinguished and useful of the

present race of German theologians. The second division, constituting properly the Schleiermacher school, found themselves, since the death of their master, in a false position. Deprived of the influence derived from his personal character, comparatively few in number, desirous of retaining the status quo, while the age is rapidly advancing, striving to preserve the incongruous union of church doctrine and rationalism which distinguished Schleiermacher's system, while all other men were becoming more and more convinced of the necessity of separating these discordant elements, they were like men who insisted on going about in the clothes of their childhood.

In this party a decided hostility had been for some time manifested towards the friends of the church.\* This hostility Hengstenberg says, was unprovoked. He asserts that he had ever cheerfully acknowledged the great service rendered by Schleiermacher, and had ever treated him with forbearance. The only article unfriendly to him that ever appeared in the Church Journal was provoked by a gross attack of Schleiermacher, in which he said, referring to the evangelical party, "The ground is heaving beneath our feet, and miserable worms are crawling out from religious crevices, who regard all speculation, beyond the circumvallation of the ancient letter, as satanic." Our main object, says our author, being to resist the rationalists proper, we were disposed to be on friendly terms with this middle party. It was long evident however that an explosion must come. This is not a time to occupy middle ground. When so many openly deny Christ, those who are for him, must openly confess him.

The Protest begins with the following sentence: "A party has arisen in the Evangelical church, which stiffly insists on that view of Christianity, which has been inherited from the beginning of the Reformation." It is a matter of gratitude, says Hengstenberg, that at the very outset, we have their acknowledgment that our differences relate to doctrine. The case, however, is not fairly stated. The difference does not relate to any symbols set forth at the reformation, which we retain, and they reject; but it concerns the essential facts of the evangelical his-

\* The class of men to which Hengstenberg belongs is designated by various terms. By their opponents they are called, "Pietists." "The Strict Orthodox;" "The Church Magazine Party," &c. They call themselves, "The Church-minded;" "Friends of the Confession," &c.

tory, and fundamental doctrines. It does not relate to theology but to faith, not to Dogmatic, but to the catechism. It does not begin with the Augsburg Confession, but with the ancient creeds. Many of the signers of the Protest would have hesitated long before subscribing their names, had they seen the matter in its true light. To us the scriptures are the word of God, which we do not judge, but by which we are judged, whence we derive all our religious knowledge. They are at once the source and the rule of our faith. Schleiermacher's position in reference to the scriptures was entirely different. The authority which we, in common with the whole Christian church, ascribe to the word of God, he ascribed to 'the Christian consciousness,' 'to the inward experience, which every one formed for himself on what he found in Christianity.' The Bible was to him a mere human book, of great authority indeed, because in it are to be found the original expressions of Christian feeling, but by no means free from serious faults; the Old Testament being essentially on a level with the productions of heathenism; and the New, in its most important parts, mixed with fables (Myths,) and even with errors in doctrine, from which Christ himself was not free except in what related to his own immediate vocation, as Schleiermacher understood it. The testimony of the New Testament in behalf of any fact or doctrine, only creates a demand for careful examination; the decision rests, on the one hand, on feeling, on the other, on science. In proof of the correctness of this representation of Schleiermacher's relation to the scripture, a long quotation is given from his letter to Lücke in the *Studien und Kritiken*, 1829. s. 489, from which it is very plain that he considered the scriptural doctrine of creation, the New Testament miracles, the canon of the Old Testament, the messianic prophecies, types, special revelation and inspiration, and many portions of the New Testament, as incapable of defence at the bar of reason. Even the most prominent facts of the evangelical history, the miraculous conception of Christ, his ascension to heaven, his predictions of his second advent, the resurrection of the dead, which Paul regarded as a fundamental doctrine of the Christian church, are all yielded to his remorseless criticism. It is only in reference to the person of Christ that Schleiermacher admitted anything supernatural, in every

thing else he was confined to the sphere of natural cause and effect.

Though some of his disciples may, in some points have raised themselves above his position, yet as a school, their relation to the scriptures is just what his was. Were this not the case they could not so unconditionally call him master, nor would they, says Hengstenberg, be so enraged against the position assumed by the Church Journal. For they are well aware that all that the editor of that Journal is labouring to effect, is that the scriptures should be restored to their authority in the church; that the confessions have authority for him only as compends of the contents of the scriptures, unnecessary for those who are confirmed in the faith, but demanded by the necessities of the church.

The Protest itself gives clear indication of the real position of its authors in reference to the scriptures. It sets forth as the only essential point of Christian doctrine, that "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever, is the only ground of our salvation;" every thing beyond this is changeable, like the web of Penelope, unraveled as fast as woven. If the signers regarded the scriptures as the source and rule of faith they could not consider this one point the only one clearly determined by their authority, or that all other doctrines were to be left as open questions in the church. In further support of his position as to the character of this school, in this particular point, the author quotes from the writings of several signers of the Protest, various declarations of similar import with those quoted from Schleiermacher himself. These our limits will not allow us to give, and they are not essential to a fair understanding of the merits of the case.

In the second place, the difference between the signers of the Protest, (or rather the disciples of Schleiermacher) and the evangelical party, relates to the apostle's creed, the foundation of the Christian faith. Of this creed very little is adopted by this school. They reject the distinction of three persons in the divine essence, and therefore deny the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, in the sense in which the creed affirms the faith of the church. See Schleiermacher's *Glaubenslehre* Th. 2. § 170. In the place of the eternal Son of God, we have "a divine revelation (revelation of God) in the person of Jesus, from which all may and should

derive spiritual life ;” or, as Dr. Schweizer expresses it, “ a man imbued with the fulness of God ;” an ordinary man in whom the (*Gottesbewusstseyn*)\* consciousness of God was all powerful. To pray to him must be idolatry, to look to him for help must be useless. In vain did he declare that “ before Abraham was, I am,” and in vain did John testify that in the beginning the word was with God, for Schleiermacher says that Christ, as the Logos of God, apart from his manifestation in a particular person, is one of those church doctrines which is foreign to his system. *Sendschr.* S. 260. In place of the Holy Ghost this school gives us “ the common spirit of the Christian church.”

Faith in ‘ the Almighty maker of heaven and earth ’ is of course greatly changed by their doctrine of an eternal world. This school also strikes out that part of the creed which says that Christ was ‘ conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, descended into hell, rose again from the dead, and ascended into heaven.’ So also the declaration that he is to come again to judge the quick and the dead. See Schleiermacher’s *Glaubensl.* Th. 2. § 160, where the coming of Christ to judgment, is contested, and § 162, where the last judgment is explained away. The ‘ resurrection of the body is only a figurative mode of teaching the immortality of the soul,’ § 159 ; a doctrine which Schleiermacher brought himself to acknowledge in the interval between the publication of his *Discourses on Religion* and his *Theology*. Personal immortality and the consummation of the church, are the only points in what the Bible and the church teach concerning ‘ The Last things ’ that are admitted to be real. All else is figure.

The third point taken up, is the charge against the evangelical party of slavish adherence to the letter of the Augsburg confession. In answer to this Hengstenberg says that his position in reference to the Symbols of the church has always been a liberal one. He always admitted that with the simple doctrines of faith there was in the confession an element due to the time

\* The word *Gottesbewusstseyn*, cannot be translated because its English equivalent does not express the idea the German word is intended to convey. The *Gottesbewusstseyn*, according to the Pantheistic theory which lies at the foundation of Schleiermacher’s system, is the *Seyn Gottes* in man. In Christ, according to his doctrine, this was absolute, all-controlling ; in us it is merely in the process of development. By “ consciousness of God ” must therefore, in the language of his school, be understood “ the being of God ” in man.

in which it was drawn up, and to which the church was in no measure bound. Even as to matters of faith, he distinguished between the strictly fundamental doctrines and those of less importance, and only in reference to the former, had asserted the right and duty of the authorities to maintain them. Even in reference to such serious departures from the faith as those chargeable on the school of Schleiermacher, he had never thought of invoking the interference of the government. It was only in reference to the open denial of the fundamental doctrines of the church by such men as Gesenius, Wegscheider and Wislicenus, that such a call was ever made. He refers in explanation of his views on this subject, to his preface to the volume of his *Journal* for 1844 where he had taught, 1. That the confessions were binding only as to matters of faith; or as he elsewhere expresses it, as to those things which come under the Rubric of *credimus, confitemur, docemus*. Theological explanations, arguments and proofs do not belong to the confession as such, and never were and are not now obligatory. 2. That the church authorities (such as they have in Prussia, i. e. the state,) have no right to alter the confessions. In such a state of things as the present, the duty of the government is to uphold those fundamental doctrines common to all Christian churches, and the doctrine of justification by faith, and to go further only as the increasing faith of the church demands. 3. That consent to the confession, though remaining the same in form, is modified by the character of every particular age. In such an age as the present, he says, a man may with a good conscience remain in the ministry of the church, if he sincerely adopts her fundamental doctrines, provided he leaves untouched those articles to which he does not assent; for to speak against the confession should in no case be allowed. If this deserves to be called stiffness and slavery to the letter, he adds, then the charge lights on the whole theological faculty of Berlin, who, without hesitation, signed a paper expressing precisely the same sentiments.

It is one of the devices of the Schleiermacher school to profess adherence to the substance of the confession, and dissent only from the form, when what they refer to the second category, by the common sense of mankind, belongs to the former. Take for example what is taught in the second article of the Augsburg Confession, concerning original sin. "It is further taught by us,"

it is said, "that since the fall of Adam, all men, born in the ordinary course of nature, are conceived and born in sin, that is, they all from the womb are full of evil concupiscence and desire, and cannot by nature attain true faith or fear of God; that this innate corruption and original sin is truly sin, and subjects all to the everlasting wrath of God, who are not born again by baptism and the Holy Ghost. . . Hence we reject the Pelagians and others, who do not admit this hereditary corruption to be sin, in order that they may hold that our nature may be made good by its own powers, thus doing despite to the sufferings and merits of Christ." In opposition to all this, Schleiermacher teaches that sin is nothing positive, that it has its ground in the law of progress and development, that it is nothing more than a lower stage of what is good, the incitement by which the development of good is carried on. There has been no fall of man. Sin is connate, a necessary attribute or condition of our nature. *Glaubensl. Th. 1. s. 442.* Since sin has its origin in God and the necessary imperfection of our nature, death cannot, as the scripture and the church teach, be its penalty, death was prior to sin. Now we ask, says our author, does this difference relate to the form or to the essence of the doctrine?

It is obvious that the consequences of this difference must reach very far. Schleiermacher's Christology is intimately connected with his doctrine on this point. If sin is a mere imperfection, there is no necessity for the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, in order to subdue it; a man absolutely good (in whom the consciousness of God is all powerful) is sufficient, as all that is needed is that the undeveloped good in man should be called forth. The miraculous conception of Christ may be referred to the class of Myths, for human nature is not so corrupt but that an individual man might be raised up by the Spirit out of the corrupt mass, and be perfectly free from sin. We need no Christ *for us*, to bear the sins of the world, and by whose wounds we may be healed, for God cannot be offended at that which he himself created, nor regard that as guilt for which we are not to blame. All that we need is Christ *within us* to free the indwelling 'conscience of God' from what hinders its development.

Fourthly, it is said we make the confession "our Pope," to whose authority we bow not from inward conviction but from



outward constraint. This, says Hengstenberg, is a serious charge, made undoubtedly on the part of some of those who signed it against their own better knowledge and conscience. He does not maintain that he had arrived at his present conviction fortuitously, without the aid of the church, her confession and especially her hymns. He refers with gratitude to what he owes to the Augsburg Confession, when it came to him, in the time of his awakening faith, as a guide through the labyrinth of various and apparently conflicting views which his unassisted study of the Bible had not enabled him to master; and with no less gratitude to the strength derived from the hymns of the church, in times of temptation and conflict. Few, if any, he supposes, would arrive without the church, to the clearness and decision of the church's faith. But a mere outward submission to the doctrines of the church, no man among us, he affirms has ever been chargeable with. We have tried the confession by the scripture, and found it to stand the test. We have not put it on as a ready made coat, but our progress in doctrine has gone hand in hand with our progress in life. One after another the principles of "the wisdom of the world," have been renounced, which had become so incorporated in our nature, that only by the most painful operation could we be freed from them. At last we attained a fully coincident but perfectly free conviction as to doctrines with the church. We no longer need to seek our faith in the Augsburg Confession, which as far as we are concerned, might cease to exist, for its contents are written on our hearts, not with ink, but by the finger of the living God. He calls upon his opponent to lay their hands on their hearts and say whether they find in the evangelical party, the vacillation and doubt which always attend a faith founded on authority. Do we not rather, he asks, make on you and on all who hear us, the impression of men who say what they say from an inward necessity? How else can you account for the power which attends our preachers, who even from the Rationalists extort a confession of their sincerity and ardour?

Fifthly, the charge of striving after dominion in the church, is answered by saying that they seek dominion in no other sense than Paul did, when he said to Agrippa, I would to God that not thou only, but all who hear me this day, were not only almost, but altogether as I am, save these bonds. The church party

strive for nothing more than to have it acknowledged that no man should be a minister in the church who does not receive the fundamental articles of its faith. The accusation that the friends of the Confession are the cause of constant disturbance and conflict, is met by quoting at length Luther's noble answer to a similar charge made against him by Erasmus. The sum of which is, that the disturbance which attends the truth is not to be laid to the charge of those who adhere to God's word, but to those who oppose it: and that the outward evils thus occasioned, are not to be compared with the inward evils of which the truth is the only remedy. In proof of this Hengstenberg appeals to the deplorable state to which rationalism had reduced the church twenty years ago, and to the vast improvement which had taken place since the revival of the gospel.

The signers of the Protest say that the whole tendency of the course pursued by the opposite party, is to destroy brotherly love and to produce divisions in the church. To the disciples of Schleiermacher it is natural that division should be regarded as the greatest of evils, but the Bible teaches us that there are other evils far more to be dreaded. To the Schleiermacher school indeed, division must cause great embarrassment. They would have to separate from themselves and from part of their own hearts, before they could tell which side to take. They profess to go on the principle that every thing should be left free in the church, regarding Jesus Christ the same yesterday, to-day and forever, as the only ground of our salvation, every other doctrine should be unconstrained, proceeding from Christ and tending to him. To understand this, it should be remembered that according to this school the only thing true and eternal in religion, is feeling. Doctrine is merely the imperfect, and necessarily faulty form in which that feeling expresses itself. So that if the feeling is right, it matters little what the doctrine is, and therefore doctrine is a matter which should be left for every one to decide for himself. The cause of this unnatural dualism between faith, (or rather feeling) and knowledge, is to be found in the peculiar circumstances of the author of the theory. When he came on the stage, the whole sphere of knowledge was filled with error. Into that sphere religion could not enter and live. Schleiermacher therefore sought for it a refuge in the dark chamber of feeling, and nobly laboured to guard it from all assaults. Whoever has

made the transition from unbelief to faith, must remember being tempted to adopt a similar device, whenever his faith, still feeble, was affrighted at its own image in the glass of doctrine. This theory also performed the welcome service of getting rid at one stroke of confessions of faith and of leaving an open field for individual development. Faith when strong, rejects a theory so foreign to the Christian church; a theory which divides what God has joined together, which gives the church up to perpetual vacillation, destroys all courage and all confidence in truth, prevents the possibility of church communion, and contradicts the most intimate conviction of every Christian, who has the same confidence in the objects of his faith, as in his faith itself. It is singular that the advocates of such a theory should represent themselves as the friends of progress, and us as its enemies. Progress in any science is possible only because one man stands on the shoulders of those before him. He who rejects the acquisitions of former ages, and insists on beginning everything anew, must always be at the beginning. And he who regards all the labour of the church for eighteen hundred years as establishing nothing, is just where the pastor Hermas was in the first century. If he denies the possibility of fixed doctrine conformed to truth, if doctrine in its very nature is the transient form of feeling, the flower which to-day is, and to-morrow is cast into the oven, he makes progress an impossibility. The church on this plan is gathering water in a sieve; ever learning and never coming to the knowledge of the truth. We, on the contrary, have the true foundation of progress, the firm basis of the past, and the living conviction that the Lord of the church has not left her to blind feeling, but has given her firm, clear and shining truth, and that he is leading her evermore into a deeper knowledge of that truth. We are far from believing that the church has attained the full measure of the stature of Christ, or that the rich treasures of the scriptures have all been brought to light.

But what is meant by the followers of Schleiermacher when they say that "Christ is the only ground of our salvation?" According to their doctrine, Christ was nothing but what we are to become, so that at last, he will be but the first among his equals, a thought at which every feeling of the Christian heart revolts. Dr. Schweizer brings out this idea distinctly when he says, "Christianity does not perish, when we have become equal to Christ

(wenn wir Christo gleich geworden,) for he will forever remain the first among many brethren. We can never renounce him without renouncing God, and falling into sin. We become his equals only because he, his divine inward life, has formed itself in us." The original meaning of this formula therefore is, that Christ is the ground of our salvation, because he was the first man in whom the divine consciousness was absolute, and by whom that principle in us is aroused, and little by little attains the same power in us it had in him.

This is the original sense of the formula, but it is not the only one. It was designedly so framed that those who hold far lower views of Christ might sign it. How could these men frame a confession which should exclude from the church those "worthy men," the Rationalists, as Schleiermacher calls them, or such a man as Uhlich of whose "honest intentions," superintendent Schultz is so well convinced? In point of fact it does not exclude them, the names of genuine Rationalists, and of Helegians of the extreme left are found among the signers of this declaration. The confession therefore that Christ is the only ground of our salvation admits of a wide interpretation.

The Protest concludes that the only remedy for existing evils is to abstain from all arbitrary exclusions from the church, to give full liberty of opinion, and to grant to the church a free constitution and the right of self-government. By arbitrary exclusions must, says Hengstenberg, in this connexion, be understood deposition from office. This declaration, therefore, is meant for the government. It is intended to deter them from the exercise of their right and the discharge of their duty. The design is to get all church power into the hands of the people, i. e. the world; and then whatever is opposed to the spirit of the age, the evangelical party on the one hand, and some of the extremest rationalists, on the other, may be excluded. The school of Schleiermacher will then occupy a central position, guiding every thing at their pleasure, having the moderate friends of the church doctrine on their right, and on the left, the followers of the excellent Uhlich. Then will come the Millenium, when the wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. This, however, is all an illusion. This school deceive themselves if they expect by a change of its constitution to obtain dominion in the

church. Whether it will be decided faith or open unbelief that shall then have the ascendancy, is known only unto God, whose mercy is broad as the sea, but whose judgments also are fearful. But that a school which is neither one thing nor the other, can have only a temporary importance is as clear as day, to every one who really understands the age in which he lives.

To the charge of favouring the Romish church, Hengstenberg answers, that if by this is meant that he prefers Romanism to a Rationalism which rejects not only the Augsburg confession but the apostle's creed, he readily admits the charge. He yields to Popery no one point in controversy between the Evangelical church and Rome, but he refuses, on account of these differences to overlook what the two churches have in common, or to take part in cheering on the enemies of a church which with all its corruptions has more of truth than all the "friends of light," "German Catholics" and its "unevangelical opposers" put together.

Our readers can have a very inadequate idea of the power of this manly defence of himself, from our imperfect outline of its contents. Its effect was soon visible. It was published in October last, and on the tenth of November appeared "An explanation from the signers of the Protest of the 15th of August," written in a very different spirit from that exhibited in the Protest itself. It contains a much more distinct testimony against the friends of light, and much more of Christian doctrine. The signers of the explanation acknowledge the leading facts of redemption, the appearance of Jesus Christ, as the manifestation of God in the flesh, and the redeemer of the world; they acknowledge also his sinless life, his death and resurrection. If this acknowledgment of the incarnation of the Son of God, says Hengstenberg, is made in the sense of John 1, then the signers have renounced the Sabellianism of Schleiermacher, and they have admitted the true divinity of Christ, and thus in one main point escaped from the magic authority of their master. At any rate, the explanation is practically a retraction of the Protest, and is so regarded, for many who signed the one, refused to sign the other. Of retraction, however, the signers say nothing; on the contrary, they say they take back nothing. Is it then so hard to confess an error?\*

\* *Kirchen Zeitung*, Jan. 1846, s. 35.

In reply to the numerous rejoinders to his answer to the Protest of August 15th, Hengstenberg, in the preface to his Journal for the current year, vindicates himself from the charge of having attacked the dead instead of the living. In reference to this point, he says, he could not do otherwise. Determined to go at once to the root of the matter, he was obliged to turn to the master, as the scholars had written so little to which he could refer. This necessity however was a welcome one. Since the death of Schleiermacher a position has been assigned him by the grateful admiration of his friends, which is altogether false. He has been held up the "Church Father" of the present century. This perversion of the real judgment of the public has had a very injurious effect. Inexperienced young men, have been led to read his writings without suspicion, and have thus been made sceptical or unbelieving as to many important doctrines. Hengstenberg says he had long observed this evil, but waited for some providential call to speak his mind freely on the subject. This has now in part been done; a beginning and only a beginning has been made. A warning has at least been given. Schleiermacher himself would have approved of this, for nothing could have been less acceptable to him than the canonization which has been forced upon him, who during his life was well aware of the mixed origin and character of his system. As to his representation of Schleiermacher's opinions, our author retracts nothing. He was careful not to bring up any points about which there could be any doubt, and therefore abstained from referring to the pantheistic basis of his system, which is apparent even in his latest writings.

Two other subjects of great interest have agitated the German church during the past as well as preceding years; the constitution of the church, and the obligation of its symbols. As to both of these points the country is divided into two great parties. As to the former, the one is in favour of the gradually improvement of the existing constitution; the other insist on the introduction of a free presbyterian organization. In the general, the evangelical party are in favour of the existing form; the friends of light, the disciples of Schleiermacher, and the other elements of the party opposed to that to which Hengstenberg belongs, are in favour of independent presbyterianism. The king of Prussia, as is well known, is anxious to free himself from the power and

responsibility which belong to him as the *summus episcopus* of the church, as far and as rapidly as it can be done consistently with the best interest of the church itself. To attain this object he has endeavoured in various ways to call out an expression of the wishes of the church. For this purpose he summoned together synodical meetings in the several provinces of his kingdom; and more recently assembled a conference from all parts of Prussia to meet at Berlin. Of the doings of this convention we have no particular information. Of the proceedings of several of the provincial synods our German periodicals contain a particular account. The principles of the party which are desirous of a free presbyterian organization are presented in the most advantageous light in the following summary of the report of a committee of the Synod of Brandenburg, which met at Berlin, November 8th, 1845. "Christ is the only head and Lord of the church, which he governs by his Spirit, and his word, and in obedience to the powers that be. The christocratical idea, therefore, should be realized in the church, and hence neither a Pope nor Prince should stand as head of the church, nor should any clerical order be regarded as the exclusive representatives of Christ. Hence it follows that no individual, no corporation, no class or office, can exercise the power of Christ in the church, which emanates from the Holy Spirit, which Christ has promised and which he gives to these that believe on him. Since the church, in its essential character, is neither a political nor a hierarchical institution, the civil power has not the government of the church, in its spiritual concerns, and cannot exercise any positive or direct influence in these matters. On the contrary, the church orders all her internal affairs as free and independent. To the head of the state belongs the general oversight of the church, since this is a necessary attribute of sovereignty; to him belongs a veto on the doings of the church, and he gives them the *Placet*, and exercises the general right of protection."\*

If we omit the veto and *placet* clauses, this might have been written by Dr. Cunningham. And no one at all conversant with the state of opinion and feeling on this whole church question in Germany, can fail to see the influence of the Free Church controversy in Scotland. The principles there avowed and acted

\* *Kirchen Zeitung*, April, 1845. p. 255.

upon, are working like leaven in the whole protestant European mind. A very decided majority of the Synod was in favour of this report. It was however strenuously opposed by the minority, and finally through the influence and skillful management of the president, the bishop Neander, a compromise was adopted, which affirmed the following propositions. 1. The present organization of the church is not satisfactory. 2. In order to such an organization, the co-operation of the congregations must be included. 3. In this co-operation laymen should participate. The whole subject was then referred to a permanent commission.

The leading objections to this scheme, for a free Presbyterian constitution, as urged by Hengstenberg in various articles in his Journal, are the following: 1. According to the principles of the Evangelical church, the question of organization is altogether subordinate to that of doctrine. The former, therefore, must be postponed to the interests of the latter. The only essentials of a church, are the word and sacraments; where these are found, religion may and does flourish under any form of government. 2. In a fallen state of the church, the proper course is to labour for the revival and propagation of the truth, and when that has taken effect, a living church will assume an appropriate form. 3. That in the present state of Germany, it would be most unwise to throw the power of governing the church into the hands either of the people or the clergy. The great mass of the educated classes are alienated from the gospel; and the same is true of the majority of the clergy, especially of those whose age and station give them most influence. You cannot make a free church out of men whom the Lord has not made free. 4. The true mode of improvement is not by the sudden rejection of long established principles and usages, and the introduction and application of abstract principles without regard to the historical circumstances of the case, but to act upon the basis of what is historically given, and gradually correct what is wrong and introduce what is good. He is therefore for taking the existing consistorial organization, giving it more power and independence, infusing into it more of the direct influence of the church, as the progress of the church itself demands.

As to the continued obligation of the symbols of the church, this also was vehemently debated in several of the synods.



Those of Westphalia and the Rhine provinces are perhaps the most thoroughly orthodox of any of the provinces, though we are not informed of any recent decisions on their part, on this subject. The Synod of Pommerania was decidedly in favour of the authority of the confessions; that of Magdeburg representing the province of Saxony, very decidedly the other way.\* In the synod of Brandenburg the obvious majority was, according to the report in Hengstenberg's Journal, hostile to the confession, or to its imposition. In this case, however, as in the decision concerning the constitution of the church, after vehement debate, the skilful president prevented any decided vote; the synod agreeing to leave the status quo untouched. These decisions are interesting as indicating the state of opinion in the church, though these bodies being called together merely to give advice had no power to give effect to their resolutions.

Few parts of the world present so much to interest the Christian as Germany in its present state. Its elements of power for good or evil are immense. Those elements are now in a state of active fermentation. Much depends on the present and the immediate future, and we therefore venture to hope that the foregoing statements may have the effect of exciting the people of God to remember Germany in their prayers. It has been one of our objects, in preparing this paper, to make our readers better acquainted with Hengstenberg, who is probably doing and suffering more for the cause of Christ than any other man in that part of the church. What he is called to endure may in a measure be inferred from a letter addressed by the Doctors Thomasius, Kaifer, Hoefling and Hofmann, dated, Erlangen, December 30th, 1845. "What induces the undersigned members of the theological faculty in this place, to address to you this communication, is the performance of a duty intimately connected with the confession of evangelical truth. It arises from the very nature of the gospel, and from the spirit of the world, that a decided confession of that gospel should at all time be attended with reproach. This is especially true at the present time, in which indifference or enmity against divine truth, and decided opposition to every open testimony in behalf of Christ, have gained complete ascen-

\* *Zeitung*, January, 1845. s. 71. According to this account, only three-eighteenths of the Synod were in favour of the authority of the confession, fifteen-eighteenths against it.

dency. As this should not prevent the followers of Christ from openly confessing him and his word, it imposes also upon them the duty of confessing one another, and of assuming as a common burden the reproach, which for the Lord's sake, any one of their number suffers. You, beyond most others, have been counted worthy to bear such reproach. We know that you cannot regard this as any strange thing, for you remember what the apostle says, 1 Peter iv. 14. Two things however, have doubtless caused you peculiar pain. The silence of many who are of the same faith, and the open hostile declaration of some whom we have regarded, if not as decided confessors yet as friendly disposed towards the gospel. It is the Protest against you from this source, that has filled us with astonishment and pain. We feel it under these circumstances to be our duty, respected sir, to testify our fellowship in the faith with you. The ground of the reproach and hostility which from so many quarters are directed against you, is not the points in which we may disagree,\* but those we hold in common. It is nothing proper to you, no peculiarity in theology, no matter of the schools, much less of a party, but the one faith in one Christ, the one confession of that faith which the church has made from the beginning. It is especially the precious confession of the Protestant church from the Reformation to the present time. In this confession we join from the bottom of our hearts—and as we see you assailed and reproached on account of that faith, we are constrained to avow our sympathy with you, and to share in the reproach which is cast on you. We commend you therefore to God and the word of his grace. Continue to fight the good fight of faith, and with the weapons of the Spirit contend against the common enemy of your church and of ours. The Lord be your shield and your exceeding great reward. May he strengthen you in faith and patience, and make you and us ever more ready to do his will!" We leave our readers with the savour of this letter on their spirits. May the blessing of God rest on all such men!

\* The writers belong to the Lutheran, not to the united, or Evangelical church of Prussia.