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ART. I.—THE LATE EDITOR.

REV. HENRY HARBAUGH, D. D., the late lamented Editor of the MERCERSBURG REVIEW, died at his residence in Mercersburg on the 28th December, 1867, aged fifty years and two months. This sad event has already been announced, amid tokens of grief and sorrow, throughout the Church. Still, owing to the relation the deceased sustained to the REVIEW, it is proper that it should be announced in these pages, accompanied with such poor words as we may be able to pen as a tribute to his memory.

At the request of the publishers, we superintended the getting up of the January number while Dr. Harbaugh was lying upon a bed of sickness. When the matter for that number was all sent in, we considered our work done. It was expected to be issued promptly on the first of the year, but some difficulty arising in arranging the forms, and the consequent necessity of procuring some new pages of matter, prevented its appearance until about a month later. Meantime Dr. Harbaugh was called away by death from his earthly labors. This will explain, what may have seemed strange to some, why no notice of his death appeared in the last number of the REVIEW.

ART. IV.—DORNER'S HISTORY OF PROTESTANT THEOLOGY.*

 BY J. W. NEVIN, D.D.

This interesting and important volume makes its appearance as one of a series of works devoted to the History of the Sciences generally in Modern Germany; a noble undertaking, which is carried forward it appears, by the special patronage of the King of Bavaria, and under the auspices of a commission acting in behalf of the Royal Academy of Sciences at Munich. Upwards of twenty different works are embraced in the plan; several of which have been already completed, while the rest are in active preparation; all from eminent scholars, supposed to be properly fitted for their task. There is a History of modern Catholic Theology in the series, a History of Philosophy, a History of Aesthetics, a History of Classical Philology, a History of Geology, a History of Medicine, and so on through the catalogue of the more important Sciences generally. Dorner's History of Protestant Theology forms the fifth volume of the course.

It is not necessary to say, that it is a work of the first merit in its own order. How could it be otherwise, coming from such a theologian as Dorner, and occupied with so fruitful a theme as the movement of Protestant Theology from the age of Luther down to the present time?

The very idea of a *History* of Protestant Theology, as we have it here brought into view, is eminently suggestive and full of instruction. It implies at once, the author tells us, the con-

* Geschichte der Protestantischen Theologie, besonders in Deutschland, nach ihrer principiellen Bewegung und im Zusammenhang mit dem religiösen, sittlichen und intellectuellen Leben betrachtet von DR. J. A. DORNER. Auf Veranlassung und mit Unterstützung Seiner Majestät des Königs von Bayern, Maximilian II. Herausgegeben durch die historische Commission bei der Königl. Academie der Wissenschaften. München, 1867.

ception of an organized unity and wholeness in this theology, in distinction from all merely outward aggregation of opinions; since in no other view could it be said to have any living history whatever. To be historical, moreover, it must be more than it is taken to be where it is regarded as a protest simply against previously existing errors, the negation and contradiction of the theology of the Roman Catholic Church; it must have a positive substance and independent existence of its own, aside from all that may belong to it as accidental only in its relations to other systems. It must enter in this view integrally into the general constitution of Christianity, and show itself to be a necessary part of its proper universal life. Only so can it have a right to exist, or be a subject at all for scientific study.

Thus positive and historical in its own nature, Protestantism must be also the product and outbirth of what Christianity was before it made its appearance. It is impossible to conceive of it as being historical at all, except as Christianity at large is seen and acknowledged to be historical. There is a view of Protestantism, we know, which owns no necessity for this; which sees in it rather wrong and disparagement to the whole cause of religion in the Protestant form. Its assumption is, that what is called the history of the Church in previous centuries was no history of Christianity at all, in any proper sense of the term; that Christianity for ages before had not been historical, but existed only in the Bible, or as the dim memory of a long buried past; that the history of the Church had become the movement and record only of a vast system of corruptions, which had well nigh extinguished at last the light and power of the Gospel altogether. How could Protestantism be supposed to derive its existence in any positive way from so foul a womb? How could its sweet waters flow from a fountain so full of impurity and bitterness? To be of God, in these circumstances, it must be a new religion entirely, drawn fresh from the Bible, having no connection with the life of the Catholic Church as it stood before, except in the way of protest and denial, and related to what Christianity may be imagined to have been in the beginning, only as its abrupt reproduction and restoration with-

out any regard to intervening time. This view of the origin and meaning of Protestantism was once common, and there are certain quarters in which it is entertained still. But it is too late in the day, to allow it now any sort of consideration. For science and religion alike, it may be considered as fairly and forever exploded. They are bad Protestants, everywhere and always, who insist on making Protestantism unhistorical. The life of the world universally is historical, a moving stream of united, continuous existence. It is so especially in Christianity, which is the central current of this stream. And if Protestantism be in fact, as it claims to be, the inmost and deepest sense of Christianity, then is it plain, not only that it must have a history of its own from the time of its appearance in the sixteenth century, but also that this history must so issue forth from the general historical flow of what Christianity was all along before, as to be plainly its continuation, and at the same time the deepest power of it, reaching onward now in such new form to its ultimate destination. Only in such view can it deserve confidence, or be entitled to any rational consideration and respect.

According to Dr. Dorner, this historical relation of Protestantism to Catholicism does not necessarily imply even a full antiquation of the second in favor of the first, authorizing us to say that the older form of Christianity, having served its purpose, has lost its right to exist in giving birth to the new; as Judaism, for example, was abolished by the accomplishment of its own promises through the Gospel. Protestantism, he tells us, may be allowed to be a higher plane of the Christian life than was reached before either by the Greek or Roman Churches—a plane, therefore, to whose level in the end all Christendom must be raised; while yet it may be true, nevertheless, that Protestantism is only itself, for the time, a partial and more or less defective representation of what belongs properly to this loftier stage of Christian history, needing to be complemented by still other forms of evangelical life; which it may not be able then, itself to produce, but must be content to accept in the end from the bosom of the older systems which it

seemed to have left behind. In other words, it is by no means certain that Protestantism, in breaking forth from the womb of the Catholic Church, carried away with it *all* the significance of that Church for the final purposes of Christianity. It could hardly fail, in the circumstances, to be more than the strongly intoned utterance of some one necessary and fundamental view of Christianity, which was felt to be in danger of being overwhelmed by the force which was carrying the Church at large in the opposite direction. Such affirmation became necessarily thus negation, and taking upon itself in this way the form of a standing *protest* against the errors of the Roman Church, made it extremely difficult for the movement to escape afterwards a one-sided character in its own direction, or to admit any free development even of its own life, where this seemed to involve a recognition again of principles and peculiarities belonging to the old religion. Under such view, it is easy to see, that there may be still essential elements of the full and last sense of Christianity, which Protestantism has not yet taken up into its separate life, peculiarities needed to complete the full idea of the Church still slumbering as possibilities in the bosom of the Greek and Roman Communions, which only the elevation of these Communions themselves to the general plane of Protestantism can serve to make the common property of the Christian world in the end. This need not imply then, of course, the breaking up of the old religions in favor of the new. Advanced to the same evangelical stage, all will stand together in free harmony and love, as integral components of one and the same Holy Catholic Christianity.

“Protestantism,” says Dr. Dorner, “seeks its ultimate ground in the essence of Christianity, as we have this exhibited to us originally in the Holy Scriptures. But it may not, for all this, decline the task of vindicating its separate existence and peculiar constitution *historically*; that is, the task of showing under a historical view, that there was need for it when it came both negatively and positively, that it came in the fulness of time, and that it is still an indispensable necessity for the Christian world.”

The History of Protestant Theology, under the broad view now stated, is divided by Dorner into three books; the first treating of the Origin or Primitive Period of Protestantism; the second, of the Separation of its two Confessions and the Dissolution of the Unity of its original twofold Principle, from the first part of the seventeenth century to the beginning of the nineteenth century; the third, of the Regeneration of Evangelical Theology, as it is supposed to be going forward in our own time. What an interesting field is here offered to the contemplation of the thoughtful student, must be at once evident to all who are in any way prepared to understand the nature of the general subject, or who can at all appreciate the bearings of this subject on the cause of Christianity as a whole.

The First Book (*Die Urzeit des Protestantismus*) opens with a sketch, brief of course, but comprehensive and clear, of the causes and forces which served to prepare the way for Protestantism, ages before its actual advent, in the life of the Catholic Church as it existed previously. These are found to be of a twofold character, negative and positive.

The *negative* side of the preparation lies, of course, in the errors and corruptions of the Roman Church, which gradually took a form that forced upon it the reactionary crisis of the Reformation, as the only way in which the general cause of Christianity could be rescued from destruction. The Catholic Church of the Middle Ages, we are told by Dorner, had accomplished vast service for the world in its time. Our modern life is under infinite obligations to it, for what it wrought in these times of darkness and wild, untamed rudeness, in favor of social order, political discipline, letters, morals, religion, and human culture generally. It was a great advance in these respects on the one-sided intellectualism of the Oriental or Greek Church. It was set for the pedagogy of the new Western nations. But this of itself served to give it a constitution and tendency, which became in the end an unnatural restraint upon the proper independence of the nations. Outward order and rule were made to stand in the way of inward intelligence and freedom. Thus the Church came to be considered

all in all for the purposes of salvation, in the character of a mere outward hierarchical organization, absorbing into itself all kingly, priestly, and prophetic functions; while the people at large were given over to serve mechanical forms, which became for them, in fact, no better than dumb idols, and left them without any sense whatever of their proper inheritance in the free, boundless wealth of the Gospel. Altogether, in this way, the Papacy grew to be an intolerable tyranny for the souls and minds of men, as well as for their outward lives.

The general ground defect of the Mediaeval Church life, according to Dorner, lay in its dualistic nature and character. Not of course in the recognition simply of two modes of being, two factorial forces required to meet everywhere in Christianity, the Divine and the human, the objective and the subjective, the general and the individual, the principle of authority and the principle of freedom; but in the want of power there was to bring these different forms of existence to any real inward unity and harmony; in consequence of which, the relation between them was always more or less oppositional, mechanical, and unfree. Such abstract dualism we have in the general theory of the Church which has just been noticed; all rule and power on one side, and on the other only passive, irresponsible dependence and obedience. So in the sphere of doctrine again, we meet it in the conflict between faith and knowledge, reaching through the whole time of the schoolmen, and ending at last in the formal reduction of faith to the character of a mere blind submission to the outward authority of the Church. The result of this was in the end a general demoralization of the intellectual consciousness of the Christian world, wide-spread skepticism and doubt, and a perilous exposure of spirit on all sides to the worst forms of irreligious error. The theological scheme itself which was thus outwardly imposed upon the Church, partook of the same dualistic character. It was a mixture of Pelagianism and magic, oscillating at different points always between superstition and unbelief. With this corresponded the moral and religious life of the time. It swung between extremes. Rigorous in one direction, it was

completely lax in another. It came to no harmony, no inward reconciliation, within itself. Altogether, the religious impotence and misery of the nominally Christian world had grown to be very great; and all must acknowledge that the necessity and demand for the Reformation, which existed in this crying form, go far of themselves to establish the full historical significance of Protestantism.

Along with this want and need, however, went also the working of active forces in the life of the Church itself, all through the Middle Ages, which carried in them the promise of better things to come, and prepared the way powerfully for what took place at last in the sixteenth century. This *positive* preparation for Protestantism must be taken into account as a necessary argument of its truth. All was not dark before its advent. Its historical legitimacy requires us to see in it, not only an answer to the crying necessities of the time going before, but the fulfilment also of its best powers and endeavors. To be true, Protestantism must be the rich, ripe fruit of Mediæval Catholicism, the natural product of its inmost religious spirit, the solution of its deepest problems, the interpretation of the vast riddle that lay involved everywhere in its struggling life. "Only thus," says Dr. Dorner, with great force, "do we possess ourselves of all that was truly great in the Middle Ages, and become able to apprehend the Evangelical Church in her organic connection with the Ancient Church, and so with the Apostolic Period itself; whereas, had she been a new Church, with no intervening life found joining her to this primitive Christianity, she must at once by such unhistorical position alone have raised the suspicion that she was the work mainly of human self-will, and that as she had come abruptly like a sudden meteor—a frightful portent for the Roman Church, it is true—so probably she would suddenly again disappear, without the inward and enduring power of correction that might turn the portent into an occasion of thankful joy for the Roman Church herself (Heb. xii. 7–12). If the Church of the Reformation was to deserve the title *Evangelical*, to which she lays claim, the pure stream of the Gospel, which since the time

of Christ could never have wholly failed among men, must have found in her a new bed; not to draw off thence onward all that was evangelical in the Catholic Church, but to secure it for her also as against her own corruption."

The positive forces, which worked thus historically toward the Reformation in the life of the Middle Ages, are supposed by Dorner to fall mainly under the threefold classification of *Mysticism*, *Biblical Study*, and *Popular Culture*. These factors, however, come not forward simultaneously, nor at once in full harmony. They are a growing movement in themselves; and only by their joint result, at the last, give us the reformatory principle in its true Church-renovating form and force.

The movement starts, of course, in the *Mystic Element*, as lying nearest the heart-life of all religion. Here we find, all through the Mediæval Period, a profound struggle in the depths of the religious spirit, the object of which was to reach direct and full communion with God, and which became in this way a continual conflict with the dualistic conditions of the Church system in which it was outwardly comprehended. It took different forms, first predominantly intellectual, then more ethical, culminating finally in the German mysticism, whose best fruit meets us in such writers as Tauler and Thomas a Kempis. There was great merit and vast meaning in the system; but it was at the same time seriously defective, and needed censure and rectification from a different quarter.

This it was brought to meet, in a measure, from the *Biblical Factor*, the second general preparatory force leading toward the Reformation. The study of the Bible stood in no connection at first with Mysticism, but followed for a time its own course separately, in the service of the plainest and most practical Christianity, as among the Waldenses. Gradually it attained to more theological insight and depth, as with Wickliffe, Huss, and their followers. With the progress of time, the Biblical and Mystical tendencies came more or less into contact with one another; and the result was a benefit on both sides, the flowing together of forces that by their union alone became properly strong for the end they were designed to reach.

“The Biblical tendency, especially in the course of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, spreading itself from Southern France and Piedmont, through Switzerland, along the Rhine, into the Netherlands and England, and eastwardly into Bohemia, Poland and Moravia, contributed mightily to establish as a fixed axiom throughout Christendom the principle, that the Church must be content to be measured and tried by the Holy Scriptures. It gave impulse also to the numerous translations of the Scriptures into the vernacular tongues, which fall within the same period. Leading representatives of this tendency, as well as the fruit of it, are to be considered in particular those popular and useful fraternities of the Netherlands, the *Brethren of the Common Life*, which were founded by Gerhard Groot in 1384, and improved subsequently by Florentius Radewins; and which, living together with community of goods, but without the constraint of vows, in spiritual though not monkish society, devoted themselves to mutual edification, especially in the knowledge of the Scriptures; following their trades diligently however at the same time, while they made it their business also to diffuse instruction among the people. They disseminated scriptural religious knowledge even among the higher classes, encouraged science, and showed favor also toward the interest of mysticism. With all this, they kept themselves free from all hostile bearing toward the Church; the old fanatical Beghard and Beguin houses reappearing in them thus, under higher and better form. Nowhere else before the Reformation, do we find the elements of reformatory power brought together in such compass as here.”

To complete the working of the mystical and biblical factors, we have, in the third place, the general gradual progress of European *Culture*, which wrought in various ways towards the emancipation of the popular mind from the bonds of ignorance and error, and carried it forward in the direction required for the coming reformation of Christianity and the Church. The revival of letters, indeed, seemed for a time in certain quarters to be more favorable to infidelity than to the cause of true religion; and the movement itself, in this way, needed historical

enlargement and rectification. In the end, however, it fell in harmoniously with the other forces, imparting to them new depth and compass of meaning, and receiving from them in return wholesome regulation in its own course.

After showing in the general way now stated, how the great religious revolution of the sixteenth century grew forth historically from the previous life of the Church, Dr. Dorner goes on to consider, in the second place, the immediate rise of the Reformation itself, in what he calls the unity of its original principle and growth, reaching from a. 1517 to a. 1525. This falls into two divisions or sections; the first treating of the Lutheran Reformation, the second of its counterpart in Switzerland.

To understand the Lutheran Reformation, it is necessary, first of all, to understand Luther himself. As the great genius of the movement, he was, in one sense, the product and birth of the general historical force which was comprehended in it. So it is, we are often told, with all grand movements in the history of humanity. They create, in a certain sense, their own organs, the representative men by whose agency they are brought to pass. But the individual significance of such men, their personal weight as independent forces in what has taken place, is none the less to be acknowledged for this reason. So Luther stands before us as himself the germ and pattern of the new order of life he served to introduce into the Christian world. We see in him "one of those vast historical figures, in which whole nations recognize their own types, their concentrated selves; in which the soul of a new moral and religious existence takes bodily form." How deeply his spirit entered, in this way, into the German mind in particular, is shown strikingly by the tenacity with which the Lutheran Church has all along clung to his name as her distinctive confessional title. It is the misfortune of Protestantism, we cannot help thinking, that this should have been the case. Luther himself, in the spirit of St. Paul, 1 Cor. i. 12, 13, protested against any such quasi deification of his person; and many of the best Lutherans have deplored it since. But the name has attached itself, for all this, as an indelible signature to the en-

tire Church, down to the present time; and there is no reason now to suppose that either the Church or its theology can ever be known by any other title than Lutheran, as distinguished from Roman Catholicism on one side, and from the Reformed faith on the other. It is only too evident, moreover, that the name itself goes farther here as a bond of union than any doctrine or Church life it is made to represent; since it is notorious that the so called Lutheran Church has embraced, and still continues to embrace, in its voluminous and capacious bosom, many forms of theological and ecclesiastical life, widely variant from one another, as well as in part, also, broadly opposed to all that Luther ever held or taught himself. The power which holds all together through changing generations and over widely sundered lands, is simply the uplifted standard of his vast and mighty name (*in hoc signo!*), enthroned forever, as it would seem, in the depths of the German heart. What clearer argument could we have of the historical and national significance of his person? We have nothing which fully comes up to it, in this view, anywhere else, either in the history of the Church or in the history of the world.

Luther himself, of course, had no conception of his own character or work, in becoming thus the organ of the German Reformation. There was no forethought or plan in what he did. It is not in that way, ever, that truly representative men fulfil their mission. They are always borne forward more or less unconsciously and passively, by the power of what they are, in another view, actively bringing to pass. In the case of Luther, this unpremeditated character of the relation in which he stood to his work comes everywhere into view. We feel the full force of it particularly, when we observe to what an extent it lay, not in his individual nature simply, not in what he was merely as a man, but in what he became himself, first of all, through the power of the Gospel, in the new Christian personality through which he was enabled to save himself from the wreck and chaos of his old life, before thinking of anything beyond himself. The whole sense of the Reformation lay in his own experience. He had lived himself, with mighty

birth-struggle, into its inmost principle, and felt the presence of it as a new creation in his soul, before he became unwittingly the organ of God's Spirit for proclaiming it, and heralding it to the world at large. "He did not set himself up to be a saint," says Dorner, "but he became of model, world-historical significance for the German mind, and far beyond, by being a man who had wrestled to find inward peace and direct communion with God—life-questions for the souls of all truly earnest and thoughtful men—and had not wrestled in vain. Having thus gone through conflict and victory in his own spirit, he committed his experiences, with eloquent faith, to the heart of his people, and so won among them the place of a competent and trustworthy leader in things pertaining to eternal salvation. True, he is a hero of the German *national* spirit, whose image even yet is of magical force for all circles, high or low; but not by his natural individuality as such, nor yet by his word as doctrine merely, has he made himself so enduringly felt; the secret of his power lies in all that served to form him to the type of an Apostolic disciple, and to an example, we will not say of the Christian life generally, but of conscious personal Christianity advanced to the ripeness of manhood—above all, in his clear, free apprehension of the way of salvation through Christ. His faith it was, emphatically, that gave him strength; and through this it became his life-work outwardly also, to open again to the free knowledge of every one the glory and power of the Gospel, and to lead even the simplest Christian to an experience of redemption, as direct and original as that by which he had himself been raised from death to life and from hell to heaven."

Dorner's history of Protestant Theology carries us back thus very properly to what may be considered the cradle of this new form of religion, as we have it offered to our view in the spiritual experience of Luther. To some it may seem not altogether satisfactory to find the movement referred in this way to so small and poor a beginning. They would be better pleased if it could be shown to have come with more outward observation and more general concert, more comprehensive consideration

and plan. But viewing Protestantism as a new creation, a re-organization in full of Christian life and doctrine, it is not easy to see how it could have deserved confidence in any other form so well as in that which here marks its origin in fact. No political authority, of course, could have inaugurated so vast a revolution (as in England) with the same title to respect; but neither would it have had so much the character and presumption of being a divine work, if it had been effected by an ecclesiastical council or a theological school. One of the most powerful arguments for the truth and right of the Lutheran Reformation, after all, will be found to lie in its origin, as the power of a new life in the man Luther himself, before it became a new form of doctrine either for himself or for the world at large. To be at all such a new creation as it has claimed to be, it *must* start in this way; it must be life first, like Christianity in the beginning, in order to become doctrine afterwards. Under no other view, we may add, does the character of Protestantism vindicate itself so clearly as being positive and not merely negative, the actual embracing of truth, and not a perpetual protest simply against supposed error. However it may have been with many calling themselves Protestants in later times, it is certain that with Luther himself, the father and fountain-head of German Protestantism in the sixteenth century, the interest of affirming the true sense of Christianity went before the interest of denying what was felt afterwards to contradict this sense. Religion for him was the most intense form of personal life; faith, the most positive apprehension of objective divine realities; without any thought at all, at first, of contradicting the authority of the reigning Church. The contradiction came at last only through the irrepressible force of what faith found itself constrained to confess and affirm. The positive can easily be seen to rule and determine the negative throughout. Confession first; then protest. Such is the honorable and only just sense of Protestantism, as it mirrors itself to our contemplation in the great soul of Martin Luther; and under no other view, certainly, can it so well lay claim to

historical justification, as being truly the work of God, and not simply the device and contrivance of men.

In the history before us we have first, then, a graphic sketch of the personal development of Luther as far as to the year 1517. In the next place it is shown how the faith that was in him became a principle of censure and reformation over against the abuses with which he found himself surrounded in the Church; how it brought him, without will or forethought of his own, more and more deeply and widely into conflict with the existing order of things; and how, at last, having passed in this way through successive stages of controversy and debate, it forced him finally to a full and complete rupture with the Papacy and all its powers. By this time the cause he represented had itself become a power, moving with irresistible force in its own direction. . It had come to a happy union with learning and science through the university of Wittenberg, and a host of strength was added to it in the person of Melancthon. The principle of reform made itself felt as a witness against the errors of Rome on all sides. It was not enough, however, that it should assert itself simply in this way. As the power of a new positive creation, it must be able to limit and bound itself also on the opposite side, by withstanding successfully all forms of thought, which might seek to make common cause with it as against Rome, while yet they ran in fact toward the destruction of the true Gospel altogether. It was a vast peril to which the Reformation was exposed. In this way, from excesses and caricatures, that put themselves forward everywhere in its name, and claimed to be the only true and full expression of its sense; and nothing served more in the end to prove the substantive character of the movement, and to give assurance of its enduring success, than the way in which it refused to ally itself to these false tendencies, and held itself steadily to its own path. Here come into view Luther's controversies with such men as Carlstadt, with the Anabaptists, with false mysticism and radical subjectivism in all forms, with the Antinomians, with dreamers like Schwenckfeld on the one hand, and with moderatists like Erasmus on the other.

Through all these controversies, the principle of the Reformation, as it reigned in the mind of Luther, wrought as an organic force, gathering to itself what was congenial to its own nature and throwing off what was foreign and incongruous, strengthening itself continually by exercise and taking volume and form more and more, so as to bring out at last in full measure the actual presence and full grown proportions of a renovated Evangelical German Church. The reality and vital energy of the principle are powerfully demonstrated, by the power it had to maintain itself in this way. For Luther was no philosopher or scholastic theologian. His divinity was more intuitional always than logical. The Gospel was not with him, therefore, a given finished system of intellectual propositions, that might be applied mechanically to all occasions as they rose. It was the sense of a new life only, full of the most positive substance, which must work its way through all confusion and chaos to intelligible form. That it did so, without involving him in self-contradiction, without losing itself in vague uncertainty and doubt, so as to furnish consistent matter as it did for the vast structures of theology that come before us in the later scholastic period of the Lutheran Church, is something at which we may well marvel, and which rightly considered can hardly fail to inspire us with true reverence for the Reformation, as having been in very deed what may deserve to be called a new creation in the history of the Christian world.

And what now *was* the principle of this creation, the power that wrought organically to bring it to pass and to give it form? We may say in general, it was the union of faith with the word of God. The principle is thus of a compound character. It has two sides, which are frequently spoken of as being in fact two different principles; one underlying the matter of the Christian salvation, and the other determining its form. Where this distinction is made, the material principle is *justification by faith alone in Christ*, the formal principle is the *exclusive authority of the Holy Scriptures*. Luther allowed to both of these principles independent worth

and right, but so as to see clearly and turn to fruitful account, at the same time, their indissoluble connection. It is a most interesting inquiry, to ascertain how they were thus distinguished and yet brought together as a single power in his mind. No inquiry can be more important, either for the right understanding of the great Reformer himself, or for the right understanding of the Reformation. It may be considered indeed the necessary key, in some sense, for understanding rightly the universal history of Protestantism.

Justification by faith, that article of a standing or falling Church, was something very different with Luther from what it has been taken to be, by many who have made it their watch-word since his time. As the corner-stone of Christianity, it was for him, of course, vastly more than any doctrine simply bearing this title. The great truth, as he held it, was in the fullest sense spirit and life. In such form, it was anything but a subjective sentiment simply in the mind of the believer. How far this view has been allowed to run away with the doctrine, making it the vehicle of damnable falsehood, all may easily see and know. In one direction, we find it in the character of an abstract intellectual solifidianism, producing the most wretched carnal security and antinomian indifference to all good works. In another direction, it meets us in the shape of wild, fanatical sectarianism, scorning the outward word and sacraments, and resolving all religion into private inspiration and fancy—the very fiend of unsacramental *Schwärmerei*, with which Luther had to do battle, long and heavy, in defence of his own doctrine and cause. Then again it looks forth upon us, with a sort of cold Mephistopheles grin, from the camp of Liberal and Rationalistic Christianity, where it is made to be another word only for the rejection of all positive Christianity, and a general trust in God without any reference to Christ whatever. Thus it is, that errors from all points of the compass come together on this common confession of justification by faith; all claiming to be Protestant in the fullest and best sense of the term; and all arrogating to themselves

the title *evangelical*, as having in their own opinion exhausted the inmost marrow of the Gospel.

Alas for the article of a standing or falling Church, in such an evangelical Babel as this. Luther's principle was never intended certainly to take in forms of Christianity like these. On the contrary, it was intended to shut them out as unevangelical and false. With him, faith was far more than an opinion, judgment, sentiment, or merely subjective state of any kind. It was such an inward relation of its subject (the believer) to its proper object (Christ and his work—the Gospel in its true sense), as involved at once the real apprehension of the object in its own proper living form. Faith found its own necessary complement thus in that which it was brought to embrace; and what it embraced was no doctrine simply or outward word, but the actual living substance of the Gospel itself.

Regarded as the beginning of the Christian life, this faith must start, in the nature of the case, where the grace of redemption first reaches over into the consciousness of the sinner—must be an appropriation of God's mercy exhibited in the forgiveness of sin. It is thus justifying faith; because it sets its subject in felt, assured communication with the only ground of justification, the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. In the apprehension of this sacrifice, however, it is not simply the doctrine of the atonement that is embraced; it is the living fact of the atonement itself, as being of perennial force to take away sin; and as this cannot for a moment be sundered from the person of the Saviour, it follows, that it is always Christ himself, who is thus embraced, under the view particularly of his priestly work, as the great object by which faith becomes efficacious here for the deliverance of the soul from the condemning and disabling power of sin.

Such faith is what it is, only by coming into real union with its object, and so causing its object to come into real union with its subject. It is at once in this way both of subjective and objective force. It assures the believer of his interest in Christ, and at the same time authenticates to him the truth of Christ

and the reality of the Gospel, as they can be authenticated to him without this by no argument or proof besides.

In this view, faith is with Luther an independent principle of evangelical truth, and not a secondary authority simply depending on the Bible. It is the direct apprehension of the truth itself, the seeing eye in actual vision, the immediate meeting of the soul with its proper life in Christ, which requires and allows no intervening mediation or condition. In such view, it cannot be said to rest on the authority of the written word, the assurance of any outward inspiration. It is *sui juris* in its own sphere, having to do only with the positive substance of the Gospel itself, back of all certification of what it is in any other way. It was not the authority of the Bible, that first brought Luther himself to the exercise of faith and the sense of justification. It was, he tells us, by having his attention turned to the article of the forgiveness of sins in the Apostles' Creed, that he came to lay hold of Christ in his own person, and was thus made to emerge from darkness into the marvellous light of the Gospel. His Christianity, like that of the first Christians, took root at once in the self-authenticating presence of the Christian salvation itself.

Luther's "justifying faith," let it be well considered then, was no apprehension simply of the merit of Christ in an abstract, impersonal view; it was the laying hold of the atonement in Christ, the atonement under a living, personal form. It embraced the whole Christ, and took in all his benefits potentially, no less than the forgiveness of sins. "Hence Luther," according to Dorner, "holds throughout (with the best later Lutheran theologians), that justifying faith, that is, the faith which appropriates justification, includes also love, and so in principle and germ at least the presence of good works. The believer remains not what he was before; not only is there a change of relation between him and God through the imputed merit of Christ, but his faith has brought into him also a new life. Faith is a new tree of life, which cannot but put forth the fruits of love and wisdom." Throughout, indeed, it is only the laying hold of the fact of God's mercy in Christ that justi-

fies us, and puts us in the way of becoming holy; but still our justification is the root of our sanctification. It is more than a simply forensic act, an outward thought on the part of God. What God thinks and speaks in the case, is necessarily of creative force for the soul into which his thought comes, and cannot fail to work productively there, as the power of a new consciousness and the principle of a regenerated life.

The position which Luther assigns to faith, as the material principle of Christianity over against the Bible, is wonderfully independent and free. He will know of no mechanical subjugation of the spirit here to a rule holding entirely beyond itself. Faith alone furnishes the key for the proper interpretation of the Bible. Faith must unfold and apply the sense of the Bible. Faith may sit in judgment even on the canon and text of the Bible. How far he carried this liberty of criticism himself, is well known. The Epistle of James he rejected altogether; and he was but little more indulgent towards the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Apocalypse. He goes so far even as to say of an argument of St. Paul in the Epistle to the Galatians, that it will not hold good; and he has no trouble in admitting, that not only St. Stephen, but the sacred writers themselves, are chargeable with inaccuracies. His views of the Old Testament are liberal in the extreme. The canon of the Scriptures is everywhere for him a still more or less open question. Some books are of higher worth than others. There are different degrees of inspiration. He distinguishes everywhere plainly, between the Divine word (the actual substance of revelation) and the written record we have of it in the Bible; and his whole view of inspiration implies that it is to be considered as of a historical, living character throughout, involving the human in the divine, under the most different modes and forms, and all in the freest possible way.

But with all this stress laid on the material principle, Luther is no less strong again in asserting the independence also of the formal principle of the Reformation, the exclusive authority of the Holy Scriptures over against every other rule of doctrine or life. So in his polemics with the Roman Church,

and so also in his polemics with the subjective fanaticism of the Anabaptists. Christ works continuously in the world through the outward word and sacraments; and he will hear of no Christianity that proceeds not from his presence among men in this form. The Holy Scriptures are the only infallible source for knowing what Christianity was in the beginning, the only sure measure and norm for determining what it is now. What faith certifies for truth must be tried continually by this rule.

Here seems to be a dilemma. How can these two principles each asserting its own independence, stand together in one and the same system? Luther enters into no formal conciliation of the difficulty. But it is practically solved for him by his sound Christian experience itself; and both principles flow together in his consciousness, as only different sides in fact of one and the same principle. Faith and the outward Word look to the same object and find their proper completeness in the same end. In their legitimate course then, they cannot come into real conflict. The guaranty of their full inward correspondence lies in their being true to themselves, and in their following, independently, each the law of its own nature. The Word demands faith as the necessary organ for its right apprehension; while faith seeks the Word as that which offers to it its own proper food and ministers continually to its growth and strength. Thus are they in mutual relation throughout, the material and formal sides simply of the same generating power, the principle which must be considered the root of all true Protestantism.

After the rise of Lutheranism, we have next, in Dorner's *Urzeit des Protestantismus*, a general survey of the origin of the Reformed Confession, as it rose in Switzerland simultaneously with the German movement. Full justice is done to its distinctive and independent character. It begins in a certain sense with Ulrich Zwingli; but he bears no such relation to it as that of Luther to the Reformation in Germany. His person is not for it at all of any like central and fundamental significance. He cannot be regarded as its original type. He is simply one among a number of others, who appear as leaders in a diffusive popular revolution, without owing to him particu-

larly their governing thought and spirit. There may have been some disadvantage in this; but it is easy to see in it also much advantage. It saved the Reformed Confession from the proprietorship of a human name. We feel at once how it must have been belittled and wronged, by becoming known as the *Zwinglian Church*. There was no possibility of that, even among the cantons of its native Switzerland; much less, as its lines went forth afterwards over Western Europe, through France and along the Rhine, to Holland, England, Scotland, and finally also far and wide over the Northern half of the New World. Over against this development, the person and name of Zwingli, with all that was generous in his nature or noble and heroic in his life, shrink deservedly into historical insignificance. In no sense can he be regarded as either the fountain or the foundation of the Reformed Church.

We have in the rise of the Reformed Church two stages; the first a sort of unripe preparation merely for the second, in which we reach at last its full confessional sense. It is only for the incipient stage that Zwingli can be said to have even relatively the character of a leader; and even here there was nothing strictly creative, as with Luther, in the working of his spirit. It had no power, except in part at Zurich, to impress itself permanently on the symbolical theology of the Church. The Swiss Confessions represent a later life.

There is a generic difference, of course, between the Lutheran and Reformed types of Protestantism. We will not pretend here to sketch it even in outline. It is not easy, indeed, to bring it to clear intellectual delineation; as is shown by the fact, that the best attempts which have been made to set the subject in proper light, besides conflicting with one another, are found in no case entirely satisfactory. But the difference itself admits of no question. It is of a kind to be felt, even where it cannot be fully understood or explained. The Reformers, on both sides, all felt it in the beginning; and it has perpetuated itself in the spirit of the two Confessions, through all changes they have suffered since, down to the present time. Yet has this felt difference never been of such sort,

at the same time, as to destroy absolutely the sense of a common life. Neither form of faith has been able to hold itself entirely independent of the other. There has been between them a mutual attraction, no less than a mutual repulsion. The full idea of Protestantism has been felt to require and embrace them both.

The Swiss movement thus, in the beginning, was regarded as kindred in full with the German. The difference between them came not at once into view. Their unity stood not only in their common opposition to Rome, but in their essential agreement besides with regard to the supreme authority of the Scriptures, and the freeness of God's grace in Christ; and then again in their common conservatism also over against false spiritualistic tendencies in the hyper-protestant direction. For the Swiss too had to defend their cause on this side in opposition to the religious anarchy both of the Anabaptists and of the Antitrinitarians. Still the constitutional difference of the Confessions was at hand also from the first; and it was not long before it began to make itself painfully felt. The occasion, as is well known, was the question of our Lord's presence in the Holy Eucharist.

According to Dr. Dorner, Zwingli's view of the Lord's Supper was not at first so different from that of Luther as to be a matter of particular observation; being substantially indeed, the same view that was received generally afterwards, through the influence of Calvin, into the Reformed Confessions, with which Luther himself, as we know, had no disposition to quarrel. He was led, however, through certain influences, gradually to shift his ground, and in the year 1524 proclaimed, in his celebrated letter to Matthew Alber, what was felt to be on all sides a doctrine at full variance with the Lutheran. This became the signal for sharp controversy, leading to much bitterness and provocation, and tending of course toward extreme positions on both sides. That Zwingli's sacramental doctrine now had become poor and low, and much of one sort with the rationalistic theory that prevails among so called evangelical sects of modern times generally, admits of no question, and is

practically proved by the fact of its subsequent repudiation on the part of the Swiss Churches themselves. Calvin, we know, went so far as to pronounce it profane. Even Zwingli himself seems to have returned again, before he died, to better thoughts on the subject, by which room was made for the Marburg Conference in 1529; the beginning of a peace between the contending parties, which reached its consummation, after his death, in the memorable Wittenberg Concord of 1536. This carries us over what may be called the first comparatively unripe stage of development in the Primitive History of the Reformed Church.

Having come thus far, the work before us advances to a third main division of its First Book, devoted to the object of representing the movement of the doctrinal life of both Confessions on to its symbolical conclusion, as this is reached for the Lutheran Church in 1580 by the Form of Concord, and for the Reformed Church in 1620 by the Articles of the Synod of Dort.

The first section of this division gives us a comprehensive view of the vast internal conflicts, through which the Lutheran doctrine was brought to complete itself in this way for the Lutheran consciousness, in what was supposed to be its necessary ultimate form. Dorner sees in these violent theological struggles, of course, a steady historical movement toward a determinate general end. They reduce themselves for him to six main controversies, falling into three counterpart pairs: first, the *Antinomian* and the *Majoristic*; then, the *Osiandrian* and the *Stancarian*; and finally, the *Synergistic* and the *Flaccian*. "On first view," we are told, "the controversies here named present a show of the greatest confusion, especially as the parties concerned in them figure in all sorts of cross combinations; the same combatants appearing as allies in one case and then again as opponents in another. In this we may see a proof, that it was not the conscious spirit of faction, but an honest regard for the cause, that determined party lines in each case. We may see, moreover, in the coming up of the controversies by pairs, how doctrines developed themselves historically through onesided antagonistic extremes, working from opposite

directions for mutual correction, and serving to bring out in full, sharp force and expression at last what each doctrine properly meant. In such view, these complicated struggles for the right apprehension of the reformation principle (necessarily more or less defective in the beginning), must be regarded as answering a most important purpose in bringing out the true sense of the Reformation. Looked at in this way, the controversial chaos shapes itself into comparative order and light. In spite of human passion and accident, it is found to proceed in the whole with regular onward movement. First, in the Antinomian and Majoristic extremes, the strife turns on the law and its significance, as forming the preliminary threshold to the right understanding of the doctrine of free grace. Next, through the ultraisms of Osiander and Stancarus, we are brought to a close determination of what is comprehended in the idea of justifying faith and the forgiveness of sin through Christ's person and work, the Gospel, in other words, under its objective view. All of which is followed up then in the third place, by the discussion of the subjective side of our salvation, involving the question of freedom and grace, as we have it in the Synergistic and Flaccian controversies. This completes the circle of principal questions. In all these controversies, it is at last a mediating view, between opposing extremes, that comes in the end to symbolical authority (though not everywhere with like satisfaction) in the Form of Concord."

It is easy to see how our History, following out this general scheme, is able to make the study of the tumultuous theological period to which it belongs, both interesting and profitable.

From the Lutheran Confession thus advanced to the high position of the Form of Concord, our attention is in the next place turned once more to the Reformed Church; whose orphaned condition after the death of Zwingli and Oecolampadius found, we are told, in the person and character of the great Calvin a new centre, and it may be said, the soul of a new life also; in the power of which it entered upon the second stadium of its general birth-period, and attained the full confessional form under which it appears in its later symbols.

We cannot pretend, of course, to generalize here, even in the broadest way, our author's very favorable estimate of Calvin's character, or the view he presents of the Calvinistic theology in its relations to the Lutheran. The two-fold principle of the Reformation (as at once material and formal), he finds distinctly recognized by the Reformer of Geneva, no less than by Luther and Melancthon; though not without some variation of apprehension, answering to the general differing standpoints of the two Confessions. This divergency of view, in reference both to the nature of justifying faith and to the authority of the Scriptures, needs to be well studied and laid to heart, for a right knowledge of the Reformed Church, and for the full understanding of the History of Protestantism generally. But we can say no more of it at the present time.

We must not omit, however, to bring forward Dorner's testimony in regard to Calvin's sacramental doctrine; "in which, as well as in the articles of sin, guilt and justification, he sought to come nearer than Zwingli to Luther;" and which entered subsequently also, we are told, into all the later and more important symbolical books of the Reformed Church—the low view of Zwingli finding in this period no favor among them whatever. The sacraments, according to this old Reformed doctrine, are not naked signs simply, nor acts merely of thankfulness or confession on our part, but pledges and seals of God's actually present grace, at once mysterious and efficacious. Such is Calvin's view of Baptism; and such also his view of the Lord's Supper. Christ, he tells us, cannot be sundered from his benefits. We partake of these only by partaking of his person. The matter and substance of the Holy Supper, then, is Christ himself in his true human life, and all the grace of the sacrament flows from this substance. The symbols in the Supper not only represent, but exhibit and offer actually what they represent; the signs are conjoined with that which they signify. Not by transmutation or natural alligation in any way, but through Christ's word and the transcendent working of the Holy Ghost.

Luther was willing to be satisfied with Calvin's sacramental

doctrine, as published a. 1540 in his tract *de Coena Domini*; and it was favorably received by the Lutheran Church generally. Still it was not in full harmony with the more rigorous thinking of that Confession; and we need not wonder, therefore, that it failed in the end to bring the Helvetic and German Churches together, and only opened the way for a second sacramental war more violent altogether than that which had ended in the Wittenberg Concord.

There are still those in this country who allow themselves to disown (with a sort of wilful obscurantism) what we have shown heretofore, in the Mystical Presence and elsewhere, to have been the Calvinistic doctrine of the Lord's Supper, as it was held by Calvin himself and adopted by the later and better Reformed symbols of the sixteenth century. They refuse not merely the doctrine itself, as they must necessarily do from their Puritanic standpoint; but they disown also the fact of its past existence, requiring history to suit itself to their own theological preconceptions. It is some satisfaction to be able to confront this stubborn humor with the clear judgment and testimony of such a witness as Dorner, in the way we have it here given with regard to the whole subject. He even goes so far as to refer with approbation to our tract, *The Doctrine of the Reformed Church on the Lord's Supper* 1850, as full of proof for the case, and notes it as something strange in another place, that for thus "bringing the genuine doctrine of Calvin to mind, and bewailing the evils of the sect system," we should have fallen with many in America into the reproach of Romanizing.

Our obscurantists (whether among ourselves or in other denominations) may as well make up their mind to yield the *historical* question with a good grace. Calvin saw in the Lord's Supper no outward show only, no theatrical pomp, no mere imagination or mental conception. "Christ's humanity (*caro*) is life-giving, not simply as that through which our salvation has been once obtained, but because now also, in our growing union with him, his body breathes life into us, because, in short, through the mysterious power of the Spirit, which resides in

Christ's body, we have a common life with him. For from the secret fountain of the Godhead life has been wonderfully poured into the body of Christ, in order that it might from this reservoir flow over to his people. Spiritual presence here must not be taken to exclude actual presence; and if by *real* we are to understand *true* simply, as the opposite of fancy or show, then was he (Calvin) willing to allow the term real presence; for he meant nothing less than a real participation of the Saviour's body. Only he was not willing to have this understood in any common physical sense, at war with the proper conception of Christ's glorified, spiritual or pneumatic being. Like the sun, Christ streams into us the vivific energy of his flesh (*vivificum carnis suae vigorem in nos transfundit, non secus ac vitali solis calore per radios vegetamur*). Himself in heaven, he yet descends to us by his power, and works in us, breathing life into us from his body's substance. The mediating principle of this world-transcending communication is what Calvin calls the mirifical agency of the Holy Ghost, working in believers a spiritual lifting up of the soul, answerable to the *sursum corda* of the old Liturgies. For it is only the organ of faith that can receive Christ—any other view must sever him from the Holy Ghost. Not that unbelief can alter the nature of the sacrament; that would make God dependent on his creature; but it is only faith that *can* receive the offered blessing, which is immediately spiritual, although it becomes through faith of bodily force also in the end. The powers that proceed from Christ's body he seems to regard as the power also of the Holy Ghost, who however is sent from Christ, issues forth indeed from his humanity itself, to effect union with him. This union is for Calvin then a lifting up of the soul into heaven, though not of course in the sense of its quitting the body as in ecstasy or trance."

This is the Calvinistic doctrine of the mystical presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper; which entered into the Reformed confessional symbols generally, in the second half of the sixteenth century; and which substantially is now embodied in the eucharistic service of the new *Order of Worship*, lately pre-

pared for our American German Reformed Church. The consecratory prayer in that service runs: "Almighty God, our heavenly Father, send down, we beseech Thee, the powerful benediction of Thy Holy Spirit upon these elements of bread and wine, that being set apart now from a common to a sacred and mystical use, they may exhibit and represent to us with true effect the Body and Blood of Thy Son, Jesus Christ; so that in the use of them we may be made, through the power of the Holy Ghost, to partake really and truly of His blessed life, whereby only we can be saved from death, and raised to immortality at the last day. *Amen.*" That this should be felt not to tally with the common unsacramental thinking of the present time, is not strange. It was not intended to do so. It was intended to be a solemn protest against all such grossly palpable defection from the old faith, whether found among ourselves or in other branches of the Reformed Church (Congregationalist, Low Dutch, Presbyterian, or Methodist); or a thing more monstrous to think of still, in large portions even of our American Lutheran profession itself! But there is not a clause or word in the form, that is not in strict agreement with the Calvinistic or old Reformed doctrine; and only theological blindness can see in it, or theological perverseness pretend to see in it, either the Roman Catholic dogma of transubstantiation, or the so-called consubstantiation of the Church of Luther.

The last portion of this part of Dorner's work sketches the history of the Reformed Church, theologically considered, after the death of Calvin, through the Arminian controversy, particularly in Holland, down to the meeting of the General Synod of Dort; which may be said to have closed in a sense the period of confessional production for this Church, as it had come to its end also for the Lutheran Church, some time before, through the bringing out of the Form of Concord.

Thus we reach the conclusion of what our author considers to be the *Urzeit* of Protestantism, its primordial creative period, in which we have the bursting forth of its first general life, and the production of the still more or less unorganized

material of its subsequent history. It forms, as we have before said, the subject of the first book of his work, and takes up nearly one-half of its nine hundred and twenty-four octavo pages. We shall not follow him any farther at present. We may, however return to his History again in some future article for the *MERCERSBURG REVIEW*. Should we be permitted to do so, we shall find the subject full of difficulty, but at the same time profoundly interesting, and of the most awakening religious solemnity. It goes to the foundations of our Protestant life, and has to do with the deepest Christian problems of the age.

One great object with Dorner in his first book, is to bring clearly into view the original and only proper sense of the material principle of Protestantism, as it conditioned and determined also, at the same time, the sense of its formal principle. On these two grand hinges, in right relation to one another, justification by faith and the exclusive authority of the Scriptures, the universal weight of the Reformation must necessarily rest and turn. But the only real foundation of Christianity, objectively considered, is Christ himself. Great stress then is laid here on the thought, that justifying faith, in the Reformation sense of the term, amounted to a real self-authenticating apprehension of Christ's righteousness through an actual laying hold of his person and life. In other words, that in which Christianity started within the soul, was held to be not just the idea of the atonement after all; but this idea lodged in the Incarnate Word, as the power of salvation back of all Christ's doings and merits in any farther view. This is all very well, and as we believe profoundly true. The article of a standing or falling Church becomes thus Christological, in the fullest sense of the term. It centres upon the person of Christ, and has no meaning or truth in any other view. Dorner sees well, that in no other view can there be any room to speak either of theological consistency or of historical continuity for Protestantism; without this, it must resolve itself into endless confusion and chaos. We may well say, therefore, that in thus maintaining the Christological sense of Luther's doctrine of justification by

faith, Dorner has in truth planted himself on what must be considered the very Gibraltar of the Protestant cause, if that cause is to be successfully defended at all on strictly Protestant ground.

But has Dr. Dorner now shown himself faithful to his great position, in making no more of it than he has done for the historical treatment of his subject? With all our respect for his high name, we must say that we think not. We cannot help feeling, all through his History, a certain theological inconsistency, by which he allows his view of the ultimate significance of Christ's person for the Gospel, to stop short with what it is in one direction only (the atoning virtue of his death as apprehended by justifying faith), while no like account is made apparently of what it must necessarily be also in other directions. Is it only the priestly office and work of Christ, then, that have their root in his person? Is not his person just as much the root also of his prophetic office and work; and so again the root no less of his kingly office and work? It will not do to confine the Christological principle here, as Dorner appears to do, and as seems to have been done in some measure also by the Reformers of the sixteenth century, to its bearing on the cardinal interest of the atonement. The whole Gospel starts in Christ, the mystery of the incarnation, the coming together of God and man in his person. This is the beginning and foundation of all that follows; and in taking in this, the faith that gives us an interest in the atonement (the material principle of Protestantism) brings into us in truth the power of his universal life, as related to the purposes of our salvation. All this we have in the Creed. There Christianity begins in Christ, and rolls itself forward in the grand and glorious life-stream of the Church. The forgiveness of sins (on which Luther first fastened the anchor of his faith) is there in its proper place; but there too are other articles, supposed to be comprehended with equal necessity in the Christian mystery—*God manifest in the flesh*. There in particular is the article of the Church, drawing after it unquestionably, not only the idea of sacramental grace which Dorner admits, but the

idea also of an Apostolical ministry by Divine consecration (as we have it in Eph. iv. 7-15), which Dorner takes pains, if we understand him properly, to let us know he does not admit. Here, we say, we feel his whole position, and the whole argument of his History to be unsatisfactory and wrong; and just here, as we have had occasion to say before, we break with the modern German theology generally, much as we admire it otherwise, because we find it untrue to its own Christological principle. The virus of Erastianism is everywhere in its veins. We are willing to meet all parties, German or English, on the basis of the Apostles' Creed; but, God helping us, we will not consent to stand with any of them anywhere else.

ART. V.—SCHELLING'S IDEA OF ACADEMIC CULTURE.

Vorlesungen ueber die Method des Academischen Studium, von F. W. J. Schelling, Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1830.

Schelling very properly introduces his Lectures on Culture with the remark, that discussions of this kind are important, not only to the teacher and student, but also in the direct bearing they have on the progress, tendency and character of science itself. Schools of learning, if they be pervaded with anything like life and power, and are not simply the tread-mills of a dead routine of worn out traditions, may, therefore, be expected to exert an influence that goes beyond the college walls, and be felt in every sphere of life, but especially in the impulse and direction they give to the pursuit of knowledge under all its diversified forms. This remark seems to be conclusively verified by the lectures before us. Whilst they throw much light on what might be called the German idea of education, they at the same time present the sciences in their proper organic connection with each other, and invest them with a dignity and value, which they would in vain claim as they stand by themselves, in-

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ART. I.—DORNER'S HISTORY OF PROTESTANT THEOLOGY.
[SECOND ARTICLE.]

BY J. W. NEVIN, D.D.

THE Second Book of Dr. Dorner's work is devoted to what he calls the *Sonderleben* of the two Protestant Confessions, and the *Wiederauflösung* of the original principle of Protestantism. The period embraced in it reaches from the first part of the seventeenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The Lutheran and Reformed Churches, originally and constitutionally different forms only of the same general movement, more or less conjoined in their actual previous history, are regarded as now falling asunder, and running each a separate course through several generations; an intermediate historical stadium, which must be considered in this view unsatisfactory and wrong, while it served, however, to prepare the way for the ultimate union of the Confessions again, as it may be trusted, in the power of a higher and better life. It is characteristic, then, of this period of sundered existence still farther, that it was attended also with a sundering of the proper Protestant

consciousness itself on the part of both Churches. The unity of the original Protestant principle (as at once material and formal), underwent a gradual dissolution, resulting at last in the reduction of the principle under both views to sheer weakness and inanity. This also, however, must be taken as a transitional stage of church life, designed to make room for the restoration of what was the proper idea of Protestantism in the beginning; and the great theological problem for the present age, accordingly, is to re-assert, both practically and theoretically, the original Protestant principle in its full compound force, in a way that shall place it triumphantly above all the errors that have attended its wrong development, down to the present time.

Only in this way, Dorner thinks, is it possible to vindicate "either the justice of the Reformation itself in the sixteenth century, or the right of Protestantism now to look upon itself as having any legitimacy from that great revolutionary movement." Mere outward succession here, in other words, is not enough; without the bond of a common life, without comprehension in the principle of the Reformation as a positive actual force, the boast of lineal descent can mean nothing. Without this, all comes at last to poor empty negation; and Protestantism has no history which is not at the same time the argument of its own unsubstantial existence.

The Birth-Period of Protestantism, the age of confessional production, was followed in both divisions of the new Evangelical Church by an age of scholastic theology, in which every effort was made, with vast outlay of strength and learning, to organize the religious material of the Reformation into full scientific form; whereby it might appear in proper harmony with itself, and be properly distinguished, at the same time, from the errors of Rome in one direction, as well as from all false irreligious extremes in the other. It lay in the very nature of this school divinity, that it should stand in a certain sort of outward opposition to the original freshness and vigor of what it was required to study and explain; and we find throughout a tendency with it, accordingly, to substitute the

theory of religion, in some measure, for the actual life of religion. Orthodoxy was made to stand too much for the whole sense of Christianity; in which wrong position, then, it failed to secure its own object, and became itself unfaithful to the very cause it was intended to support. Especially was this the case in regard to the main citadel of Protestant Christianity, the right union of the material and formal sides of the original principle of Protestantism. All here depended on the living relation of faith to the word of God as comprehended primarily in Christ Himself, and could be firmly and steadily held only in the element of the actual life to which it belonged. As an object of mere reflection or outward scientific contemplation, the mystery is found to become more or less unsteady; its two sides lose their necessary coherence; faith no longer carries with it its own rightful assurance; and then the word, also, turned into a simply mechanical authority, is shorn of its proper power, and proves unequal altogether to what is required of it, as taken to be now in such abstract view the pillar and ground of the truth.

In this portion of his History, our author directs his attention first to the Reformed Church. The reign of orthodoxy here, or what he calls "one-sided objectivity," is made to reach to about the close of the seventeenth century. The Reformed theology of this period comes before us under a most respectable and imposing character; passing from Switzerland over to Holland, strengthening itself in different parts of Germany, flourishing for a time in France, and finally attaining to credit and distinction also in England. Holland became famous throughout the world for its universities and great theological names. The Synod of Dort, claiming to be of œcumenical authority for the Reformed Confession, made the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination to be a necessary part of its orthodox faith. But this met with much opposition; not only in Germany, through the influence of Lutheranism, but also in Holland, France, and England, by a reaction from within the bosom of the Reformed Church itself. All this gave rise to great controversies; in the course of which the material and formal sides

of the Protestant principle both suffered damage, in a way that made room finally for a general irruption of rationalistic unbelief. The old orthodoxy, held up for a time in Switzerland by the *Consensus Helveticus*, gave away at last in full about the year 1700, making an end of this whole scholastic period for the Reformed Church at large.

Of special importance as a reactionary force against the scholasticism of the period, was the celebrated school of Cocceius (J. Cock), an eminent German divine, whose labors in Holland told with immense effect for a time on the theology of the whole Reformed Church. To understand his position, and what he accomplished in this view, it is necessary to glance at what had come to be the general theological posture of the Protestant Church in his time.

The circumstances of Protestantism, according to Dorner, necessitated in the progress of its development a resort to philosophical scholasticism, for its own explanation and defence. The two Confessions, however, applied their studies here in different ways. The being of God (theology in the strict sense), they accepted in common without any original inquiry; then, however, while the Lutheran theology directed its attention to Christ's benefits (justification in particular), as the marrow of the Gospel, the thinking of the Reformed Church fastened itself mainly, not, indeed, on God's being, as now said, but on God's decree, in such manner as to see all history comprehended in it, as it were *sub specie æternitatis*, without room for any real human agency whatever. Under such unchangeable constitution, there could be no resolution of history into great periods or ages ruled by different principles; even the fall of man itself could form no such distinction, but must be considered the coming out simply of what was required by God's decree from the beginning, for the accomplishment of its ultimate purpose. God is in full harmony with Himself through all, looking to the end of all from first to last, the salvation of the elect through Christ. History in such view, of course, ceases to be history in any proper sense of the term. Human freedom has nothing to do with it. It involves no real movement whatever.

But the want of a proper historical view of religion was not confined in this period to the Reformed Church. "The Lutheran scholasticism also," Dr. Dorner tells us, "failed to reach the idea of an actual history of redemption, including periods and stages, for humanity at large; all it recognized was such history in the case of single souls, whose salvation then was made to turn, not on God's decree, but on His truth made known for the purpose through revelation. This truth must be the same, it was assumed, for all times; and therefore salvation was at hand for men under the Old Testament, before Christ came into the world, in the same form in which it is at hand for them now, since His coming, under the New Testament. In this we see at once a tendency to one-sided intellectualism in the conception of saving faith, and at the same time a general want of clearness, as in the age of the Reformation itself, in regard to the relation of the Old Testament to the New. For, keen as Luther's observations frequently are in this direction, particularly where he contrasts the Law with the Gospel, it did not come still with him or with the Church at large, as his own commentaries on the Old Testament show, to the firm apprehension of any real difference of religion under the two dispensations. The Form of Concord says indeed what is true, when it tells us, that the Gospel is to be found in the Old Testament, and the Law also in the New Testament; but if we are to allow at all the force of our Lord's own distinction of periods (Matt. xi. 11, 12), this must not be so taken as to trench too closely on the absolute newness of Christianity. The identification of the two dispensations in the Lutheran Church, doing away with the idea of historical development, and raising the Old Testament at once to the level of the New, found support in the hypothesis that the Old Testament saints saw Christ and His work of salvation prospectively by faith; and that as for the unchanging nature of God, all history is comprehended in a single glance, causing the future to be felt as present, so the historical value of the atonement also must be allowed to carry with it in this way a retroactive force. This view was promoted largely, moreover, by the reigning doctrine of inspi-

ration, which made God to be the exclusive and sole author of the Scriptures (without any recognition of a true human concurrence in their production), and then, as all sound interpretation must aim at giving the *full* sense and mind of an author, was led irresistibly, out of regard to the immutability of God's purposes and counsels, to seek in the Old Testament also what were known to be the truths of the New Testament; as being necessarily the only whole and adequate expression of God's meaning in His own revelation, and capable of being apprehended as such, at least by true believers."

In this way, we are told, the Lutheran theology, no less than the Reformed, failed to reach in the seventeenth century the conception of a real, living historical movement in the work of the world's redemption. But the identifying view of the Old and New Testaments was aggravated somewhat perhaps, and made more mechanical, in the Reformed Church, by the stress which was laid there on the absolute sovereignty of God, in connection with the doctrine of predestination.

Keeping all this in view, we may understand the significance of Cocceius and his "theology of the covenants." He stood in the bosom of his time; moved in the Reformed system of thought; and found Christianity, himself, quite too indiscriminately in the Old Testament. But his heart was warmly in the Bible, and his studies here carried him out of the beaten track of the schools. The great business of theology, in his view, was to ascertain the mind of God in the Scriptures. He has been charged with teaching that the sacred text must be taken to mean all that it can in any way be made to mean; but his view was simply that the sense of the text, in any case, is not to be limited or measured by what was in the mind of its human composer. For the whole authorship of it being of God, according to the common orthodox judgment, the wholeness of God's knowledge with regard to its subject, must be considered as entering into it; so that whatever it can be made to mean by this standard, must be counted as belonging in truth to its legitimate sense. Under this general view, theology became in his hands altogether biblical; and the idea around which it

revolved was that of the covenant. Others before him had made much also of this idea, particularly Olevianus, one of the authors of the Heidelberg Catechism; but it was under a one-sided view mainly, as seeing in it only a relation of God to man. Cocceius first made earnest with the double character of the relation, as depending on conditions, involving acts, and carrying along with it the force of real history. This was at once to unsettle the doctrine of an abstract decree, made to be the principle of the world's salvation in the Calvinistic sense. Not only the supralapsarian scheme of necessity, but the infralapsarian also, was made to bend and give way more or less before such a view. It was an immense matter to have the feeling of a historical process, the sense of differing economies brought home to the consciousness of the Church in this way. No wonder that the scholastic orthodoxy of the time felt itself disturbed by what was felt to be so serious a breaking away from its authority. Its controversies with the Cocceian theology, reaching through many years, while they were successful to a certain extent in exposing the defects of this scheme, served at the same time to bring out the inherent weakness of the reigning theology, and helped on the reactionary tendency which robbed it finally of all its force, and caused it to give way entirely to the subjectivism and rationalism that carried all before them in the course of the following century.

Our author finds in the Cartesian philosophy another far-reaching cause which, in his opinion, wrought powerfully and deeply, as a silently undermining force in the same revolutionary direction.

After noticing in such general way the course of theology in the Reformed Church on the Continent, Dr. Dorner passes to the consideration of its history during the same period in Great Britain. Here there might seem to have been, at first view, no movement in common with the continental life of the Confession. But we have, in fact, the same general law at work, our author thinks, on both sides; only under a difference of character, answerable to their different spirit and genius. What we have on the Continent predominantly in the form of thought and in-

tellectual production, meets us in England and Scotland in the form of will, practical production, external organization, political and social life; with special regard also in England more particularly, to all that pertains to cultus or public worship. In neither of these countries, we are told, has a scholastic theology, or rigidly scientific orthodoxy, ever been able to strike root. The idea of objective religious authority has, instead of this, embodied itself in real outward arrangements and constitutions; over against which, then, the heterodox has run always naturally to like outward expression in the form of church separation and schism. These practical activities, however, are only in their way what the theoretical activities show themselves to be in another and different way. History as a whole, in both cases, turns on the relation of authority to freedom, as these oppositional forces are found incessantly struggling, through all antagonisms, to reach some satisfactory reconciliation and peace. Thus we have the idea of authority in Great Britain represented under the form of an established church polity, Episcopalianism in England, Presbyterianism in Scotland. The ecclesiastical struggle between the opposing forces here corresponds in some measure with the confessional war on the Continent; as it ends also in a sort of like general exhaustion and dead formalism on both sides, making room for the insurrection of private judgment and private will, in a way that brought on finally a reign of general unbelief. The reaction of the subjective principle against objective authority, gave rise to the Independents or Congregationalists, to the English Baptists, to the Quakers, and other unsacramental sects; and then finally, also, to the Deists. Deism rose in England during the latter part of the seventeenth century, and flourished steadily on till about the middle of the century following. In Scotland, the inward course of things was substantially the same. The old church orthodoxy sank into lifeless formality, and there also, as everywhere else, the eighteenth century became a period of wide-spread scepticism and unbelief.

In the Lutheran Church, the parallel historical movement through the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, according to

Dr. Dorner, is of a more measured and regular character; carried forward by parties, which were held together always in the same ecclesiastical communion, and which found themselves forced in this way to come to a more thorough understanding of their differences. Here we have again, in the first place, a period of one-sided objectivity, a time of scholastic orthodoxy, devoted to the work of expounding and defending theologically, on all sides, the religious acquisitions of the previous age, as they were held to be embodied particularly in the Lutheran symbolical books. The great matter was to hold fast, and hand forward safely, the traditional faith received from the Reformation fathers. It was, for Germany, an age of famous theological schools and mighty theological men.

Specially deserving attention here is the history of the Reformation principle. It underwent gradually serious modification and change. For Luther, as we have seen, faith and word (the subjective and objective sides of the principle) were indissolubly joined together, though each had still its own relative independence; the direct apprehension of the Christian salvation itself in Christ, was that which authenticated the truth of Christianity; and the assurance of this truth, therefore, was not the result, in the first place, of any divine certification of the biblical canon, but came simply from the laying hold of what forms the matter of the Bible, the gracious doings and promises of God, and, above all, the great fact of justification through faith. This article of justification, then, was not with him one simply among other doctrinal propositions; it lay at the root of the whole Christian life itself, as well as at the foundation of all Christian doctrine. In the seventeenth century, now, we find the demand for unconditional certainty in religious things still actively in force among German theologians; a demand, that could not be satisfied without reaching directly to the highest source of evidence, as it is found only in God Himself. It was not considered enough to set the testimony of the Scriptures above the outward authority of the Roman Church; this testimony itself must not be a mere outward authority, but must be received as an inward personal assurance wrought in the soul

by God. So teach in harmony with Luther and Chemnitz, we are told, John Gerhard, Hülsemann, König, Calovius, Dannhauer, Dorsch, Quenstedt, and Hollaz. Neither do these great writers mean to treat Christian truth as a merely theoretic interest, or to sunder the knowledge of it from the sense of its saving power; theology they hold to be a practical state of mind (*habitus practicus*) directed toward eternal salvation. We cannot say, therefore, that the union of the formal and material principles which formed the pivot of the Reformation, was altogether lost sight of in the seventeenth century. Even where systematic divinity is made to begin with the Bible as its only principle and foundation, it is still always on the assumption that the truth which the Bible teaches has become matter of experience to the theologian, and that he stands through faith in the felt sense and assurance of what he is here called to expound.

So much must be granted; and yet how different the spirit of this seventeenth century is, after all, from that of the Reformation period! In what does the difference consist, then? and how is it to be explained?

According to Dr. Dorner the difference lies in this, that the theology of the seventeenth century no longer held the material principle of the Reformation (the assurance of faith authenticating its own object, God's justifying grace), as of co-ordinate force with the formal principle, the authority of the Bible, but allowed it weight only in the form of dependence on the Bible, and indeed only as its effect and product. This might not seem to amount to much; but it was, in truth, a falling away from Luther's standpoint, which drew after it most serious consequences.

Two polemical references contributed to this unconscious change of base. First, the Catholics held all appeals to personal God-wrought convictions as no better than fantastic private judgment, against which they arrayed then the supposed sure authority of the Church; and so in controversy with them it was felt necessary, instead of standing on any such personal assurance, to have recourse only to what both parties were ready to acknowledge, namely, the divine authority of the Holy Scrip-

tures. Then secondly, however, the Anabaptists and other fanatics, reversing the Catholic view, affected to plant themselves wholly on the material principle (personal assurance), making no account, comparatively, of the formal (Bible authority). So, on this side again, there was a strong motive with the orthodox theologians, to lay all stress upon the Bible; and thus altogether it was that the proper co-ordinate authority of the material factor, as this entered into the original full principle of Protestantism, fell gradually more and more out of sight, while it became more and more an object to establish the divine sufficiency of the sacred canon as in and of itself the only pillar and ground of the truth.

Dorner finds a progressive movement in this one-sided direction throughout the seventeenth century. The deviation from the old view took place by gentle, hardly observable degrees. Hunnius and J. Gerhard go a certain length in making the personal assurance of salvation subservient only to the argument for the authority of the Bible; Calovius, Dorsche, Quenstedt and others, go farther; till finally the "witness of the Spirit" to God's truth is made to resolve itself entirely into the divine authenticity of the sacred canon, and the assurance of what is taught in the Scriptures as *doctrine*, without any regard whatever to the direct appropriation of the truth itself in its own living form. "By this subordination of the assurance of actual grace to the assurance of biblical doctrine and the divine authority of the Scriptures, justification by faith was robbed of its fundamental significance as an argument for the truth of Christianity. For the assurance of grace is simply the certainty of such justification. Another way was fallen upon for the certification of Christianity; namely, the self-authenticating power of the Scriptures themselves through the Holy Ghost dwelling in them, both as to their contents and as to the divinity of their form. Thus deprived of its fundamental force, the material principle of the Reformation could take its place only as one among other articles of faith in the body of the theological science itself; whilst, on the other hand, it became now a settled maxim, that the *Scriptures are the only principle of theology.*

They must, then, be clothed with full qualification for this position, so as to be able to bear up alone the whole weight of doctrinal orthodoxy. It was not enough for them to remain any longer as the trustworthy original record only of the Christian revelation, the fountain of genuine Christian knowledge, and in this way the norm and test for everything claiming to be Christian; they must serve also as the source of evidence for the truth of Christianity itself, and (through the formal use of reason) as the only and all-sufficient means of establishing all theological doctrines. What was taken from the material principle, as witnessing through the direct consciousness of God's justifying grace to the divine character of Christianity, and so to the certainty of Christian truth, was now attributed to the Bible; and the Bible was put forward in such sort, that the whole view taken of its inspiration, as compared with Luther's standpoint, underwent essential change, making it to be, at once, in, and of itself, the self-sufficient, self-upholding, and self-evidencing presence of all divine revelation."

That such change in the central standpoint of the Lutheran Church should make itself felt, more or less seriously, on the progress of its theological thinking at all points, is only what might be expected; we cannot pretend, however, even to glance here at the way in which Dr. Dorner pursues this observation in its details.

The one-sided objectivity of the Lutheran orthodoxy, like that of the Reformed system, called forth opposition, not only from without, but in time also from the bosom of the Confession itself. Modifications of the Protestant principle, at war with one another as well as with the reigning school divinity, but showing jointly the necessity of a more profound and comprehensive construction of Christianity and theology, come into view in the first place, according to our author, under three different general forms. These he makes the subject of separate consideration, under the titles of Protestant *Mysticism* (represented by such men as Paracelsus, Weigel, Lautensack, Stiefel, Jacob Böhme, Gichtel, Petersen and Poirer), *Calixtinism* (the Syncretistic school), and *Pietism* (Spener, Bengel, Zinzendorf).

Beautiful in his time stands out to our view the historical figure of George Calixtus, Professor for forty-two years in the University of Helmstedt. Amid the tumult of theological controversy and strife raging on all sides, he conceived the idea of finding in the history of the Church a common ground on which all parties might come together in peaceful union; and to this object, then, all his energies were directed and devoted, causing him to be spoken of as the "regent of his time." Having travelled first through Lutheran countries, he made himself acquainted personally also with Catholic lands and different parts of the Reformed Church. He spent a winter in Cologne, "the Trojan horse of the Papacy in Germany;" visited Holland, then in its glory; and from thence passed over to England. On his return, he became settled at Helmstedt, and continued there till his death, in 1656. His studies and travels widened the horizon of his religious views; made him broadly catholic; disposed him to be in all directions irenic, rather than polemical. The miseries of the intolerant Thirty Years' War confirmed him in this habit of mind. He was fond of Jerome's words: "Christ is not so poor as to have a church in Sardinia only, all Christendom is His." He liked to lay stress on what even in Roman Catholicism is Christian, and tried to put aside or blunt the sharp points that separated the Lutherans from the Reformed, and the Roman Church from both, in order that the spirit of true catholicity might plant itself on the ground of the original faith which was still common to them all. So in different works, whose very titles breathe the soul of concord and peace. He was, after J. Gerhard, the greatest theologian of his age; held in high respect, both in Church and State; a man of most imposing, but at the same time attractive, personal appearance. Altogether a name deserving, as few do, the admiring and loving memory of the world. But, alas, his catholicity met with small favor, and only brought him into difficulty on all sides. Still he was not without vast influence in his generation. His followers formed a widely extended and highly respectable school. He led the way particularly in dogmatic history; and his theology, though not strictly of the creative order, told in-

directly, with more or less effect, against the established system. The tendency of it, however, was more intellectual than practical; and showed itself ready to join hands, accordingly, with the reigning orthodoxy against Spenerism.

This third phase of opposition to church orthodoxy represented the will (as Mysticism represented feeling, and Calixtinism the understanding), and carried with it in the end the greatest power. It brings into view the movement of what is known as Pietism. This falls into two periods or stages; the first reaching to the death of Spener, in 1705, in which it appears as a struggling interest, maintaining itself with more or less difficulty against its foes; the second extending from 1705 to about 1780, when it is found to be the victorious and aggressive side. Pietism was the protest of the practical religious spirit against what had become the dead mechanism and formality of the school divinity, the prevailing orthodoxy of the Lutheran Church. It had, of course, large right on its side; but it fell also into large wrong; and, while it served to expose the weakness of the reigning theology at different points, it failed to bring in any stronger system in his place; so that all was made to totter in the end toward a common fall. The fresh life that was in the movement at the first finally died out, and it became itself only a new mode and phase of the one-sided traditionalism it pretended to oppose. Stereotyped phrases and methodical forms came to stand for the proper power of godliness. Experimental or subjective religion resolved itself, in this way, into a scheme of artificial psychological frames and states, which became then the subject of more or less morbid introspection for the minds of those in whom it was supposed to have place; and a sort of anxious outward legalism was substituted everywhere for the free sense of childhood in the family of God.

“Pietism,” says Dr. Dorner, “insisted with right on regeneration and experimental religion, and took the first in a more earnest sense than it had for Orthodoxy; which saw in it only the divine communication of ability to believe, nay, held it to be already accomplished in infant baptism. But Pietism made it to be so much a matter of consciousness, as to leave out of view

the objective basis of antecedent grace, on which alone it is possible for the new life to have any sure or prosperous growth, making no account of the unconscious and natural; and by laying all stress on sensible experience, substituted more and more a sickly habit of reflection and self-examination for the exercise of direct, joyous, childlike faith. This painful self-inspection, however, brooding always over the evidences of personal piety (Have I true faith? Have I experienced the new birth? &c.—a disease that broke out in the Reformed Church also at this time), only served to promote a feeling of inward uncertainty, and a vain reaching after notes and marks of grace, that were often only self-made, and anything but evangelical in the proper sense of the term." The system, as it reigned in Halle, degenerated thus into much inward dishonesty and untruth, became narrow and slavish in its views, ran into censoriousness and spiritual pride, and lost altogether the power of producing free, healthy Christian life. It is a most significant fact, that not a few of the leaders of Rationalism proceeded from this school.

Two other vigorous practical movements in the meantime came forward in support of the Pietistic reaction against the reigning orthodoxy; which, although less extensive than the older school, were destined to make themselves felt with deeper and more enduring force, by throwing off its essential faults and appropriating to themselves, in a way it had not done, the elements of a true church life. These movements stand identified with the illustrious names of J. A. Bengel and Count Zinzendorf.

Bengel rose into view as a star of the first magnitude in the theological world, amid the decline of the older Pietism, both in Halle and elsewhere; and soon became the centre of a new school at Würtemberg, the wholesome influence of which has continued to be felt, through all the intervening years of neology and unbelief, down even to our own time. He was distinguished alike for his warm personal piety and his great learning. His position, at the same time, was altogether independent of Halle, and, whatever kindred spirit he had with Spener,

he differed from him materially in what he aimed at and accomplished for the revival of true religion.

Of still different order again was the practical piety of Zinzendorf, and the great Christian family (*Brüdergemeinde*) of which he became the honored founder. If there was a prophetic significance in Bengel's theology, a divination of much that lay far in advance of his own time, the same must be allowed to hold good also, under a different view, of this new church organization. It was not only a protest, quiet but deep, against the existing state of the Church; it looked beyond it at the same time, and anticipated, as it foreshadowed also, a better order of Christianity in the coming future. The animating soul of the movement was the idea of catholicity, in opposition to all ecclesiastical particularism. No Church, however widely extended, can ignore this idea, without becoming inwardly sectarian and separatistic; and the followers of Zinzendorf, in its faithful representation, fulfilled a high and holy mission for the Church at large, which only the most unchurchly spirit can refuse to honor and admire.

For the theological life of the Protestant Church in general, the spirit of the *Brüdergemeinde* became of vast account first, according to Dorner, through its illustrious pupil Frederick Schleiermacher.

Thus, altogether, it was, that the Lutheran orthodoxy of the seventeenth century, even while it seemed to be strong, by a sort of dialectic process working in its own bosom, prepared the way at last for the general dissolution with which it was overtaken in the following period. The constituents of a sound theology (mystical, intellectual, practical), which the faith of the Reformation had united in itself by a sort of direct genial apprehension, without bringing them still to any clear scientific arrangement and adjustment, gradually fell asunder again—each several factor in succession asserting itself with one-sided force at the expense of the rest; until finally the bond which held them together in the beginning was completely broken, and such a wholesale wreck and confusion ensued, as made it necessary to seek a reconstruction of the entire system under a new and better form.

The catastrophe here referred to was what Dorner calls "the triumph of subjectivity in the eighteenth century." It came close on the heels of the Pietistic controversy, and in a certain sense as its natural result. This seemed to end at first in a sort of general calm, that was supposed to augur well for the interests of religion. Intemperate zeal gave place on both sides to forbearing moderation. "It was," Dr. Dorner tells us, "a comparative bloom-season for Lutheran theology that now came in; and when we consider its leading names, we can hardly help wondering that the Church should have still needed, afterwards, to pass through such sore and terrible trials in the eighteenth century, in order to be restored from the maladies of the time going before. An alliance appeared to have been reached finally between church tradition and zeal for vital godliness, Pietism and orthodoxy, faith and theological science, which promised to be at once prosperous and enduring. But this bloom-season was quickly over; it served simply to usher in the negative criticism, which soon after took entire possession of German theology."

To this season of calm before the coming storm (the Indian summer of the old supernaturalism), belong such names as Gottfried Arnold, Weismann, Pfaff, J. G. Walch, Fabricius, Cyprian, Salig, Buddeus, and Mosheim—men distinguished particularly for their historical studies. Take Mosheim, in particular, as an example of the age: "The accomplished and learned chancellor had a thorough knowledge of English, French, and Italian literature. He wrote against Toland his *Vindiciæ antiquæ Christianorum disciplinæ*, 1720. His other historical works are: *Instit. hist. Eccl.*, 1726; *De rebus Christianorum ante Constantinum M. commentarii*, 1753; and a volume on *Michael Servetus*. He had a rare talent for reproducing dogmatic systems, and wrote also a small doctrinal work of his own, as well as a system of biblical ethics in five quarto volumes, 1735–53. He shows no sympathy with the rigoristic or ascetic views of Halle; inclines, on the contrary, to the eudæmonistic scheme, and a certain philosophical eclecticism put forward in choice, tasteful language, suited to recommend reli-

gion to good society. As an ecclesiastical historian, he moves no longer in the solemn patristic style, or with the tone of a preacher of righteousness; he is the sleek abbé of church historians, with a strong dash of worldliness about him in all his ways. Without any deep sense of religion, he has for the specific life and doctrine of the Church, nay, for the very idea of the Church itself, neither eye nor understanding. It is for him simply a human society, which he is fond of considering (territorialistically), as of one order with the State. He is impartial and faithful to facts; but church history is not in his view a proper life-movement of the Church itself, proceeding from its own principle; it is only a record of the fortunes, which have befallen Christianity from external causes and powers. Movements and changes of doctrine he finds occasioned only by heretics, attacking the Church from outside foreign, especially philosophical standpoints and principles—or, in part, by the necessity, common to all communities, of having fixed laws (here catholic dogmas), for the maintenance of their general life. That the principle of Christianity is itself historical, a force generating evolution and formative movement both in doctrine and life, never entered into his mind. For him also, therefore, Christianity is something more stationary than progressive; all idea of historical movement as concerned with it falls over rather to the side of the powers the Church had to contend with beyond itself, and on these accordingly he bestows his main interest. In one word, Church history, with Mosheim, is a pathology of the Christian Church, more than a record of its actual life."

The fair show that now prevailed, more or less in this spirit, on all sides, was hollow everywhere and sadly delusive. Confidence in the old theological traditions had come to be shattered more than was commonly imagined. The forms of orthodoxy were still honored with decorous outward respect, but their animating spirit was gone; and an ill-concealed sense of weakness betrayed too often the cause it undertook to defend. With a presentiment of what was coming, much was done by the friends of the Church to fortify it outwardly against the

assaults of infidelity. As the Deistic period in England was the age at the same time of Christian Apologetics, which served only, however, to help forward the cause of Deism itself, so now, in Germany also, one of the most significant signs of the growing eclipse of faith, is the way in which pains were taken on every side to prop up the trembling cause of Christianity. The Christian argument became mechanical, and was everywhere a compromise more or less with the skeptical humor it sought to propitiate and convince—an *apology*, of a truth, in the modern, rather than in the old classic sense of the term. It was found necessary to make concessions, to part with old terminology, to qualify what were felt to be extreme positions; but this was done, without reaching any new ground, from which such modifications could be admitted in full harmony with the Christian principle; it was done in such a way as to meet the party to be propitiated on its own premises; and the consequence was, that the new orthodox theology, thus circumstanced, had no power whatever to make any effectual stand against the enemy with which it was called to contend. It was in one boat with the enemy, indeed, without being aware of the fact.

It is a very interesting and suggestive picture, which Dr. Dorner gives us of this rationalistic orthodoxy, on the threshold of the neological revolution of the nineteenth century; a picture well worthy of being held up as a mirror, for the serious contemplation of much that claims to be the best style of Protestant theology, here in America, at the present time.

“This theology,” he tells us, “had not properly any new positive principle, to actuate and control its modifications; there was nothing creative in it, no power of production. The robe in which it went about was pleasing; but it was not a theology that touched the root of the evil it was intended to correct. For it did nothing of any account, to bring revelation and the rational nature of man near to each other; to bring into view the need and longing there is in the last for the first; and then, also, the quickening and fructification there is in the first for the second; the friendly relation, in a word, of revela-

tion to reason. As regards *reason*—the Aristotelian and scholastic methods having fallen into discredit as pedantic and lifeless, without any other yet pretending to take their place—it favored a certain loose eclecticism, of no fixed principle or plan, in which all turned on private taste or common popular understanding. *Revelation*, on the other hand, had turned itself for the most part into the very reverse of its own idea; it was made to mean *mystery* (in the sense of non-revelation). Times of unfruitfulness in theological science are always ready to take refuge in the mysteriousness of Christianity, and the abused maxim of “leading captive every thought to the obedience of faith;” not considering that what has absolutely *no* place in the understanding can hold a formal relation only to the authority under which the mind is required to bow, while it implies indifference, in fact, toward the specific reality of the truth itself; so that such faith can no longer be the mother of true, positive, fruitful knowledge, but is a falling back from the Protestant position to the Roman Catholic. For the view in question does not mean simply that the natural reason cannot of itself understand divine things truly, nor yet that the depths of God are unsearchable and past full finding out even for the illuminated Christian reason (which would be strictly evangelical); it amounts to the absence of all desire to penetrate progressively, even in a measure, the wisdom of God’s ways. It had contributed not a little to this resigned and indolent view of the mysteriousness of revealed religion, that in certain weighty doctrines (as of Christ’s Person, the Trinity, the Atonement, the Holy Supper), the course of theology had involved itself in difficulties, out of which it could extricate itself at best only by the assertion, that the impossibility and inward contradiction of what they taught could not be proved. From the fact of revelation itself, orthodoxy had severed itself by its world of logical conceptions, and lost finally all sense for the living realities of Christianity. We cannot say that this was helped materially by the interest that now began to be taken in historical studies. The historical feeling did not reach yet to the Scriptures themselves; they were looked upon still, as before,

not simply as being the original record of Divine revelation, but as being the very fact of revelation itself; they took its place. Faith in the Bible was made to be Christian faith. Modifications of the theory of inspiration, such as Pfaff proposed, brought here no change. On the contrary, the doctrine of the witness of the Spirit for the Scriptures (contents and form alike) was weakened, by being made to refer only to the instruction and edification which were supposed to be contained in the words of the sacred volume. Exegesis, in the hands of such men as the elder Michaelis or J. C. Wolff, remained as before."

The theology of the time, in this way, was without inward strength. Then there was a growing disaffection abroad toward Christianity and the Church. Men's minds were unsettled on the whole subject of religion. The study of the natural sciences, in particular, became widely prolific of religious questionings and doubts, and gave a materialistic turn to the general thinking of the age. The very air of Europe had become all at once impregnated, as it were, with the spirit of unbelief. "It seemed," says Dorner, "as if the European race, especially in England and France, had now first opened its eyes to nature and her fixed laws, and those who surrendered themselves to this tendency lost more and more all sense for the independent existence and reality of spirit; the idea of God Himself paled more and more before their empirical and sensuous thinking, and they were borne irresistibly toward the materialism and eudæmonism, which were preached by De la Mettrie, von Holbach, d'Alembert, and other encyclopædists. All this, indeed, was still in a measure strange and repugnant to the German mind; it clung to its ideal character, in spite of the growing importation of English and French literature. But already the so-called *Aufklärung* (illumination), found here also its fore-runners and heralds, in such men as Thomasius, K. Dippel, and Edelmann, the first of whom especially exerted a far wider influence than any of the theologians."

It was the age of Wolff's philosophy; which, with its dry mechanical method, was any thing but favorable either to earnest

spirituality or to deep religious thought. There was a prejudice against it at first among theologians; but this gave way to a friendly feeling, when it was found capable of being turned to good account, as was supposed, in theological argumentation. Its argumentative power, however, lay wholly in the sphere of the common understanding, and intellectual processes were substituted by it for the living evidence of faith. So toward the middle of the century we have eminent Wolffian supernaturalists (Büttner, Carпов, Reinbeck, Reusch, J. E. Schubert, Baumgarten, and others), who, while laboring to bring about a full union between theology and philosophy in this form, only betrayed in fact the citadel they were called to defend, into the hands of its enemies, by placing themselves on common ground with them in their rationalistic premises. Religion, with this respectable school, was held to be *modus Deum colendi et cognoscendi*, a method of knowing and serving God, a certain amount of theory for the understanding and rule for the will, but without any independent existence of its own. Faith thus was demonstrable like a theorem in mathematics. The witness of the Spirit (*Testimonium spiritus s.*), lost its old sense, and became now, if spoken of at all, only the testimony of common experience to the salutary influence of Bible truth. Hence the felt necessity of having recourse to outward intellectual proofs for the Divine authority of the Bible and the truth of Christianity; which were sought then, partly under a speculative, and partly under a historical form. Starting from what we know of God, and of the fallen condition of the world, through natural reason, the argument in the first form dwelt on the need of a Divine revelation, on the possibility of it, and on the notes and criteria that must be expected to attend it—one main peculiarity being, of course, the presence in it of mysteries, that is, truths above and beyond all knowledge. With these criteria now the Bible was found to agree; and so the *quod erat demonstrandum* followed: The Bible is the inspired source and principle of all Christian truth. This is palpably unsatisfactory. Reason thus reasoning out of itself the fact of a Divine revelation above itself, is at bottom a contradiction in terms.

Other representatives of the Wolffian school therefore (such as Storr, Süskind, Flatt, &c.), threw themselves on the historical method of proof. Here we meet the chain of evidence, so familiar still to a large part of our American theology, by which what begins as simply human faith in the Scriptures has been supposed to rise logically to the character of Divine faith. First, the authenticity and integrity of the New Testament canon; next, the credibility of the writings; then, the evidence in them (through His miracles and otherwise) of Christ's truthfulness and Divine mission; then farther, the inspiration of His apostles, and so of the New Testament, guaranteed by His word; and so, finally, the inspiration of the Old Testament also, established by the witness of the New; the whole process ending thus in what is taken to be an infallible assurance that the Scriptures are the infallible word of God, and so in and of themselves immediately and directly the ground of all revealed truth. All stress was laid in this way on the formal principle of Christianity, with almost no account whatever of the material principle; the simply intellectual argument, on historical and rational grounds, being held sufficient for the full verification of its supernatural character and claims. Reason, it was supposed, could in this way demonstrate the presence of revelation, and settle its credibility, on the outside, as it were, of the fact itself. But who may not see, that Christianity, in such view, must descend into the order of mere natural reason, and lose its strictly supernatural character altogether? The whole standpoint is inwardly rationalistic.

As a matter of course, this way of looking at Christianity made itself felt on all theological doctrines. The Wolffian supernaturalism was essentially Deistic (not properly *Theistic* in the true Christian sense), in its view of God's relations to the world. It had no idea of a Divine immanence in the world, regarded either as a constitution of nature or as a constitution of grace. All was mechanical, external, and hopelessly dualistic. Hence Pelagianizing views of original sin, and of the nature of redemption; of the Church, as a mere voluntary human association; of grace, as an outward assistance simply to the moral

powers of humanity working in its own different sphere. Hence, also, a Nestorian view of Christ's person, of inspiration, and of the atonement; such a sundering of the Divine from the human, as made all to be human finally and nothing more. The old Lutheran Christology was completely given up. The mysteries of Christianity, held in an outward way only, and not as having any thing to do with the proper life of Christianity, grew to be a dead weight which it was found increasingly difficult to carry; and theology, falling in with the reigning spirit of the age, lost all firm hold upon the proper world of faith, and yielded itself more and more to the power of the present world. Thinking everywhere became *popular*, as it was called; that is, mechanical, materialistic, shallow, and flat. All things in heaven and on earth were measured by the scale of utilitarian reference to the wants of the present life. Now come in the so-called popular or practical dogmatic systems (J. P. Miller, 1785; J. J. Griesbach, 1786; Less, 1779; A. J. Niemeyer, 1792; Ammon, 1797), based on the view that Christianity is wholly for practice, and that Christian teaching, therefore, should have nothing to do with what is unpractical and merely speculative; to which category must be referred, then, the doctrines of the Trinity, the Two Natures of Christ, Original Sin, the Atonement, and Justification by Faith. Such was the downward tendency of what still claimed to be the orthodox theology of the age, while it was rushing everywhere, in fact, toward full neological platitude and unbelief.

In this course of things, however, a new movement, not theological in the common sense, but exegetical and historical altogether, and having for its object the determination of what Christian doctrine was in the beginning in distinction from its present form, had come forward with great power, and was now bearing all things its own way toward the most far-reaching, and, at the same time, most unexpected results. At the head of this movement stand Ernesti and J. S. Semler.

Ernesti is the father of the modern grammatical New Testament interpretation. His exegetical manual, translated by the late Professor Stuart, of Andover, has been widely used as a

text-book in our American Theological Seminaries, with little or no sense, apparently, of its dangerous character. It is based throughout, however, on the Rationalistic assumption that the Bible, without any regard to the self-authenticating substance of what it proclaims, is itself the entire fact of revelation, and, as such, capable of being understood and expounded by natural reason, like any other book, without the help of any special illumination whatever. The study of exegesis led naturally to the idea of a biblical theology, in distinction from the ordinary dogmatics.

Ernesti's grammatical interpretation was of itself also historical interpretation; but it is through Semler, more particularly that this method of exegesis and theology comes fully into view, shaking the old order of religious thought at last to its very foundations. Semler was in every way an extraordinary man; all the conflicting forces of his time seemed to meet together in his person; but they were in him without order, a wild, tumultuating chaos, which he had no power to reduce to any harmonious or consistent form. He represents thus the breaking up of his own time, a process needed for the coming in of a better time afterwards, without, however, harbingering at all in any positive way its desirable advent. "It is placing him altogether too high," says Dorner, "when he is spoken of as the father of the later theology in general. Historical criticism forms in this theology but a single factor, nay, nothing more, indeed, than a mere preliminary. He himself came here to no clear, sure principles, or firm results. By bringing the historical element into theology, it is true, he exercised a lasting influence. While the older theology looked upon doctrine as something complete from the beginning, saw in the biblical canon a settled whole beyond all criticism, held the Old Testament to be essentially and directly of one order for the ends of Christian instruction with the New, and had no sense of a revelation moving forward in sacred history from one stage to another; Semler broke the way for a historical view of all these questions, by bringing them up again, and so forcing the uncritical habit of the time to make room for what was here the

more free spirit of the Reformation. Still, taking him altogether, Semler's work was immediately negative far more than positive, a work of destruction far more than a work of creation." With all his historical studies, he had no organ for the right apprehension of history, no sense for its true genetic and teleologic character. It was for him a mere flow, a restless succession of events, in which he saw no abiding substance, no unity in the midst of change, no determination whatever to any fixed end. It had no meaning for him; it served only to destroy all objective landmarks for his faith, and swept him from his traditional moorings out into a sea of general uncertainty and doubt, where he found himself without either compass, rudder, or sail. In all this, however, he was but an image and type, in a certain sense, of the foundering theology of his time.


The general collapse of faith, and the growing triumph of neological illumination (*Aufklärerei*), came into view now through the portentous appearance of such men as Samuel Reimarus (in the infamous *Wolfenbüttel Fragments*), Moses Mendelssohn, Nicolai, Gedicke, Teller, Steinbart, Eberhard, and the low-minded Bahrdt. "A deistic atmosphere," says Dorner," seemed to have settled upon that generation, and to have cut it off from all living communion with God. To rest with cold understanding and self-satisfied choice in the present world, without a thought beyond it, was considered to be true wisdom and the soundest exercise of reason. Religion became morality simply, while morality resolved itself into a scheme of prudential eudæmonism, in grosser or finer form. All turned to reflection and reasoning; for originality and ideality there appeared to be no longer any organ whatever." There was a difference, of course, among the theological Neologists; all were not equally virulent and rank. But the general malady was wide and deep, and its power remained unbroken out to the end of the century.

Through this whole time of pretended illumination, however, there were not wanting those who might be said, as voices in the wilderness, to have uttered notes, which were not only a

swan-song for the past, but a lark-song also, hailing the approach of a better future. These stand connected more or less with the birth-struggles of a new and more spiritual literature, that was now forcing itself into view, although not always in forms favorable to Christianity. Dr. Dorner devotes a chapter to the consideration of this formless, embryonic religion and theology, in brief notices of Klopstock, Hamann, Lavater, Jung-Stilling, Claudius, Lessing, and Herder. The last two names, in particular, are of special historical significance and importance; but we can only refer to them now in this general way.

While the bands of authority were thus being broken and cast away in other forms, the way was opened for a general revolution also in philosophy, bringing with it still more fundamental changes, through the earnest and profound studies of Immanuel Kant. All the great questions of the time took new form, and demanded new answer, after the appearance of his critical works on the powers of the human mind. The shallowness of the reigning popular philosophy, as it was called, was exposed and put to shame; room was made for deeper views of the moral nature of man; the problems of religion were thrown into new form. The conflict between Christianity and its enemies was brought to turn on deeper and broader issues than before. Rationalism came to a clearer understanding of itself over against supernaturalism, while the dualistic relation in which they stood to each other forced itself more sharply into view, at the cost of all revealed religion. As there had been an attempt before to unite theology with the Wolffian philosophy, so now it was attempted to bring it into union also, first with the philosophy of Kant, and then with the systems of Fichte and Jacobi; answerable to which, we have still what may be called a change of base and tactics on the side of the enemy, and so new forms of assault and defence on the part of the opposing powers. We have the battle fought, in this way, first on the intellectual, then on the moral, and finally on the æsthetic or sentimental theory of religion. The issue in the third form was determined by the stand-point of Jacobi. Su-

pernaturalism here (represented by such men as Eschenmayer, Vater, Steudel, Emmerich, Heydenreich, &c.) took refuge in the absolutely unknowable character of eternal truth, resolved all religion into inward mystic divination and feeling, and so parted in fact altogether with the idea of any revelation under an outward historical form. This yielded in a short time to the influence of Schleiermacher; but the proper rationalism of this æsthetic stand-point lasted longer, and has its representatives indeed down to the present time. It claimed to be of a higher character altogether than the so-called "vulgar rationalism" of the Wolffian and Kantian order; but had no power, after all, to get beyond a merely humanitarian and natural view of Christianity. To this class fall the respectable names of Ammon, Hase, Rückert, and de Wette; however much the last was drawn personally toward the historical Christ in the latter part of his life, in spite of his hopeless doctrinal dualism.



We thus reach the close of Dorner's second book, in which he brings the separate life of the two Protestant Confessions down to the beginning of the present century; where the historical movement, by its own dialectic process, lands us at last in a general breaking up of the whole organization of the Protestant faith as it stood before; and we find ourselves face to face, as it were, with a sort of universal spiritual chaos, the contemplation of which may well fill the serious mind with amazement and awe; even though it appear spanned at the same time, as our author believes it to be, with the rainbow of hope, and be felt to carry in its struggling womb the *Regeneration of Evangelical Theology*, which forms the theme of his third and last book.

Thus was it altogether, according to Dr. Dorner, that the dominion and power of the old Protestant Orthodoxy, in Lutheran form, fell before the insurrectionary forces of private judgment, private feeling, and private will, arrayed through a long course of years against its towering strength. Wave after wave, the reactionary tide rolled in upon the mighty theological fortress, breaking its buttresses and sapping its foundations, till finally all gave way, and it lay a vast wreck only in the

surrounding waters. Objective authority, in every form, was forced to yield to the imperious demands of subjective freedom; first, the authority of the Church; next, the authority of all outward revelation; then, the authority even of all inward revelation (in the sense of such men as Semler and Lessing), to make room for the absolute autonomy of the human will, as taught by Kant; and, finally, in certain quarters, to cap the climax, the authority of morality and religion altogether, as held to be of objective force in any shape or form. This was the winter solstice, truly, of unbelief, cold and cheerless in the extreme; but, like the season of advent, it heralded at the same time, we are told, the *annus mirabilis* of a new and better faith. "As in severe sickness the body exerts its inmost life-powers to master the disease, so Protestantism, in the great crisis of its subjectivity, from 1750 to 1800, struggled to throw off from itself all that was felt to be a cause of its own want of freedom, whatever lay upon it as an outward or foreign force simply, refusing all assimilation with its inward life while it yet claimed dominion over it. This outward incubus was not the Divine in itself; but the human form that had been joined to it, which caused the historical to appear as unspiritual, yea, the Divine itself as a foreign force, destructive for freedom whether in thought, feeling, or will. For even the supernaturalism of the time, with its deistic character, had as little power to conceive of the concurrence of reason and Christianity, as it had to bring the true idea of humanity into proper union with the true idea of God. Human science had now, however, transcended this false order of thought; and so the old theology went down into the grave. But the *Christian faith* still remained; nay, came even now to new vivification, promising in its time a new theology also; a result, to which philosophy itself, even in its mainly destructive period, furnished material aid. For foreign and even hostile as this was now to Christianity in its general attitude, it wrought under a higher view, nevertheless, in its service as forming an onward process of thought, in which, with all loss, there was still much gain, in the way particularly of what served to foreshadow the inward correlation of the human and

the Divine, and so of nature and grace. The three phases of subjectivity that met us first under positively Christian form, in Protestant Mysticism, Calixtinism, and Spenerism, meet us here again, in like order, under consciously advanced philosophical form; the mystic brooding tendency represented in such thinkers as Klopstock, Hamann, Herder; the intellectual, in the school of Leibnitz and Wolff; the practical, in the systems of Kant and Fichte, the philosophical counterpart of Spener's Pietism, ending as religious feeling in Jacobi instead of Zinzendorf. None of these forms of consciousness, indeed, could stand by itself; each fell short in controversy with the others; still each represented also a true side of the being or idea of man. This whole process now, at the same time, shows close connection with Protestantism, and especially with its inmost law, the material principle of justifying faith. For as this principle offers, or rather requires, self-certainty and freedom holding in God, so the philosophical movement before us (subjective throughout) is based everywhere on the maxim, that whatever is to have power and right over man must be homogeneous and capable of assimilation with his nature, spirit, mind, and will, so as to become for him a personal appropriation and a personal assurance. Even the kindred nature of the human and the Divine breaks into the view of this subjective thinking, where it would itself fain stop in its own position, with what we may call a sort of involuntary surprise. For, while the power of knowing the truth, of willing the good, and of feeling the infinite or Divine, was recognized as not in itself transcending the nature of man, but as belonging to his true being, the two ideas of humanity and Deity were brought together in these several points of conjunction, in opposition to the old notion of their abstract separation; so that it seemed no longer admissible, to conceive of them as mutually exclusive and strange one toward the other. True, the demand for subjective certainty rendered philosophy, in this period, intolerant of all objectivity; but the quick succession of systems in the same line, and their perpetual conflict with one another, allowed no rest; on the contrary, we may say, forced the thinking of the time to reach toward a solution of its difficulties, in some deeper view. Fichte, a remarkable pres-

ence, by pushing the principle of subjectivity to its utmost conceivable extreme, not only shows the necessity of its rebounding into the objective, but through its full analysis brings the principle of objectivity itself also to fundamental philosophical expression. The spirit thus of two epochs appears in him with sharply defined conjunction; one coming after the other, indeed, but in such proximity as to make it plain that only an inward union of the opposing factors could bring their endless, unfruitful conflict to rest, and make room for any further onward movement of philosophical thought."

All this opens before us, as we can easily see, a most interesting field for Christian contemplation. The modern German philosophy, from Kant to Hegel, has not been friendly to Christianity, but for the most part more or less at war with its Divine claims, yet has it been in fact wrestling throughout, in its own sphere, with what is substantially the same question that modern Protestant theology has to do with in the Christian sphere. The philosophical problem is the union of subject and object, of thought and being (*Denken und Seyn*); transferred to the region of actual religious life, this becomes the theological problem (not solved in the age of the Reformation) of bringing to scientific union the material and formal, in other words the subjective and objective principles of Protestantism—namely, the self-certainty of faith on the one hand (*Matt. 16: 16-18*), and the infallible authority of the Holy Scriptures on the other hand (*2 Tim. 3: 15-17*).

PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS.

I. The fact of a progressive falling away of Protestant theology and Christianity in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries from what they were in the sixteenth century, is not to be denied; and whether we may be willing or not to accept Dr. Dorner's view of it in all particulars, it is certain that it took place under the general character at least, and in the general direction, described in his book. The movement was not confined to one Confession or to any single country; it extended to both Communions, the Lutheran and the Reformed alike,

and made itself felt in all lands. It showed itself in this way to be the result of a common law, and the outworking product of some common cause; whose action must be regarded as starting in the religious life of the Reformation period itself. In other words, the movement must be considered as of a plainly historical character; capable, in such view, of being explained and understood, and challenging the most serious and solemn attention of all who take an interest in the present condition of the Church.

The movement involves two grand stages; two contradictory tendencies, so related that the second begins to work while the first is still in full power; works in the bosom of the first as its own recoiling force, till it becomes finally of overmastering strength, and then sweeps all before it in the way of open revolution and change. The first of the two stages is the period of what Dorner calls *one-sided objectivity* (whether in dogma or ecclesiastical constitution); the second is that of *reactionary subjectivity*, ending in the negation of all positive authority in religion (theoretical free-thinking and practical unchurchliness). The first meets us predominantly in the seventeenth century; the second in the eighteenth.

The seventeenth century, in this view, stands in close connection with the sixteenth, the age of the Reformation, and seems to be at first the simple continuation of its religious and theological life. The great object, all round, was to organize and consolidate the faith that was already enshrined in the Protestant symbolical books. But it is easy to see, that this zeal for the conservation of what was thus handed down as true Protestant Christianity, ran soon into a care for its outward form simply at the expense of its inward life. The faith of the sixteenth century was so intellectualized, as to be shorn of its original native vigor and force. We feel that, where we cannot always explain it, in comparing the spiritual life of the older time with the orthodox thinking of the later time. There was a something here in the theology of the sixteenth century, which we find to be wanting in the more elaborate divinity of the seventeenth. So in the Lutheran Church; and so also, full as much, in the Reformed Church.

In the case of the last, the truth of the observation may be verified very readily by a careful comparison of the Heidelberg Catechism, issued in 1563, with the Westminster Catechism brought out in England toward the middle of the century following. Both represent the same faith; but not by any means in the same way. While the orthodoxy of the Westminster formulary is more intellectual, more anxious, more mechanically rigorous and exact, the soundness of the Heidelberg formulary is more emotional, more free, and more full every way of the spirit of actual hearty life. We could hardly have a better exemplification, indeed, of what Dorner makes to be the difference of the two periods in regard to the material principle of Protestantism. In the Heidelberg Catechism, all turns fundamentally on the direct apprehension of the actual substance of the Gospel itself (Jesus Christ, and Him Crucified, as in the Creed), through an exercise of faith which is supposed to be, in such relation to its object, the full verification in itself of what it is thus brought to believe (Qu. 19-23); all this without any reference whatever to the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures as a starting-point of right belief, although their authority is indirectly recognized everywhere as the necessary formal side of the general Protestant principle. Who may not see, how this squares in full with the original Reformation stand-point both of Luther and Calvin? But what now is the pivot on which all theological certainty is made to hinge and revolve in the Westminster Catechism? Justification by faith is there of course; but no longer as the article of a standing or falling Church in Luther's sense; no longer as the central prop of the whole Christian system, upholding all other doctrines. It is there simply as one among these other doctrines, in the body of the system; which then requires, of course, to be borne up by some other central pillar altogether. This, we are taught at the very outset, is to be found only in the Bible, regarded as the written codex of God's will, "the only *rule* He has given to direct us how we may glorify and enjoy Him"; which rule we are then required to consult, that we may know "what man is to believe concerning God, and what duties God requires of

but

man." In other words, we have the formal principle of Protestantism here substituted in full for the material principle; and the whole weight of Christianity is thrown upon the canonical authority of the Holy Scriptures, instead of being made to centre on Christ through the direct apprehension of saving and justifying faith.

The theology of the seventeenth century must be considered in this view, universally, a falling away inwardly (though not outwardly), from the original life of the Reformation; which then drew after it, however, by a sort of logical necessity, a far more serious falling away from itself, as well as from the older faith, in the overflowing rationalism of the eighteenth century. Dorner resolves all this into the dissolution of the original unity of the twofold principle of Protestantism, and the wrong that was thus inflicted on the side which represented the inward freedom of the believer, by making all of the side that represented outward authority; a wrong, which then by a righteous nemesis so reacted upon itself, as to end in the overthrow of this authority altogether, and the full unbinding of the principle of subjectivity in all imaginable forms. How far this may bear close examination, we will not now stop to inquire. Enough, that we know the fact, and are able to bring it under consideration in its general historical connections. The eighteenth century, immediately behind us, was an age of what may be called general religious atrophy; an age of feeble, languishing faith; an age, in which sense and natural reason had come to rule everywhere the thinking of the world, while things unseen and eternal were regarded for the most part as visionary abstractions. Not that all theology and religion were dead; the religious spirit wrought mightily in certain quarters against the reigning power of unbelief. But still the power of unbelief *did* reign, on all sides, in fact; and this not only as open free-thinking and infidelity, but as a secret virus also, that served to poison and weaken the very life of faith itself. There was a malaria of rationalism diffused through the whole religious world. The best piety of the age was of a scrofulous habit; while its best theology went wheezing continually toward its own grave.

II. We may be thankful that we come after the eighteenth century. Our own age is bad enough; but it is certainly better in many respects than its predecessor. The movement of religious negation seems to have run its course; so far at least that it has come to stultify itself, and thus call for the building up again of what it has sought to destroy, while the conditions for such reconstruction are at hand as they never have been before. The great problem for the nineteenth century would seem to be the restoration of faith from the disastrous eclipse, under which it has come down to us from the century going before, and along with this the recovery of theology and religion to some answerable tone of vitality and health.

This implies at once, of course, that our mission is not to follow blindly in the wake of the last century, but rather to throw off its authority, and to strike out for ourselves a new course, in which we may hope to avoid all that we see so plainly to have been its calamity and its curse. Some have a foolish way, when it suits their fancy, of lugging in here the respect which is due to our ecclesiastical fathers, as an argument against any the least deviation from their opinions or practices. But what can we think of more outrageously absurd, than to require that the Church of England should be bound in this way now, or the Church of Scotland, by the latitudinarian liberalism of their respective church ancestries during the last century; or that the Church in Germany now should hold on to the rationalistic supernaturalism of the days of Wolff and Kant, out of reverence, forsooth, for the memory of the many excellent theologians who did their best to uphold the cause of Christianity in that poor way? And can it be any less absurd, seriously we ask, that our American Church at the present time, seeking to solve for herself the great religious life questions of the age, should be required to fall back passively upon the *modus Deum colendi et cognoscendi* (the very sound now irksome), which ruled the schools and text-books of European Protestant Christendom some eighty years ago—under pain of being held disrespectful to her English, Scotch, or German *fathers*, whether in the old world or in the new? No; the demand is prepos-

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terous in the extreme. Let these fathers be honored as they deserve. Let the memory of their faith, and piety, and zeal, be sacredly cherished by the Church. Still it is not reason, that, representing even the best religious life of the eighteenth century, they should be held most fit to give absolute tone and law now to the proper religious life of the nineteenth century. We are beyond that "age of reason" (God be praised); and if there be any meaning ever in history, it calls upon us now to break away entirely from what is thus in our rear, and to reach forth unto those things which are before, "that we may apprehend that for which also we are apprehended of Christ Jesus."

But yet with all this, if there be any meaning in history, the eighteenth century cannot be ignored, or thrust aside, as of no account for the new life of religion and theology, which is required to meet the wants of the present age. Whether we accept Dorner's view of it or not, in some way it must be taken as a preparation for the subsequent coming in of a period better than itself; and then it must be regarded as having in itself much, that is required to pass over, as positive or negative condition at least, into the constitution of this better period, so as to make it all it needs to be made. Our age, like every other, is the child, in a profound sense, of the age going before it; and it is only through the immediate past, therefore, that we can hold any living connection with the past at large, so as to be historically full and complete in our own generation.

III. The idea of a resuscitated theology then, in our circumstances, requires something more than a simple return to the theology either of the seventeenth or of the sixteenth century. Dorner is unquestionably right in this view. Universally, we may say, such a simple resumption of an old outlived stand-point, without regard to following time, is an impracticable solecism. The past, in such view, is always modified by the time following it, so as to be forever different from what it was in its own time. There can be no such thing, therefore, as what is called the re-pristination of a past life; and it is only folly to dream of it anywhere, in any shape or form. No man can re-pristinate for

himself, in this way, his own childhood or youth. He may remember, but he cannot *be* over again, what he has been thus in years that are gone. Just as little can any nation reprimatinate a former stadium of its national existence, whether in art, science, politics, or social life. And so is it in full, also, with the life of the world as a whole. It moves through stages, which once gone are gone forever, save in the way of spiritual incorporation into the ongoing movement that leaves their forms behind. Can there be ever a literal resurrection of the buried Grecian or Roman civilization? Can the Middle Ages, as sentimental romanticists have dreamed, be rehabilitated for modern times in their old flesh and blood? Never. The law is universal and unchangeably sure. History cannot return upon itself in such style as this. Its general movement is onward, everywhere and always.

Admit then, as we must, such a falling away of Protestant theology, as Dorner's History shows, from what it was in the seventeenth and sixteenth centuries, and it follows at once of itself that the evil is something which cannot be effectually corrected, by any supposed reprimatination simply of the religious life and habit either of the one period or of the other. The scholasticism of the seventeenth century carried in its bosom the incipient strife of principles, that in due course of time gave birth to the spiritual licentiousness of the eighteenth century; and the possibility of this strife also lay involved in the still undeveloped life of the Reformation period, as something which could be fairly surmounted only by its being brought to work itself into full view, as it did through the theological consciousness of later times. Can all this process now pass for nothing, that we here of the nineteenth century, with such vast historical movement as an accomplished fact behind us, should be able at all (even if it were desirable) to domiciliate ourselves quietly in the precise scheme of thinking that belonged either to the later or to the earlier of these great Protestant periods? To put the question fairly, is to answer it. No unsophisticated mind can have any doubt in so plain a case.

The theological salvation of the present, then, is not to be

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found in a slavish mechanical reproduction of the systematic divinity of the seventeenth century (Rivet, Gomarus, Maresius Cocceius, Witsius, Pareus, Turretin, Pictet, Gerhard, Quenstedt, Calovius, Barrow, Owen, Goodwin, Howe, &c.), whatever of wealth is still to be drawn from the rich mines here offered for lasting use. But neither is it to be found in making no account of this later divinity, and falling back immediately and directly upon the age of the Reformation, as though all truth were there, and there only. For us now, the age of the Reformation is not really accessible or available for right theological use, except *through* the consequent progress of its life in the following period. We cannot put ourselves abruptly back into its precise modes of existence and thought; and if we could do so, it would be for us certainly no enlargement, but a narrowing rather and weakening of all our religious powers. For this reason, that style of Old Lutheranism is not to be admired which affects to be a literal fac-simile in the nineteenth century of what Lutheranism was in the sixteenth century, holding for a nullity the three hundred years that have passed since in the general movement of the world's life. This surely is to seek the living among the dead. The past can have no real life for the present in that way. And just so in the case of our Reformed Church, whose genius it is especially to be large and free, both in her theology and cultus. There can be for us no such thing as a mechanical going back to the thinking of the Reformation period, either in Switzerland, or Germany, or Holland; as though all right thought on every point began then, and became all at once complete then, in such sort as to admit no possible progress through all following time. The very pretence of it is pedantry; which comes, too, with a particularly bad grace from those, who are all the time harping on the free spirit of Protestantism over against the older traditions of the Catholic Church. It is idle, to talk of honoring the Reformation fathers in this way. We never communicate with their actual life at all, by a simply outward echoing of its forms; but only by entering into its inward spirit. And this we can never do effectually, except as it is brought near to us in forms

answerable to the changed conditions of our own time. Indeed, it is something terrible to think of never getting beyond the issues, which divided the Protestant Confessions in the sixteenth century, and entangled their theology in so many thorny questions on all sides. Are we to be forever *banned*, then, to the doom of this great ecclesiastical disruption, without any the least hope of future common understanding or reintegrated faith? Must Lutheran orthodoxy, and Reformed orthodoxy, be considered so rigidly inflexible in their original nature, so utterly unhistorical in their constitution, as to allow no prospect whatever of their even approaching nearer to each other in the course of history; much less, of their ever becoming united in full as one and the same Evangelical Church? But this is just what *re-~~pristin~~ation* means here, whether on the Lutheran side or on the Reformed side. Let it be *anathema maranatha* then, we say, on both sides. Our Lord is setting before us, surely, a more excellent way.

IV. Through all movement and change, however, Protestantism must remain in harmony, at the same time, with its own original life, and true to its own fundamental principle; and therefore, in any falling away from what it was in the beginning, must have the power of recovering itself again to its first full substance, though not precisely to its first form. This is the necessary argument of its truth; which is to be looked for now, first of all, according to Dr. Dorner, in what he terms the regeneration of evangelical theology, the work to which the Church is called particularly at the present time. Here, of course, all depends on re-apprehending and re-asserting, both theoretically and practically, the *material principle* of the sixteenth century, in a form answerable to the advanced theological conditions of the nineteenth century.

We have seen what this principle was, as it wrought mightily in the first Reformers, against Romanism on one side and Anabaptism on the other. Justification by faith; this so taken, however, as to be an actual laying hold of Christ's atoning righteousness in the person of Christ himself; whereby Christ himself, it was held, became for faith, then, the assuring argu-

ment at once both of his own truth and grace, and also of the believer's interest in the same. In other words, the material principle of Protestantism in the sixteenth century, was so held as to be strictly Christological; the central significance of the atonement was made itself to centre in the life of Him by whom the atonement came, and who of God (as the Heidelberg Catechism, following Paul, puts it), is freely given unto us for complete redemption and righteousness.

But now, taken in this way, the principle of Protestantism falls back simply on what must be considered the original principle of Christianity. It must do so, we see at once, if it is to be received as a true derivation from what Christianity was in the beginning. In the nature of the case, it is true, as the beginning of a new movement in the history of the Church, it was the original Christian principle under one special aspect, supposed to require at the time special, and in some sense, exclusive affirmation. Still, the special principle here could never be valid, except as it was felt to be comprehended in the general principle out of which it flowed; and so it is easy to see how only it can be corrected and brought right, should it be found at any time out of proper course. Any self-rectification of the Protestant principle now, therefore, such as Dorner holds to be necessary for the regeneration of evangelical theology, must be in the way of bringing it to new and deeper radication in the universal Christian principle. So much is abundantly clear; all the Christological tendencies of the age demand it. The doctrine of the atonement, and the article of justification by faith, can be quickened into new life, only through a quickened interest in the coming of Jesus Christ in the flesh. First the incarnation; then the atonement. That is the everlasting order of the Gospel, and the only true order of all Christian faith.

And yet there are some, who seem to think that the significance of Christ's sufferings and death is imperilled, if the glorious Person of Christ Himself be taken to comprehend in it *more* than this one offering of Himself for sin; that is, if the derivative principle of Protestantism be not so taken as to be

of more profound and broad meaning, than the formal principle of Christianity itself from which it flows!

Surely, it ought to be self-evident for all, that the Gospel begins in the angelic song: "Unto you is *born* this day a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." The powers of the Christian redemption meet us first of all in the constitution of the Christian Mediator. Christ is the only principle of Christianity. His mediatorial offices and acts, prophetic, priestly, and kingly, derive all their force from what He is as the Incarnate Word, comprehending in Himself the fulness of the Godhead bodily for *all* the purposes of our salvation.

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So it is that all true Protestant faith, fastening itself upon the atonement, must be at the same time true Catholic faith, fastening itself, through the atonement, on Christ Himself, in such way that (whether consciously or not), it shall find in Him more than the atonement; nothing less indeed than the radiant tabernacle of God among men (John i. 14), full of all grace and truth. It must be at bottom of one sense with what Peter and his fellow apostles felt to be in Christ *before* His cross and passion: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life; and we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God."

And to this, we reiterate, it must come also with all our Protestant theology and church life, if there is to be for them any such new birth as Dr. Dorner holds to be the great ecclesiastical problem of this nineteenth century. It is not enough that they be brought to revert to the standpoint of the sixteenth century, through an inward surmounting of the historical dialectics of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; to do this effectually, they must be brought to refer themselves also, through this Reformation standpoint, back to the standpoint of the first Christian ages. There can be no full falling back, in other words, on Luther's principle of justifying faith, that shall not now be a falling back in full also on the original Christological groundwork of the Christian faith as we have it set forth in the Apostles' Creed. It will not do to single out here some particular aspect only of the Mediator's Person, in

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the way Dorner and others seem disposed to do, as sufficient for the needs of the case. We must have the Christological principle in full, the whole Person of the Mediator, to start with; as knowing full well, that "other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ," and that any theology, therefore, whether Protestant or Catholic, which is not built on this basis, is sure to turn out in the end no better than "wood, hay, and stubble." Let the confessionism of the sixteenth century be required to root itself in the confessionism of the second, third and fourth centuries, connecting itself through this old *regula fidei* with St. Peter's great confessional act: THOU ART THE CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.

This is only taking the Confessions of the sixteenth century, Lutheran and Reformed, at their own word. They own, all of them, the authority of the ancient Christian Creeds. Let earnest be made, then, with this fair and good profession. Let the Apostles' Creed, in particular, be made of fundamental, normative force for all later symbols; so that, however they may be found diverging from one another in what comes after this scheme of sound words, they shall all be found at the same time consenting heartily, here at least, in the consciousness of a common faith. Then the way will be open for a regenerated Protestant theology in the fullest sense of the term. Then confessional polemics may be expected to resolve themselves at once into confessional irenics. Then there will be room for the coming in of real catholic fraternization and union among our different denominational Churches, which even to talk of without this must be considered as only so much chattering nonsense. How can it come to real union anywhere, in theology, worship, or ecclesiastical polity, where there is no agreement, to start with, in the premises of what is to be considered true Christianity, no common acknowledgment of "what be the first principles of the oracles of God"?