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OUR NATIONAL RELIGION.

How many quires have been filled with glowing descriptions of the already acquired greatness, and prospective glory of the Young Republic of North America! How many writers have vied with each other, in attempting to delineate in appropriate colors, the extent, fertility and natural beauties of her vast territory, and to exhibit in adequate numbers the sum of her agricultural wealth, and rich, ever expanding mineral and commercial resources! How many volumes might be gathered, if all that loving enthusiastic hearts, and admiring minds, have spoken and written, in the patriotic oration, the thoughtful essay, or the racy narrative, could be found and rescued from the must and moth! And yet the tithe of the reality has not been told. Although the subject has been the theme of many of the liveliest imaginations, and ablest pens, and much that was even wild and hyperbolic has been spoken and written upon it, no adequate conception of what our country really is, much less of what she promises to be, has yet been formed. The tithe of it has not been thought. Indeed the tenth of it has not yet had time to develope itself. Many even of our keenest-eyed Statesmen, though occupying a position commanding by its height a far-reaching view, have but recently begun to comprehend the ter-

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an *asylum* for the suffering, no one has a right to convert it into a *sewer* for the abandoned and depraved.

Easton, Pa.

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THE APOSTLE PETER.

[An extract from Schaff's Church History.]

His Character.

SIMON, according to his old name, or according to his new one PETER, was the son of the fisherman Jonas, (Matth. iv: 18, xvi: 17, John i: 43, xxi: 16), born in Bethsaida of Galilee (John i: 45), and settled at Capernaum (Matth. viii: 14, Luke iv: 38), where he pursued himself his father's business. His brother Andrew, a disciple of John the Baptist, first brought him to Jesus, by whom he was called to become a fisher of men (Matth. iv: 18 ff. Mark i: 16 ff. John i: 41 f.). From the time of that miraculous draught of fishes, which served to overwhelm him at once with the sense of his majesty and power and with the feeling of his own weakness and sinfulness (Luke v: 3 ff.), he gave himself up entirely to his service, and with John and the elder James stood ever after in the nearest intimacy with his person, being along with them a witness of the transfiguration on Tabor and of the awful conflict of Gethsemane. Among these three moreover he appears evidently the most prominent. He is the proper "organ of the entire apostolic college,"¹ he speaks and acts in their name. While the contemplative self-communing John lay in mysterious silence on Jesus' breast, the more practical and active Peter was never able to conceal his inmost nature; it comes everywhere involuntarily to light, so that we are thus better acquainted both with his virtues and faults from the evangelical narrative, than we are with those of any other apostle. With the most ardent devotion he gives himself up to the Saviour, and confesses in the name of his fellow dis-

¹ So *Chrysostom* styles him, in Joann. homil. 88, where he says of him: Ἰερευς ἦν τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ σῆμα τῶν μαθητῶν καὶ κορυφὴ τοῦ χερσοῦ.

ciples that he is the Messiah, the Son of the living God (Matth. xvi: 16). Soon after he undertakes, with unbecoming familiarity and unconscious presumption, to administer to him a rebuke, and to dissuade him from the course of suffering which was required for the redemption of the world (Matth. xvi: 22). On the mount of transfiguration he is bent prematurely on building tabernacles, to perpetuate the happiness he felt in a simply outward way (Matth. xvii: 4). At the feet-washing, his high-minded modesty leads him to make himself wiser than his Master: "Lord, dost thou wash my feet?—Thou shalt never wash my feet!" (John xiii: 6, 8). What a remarkable mixture of glowing love to Christ and rash self-reliance proclaims itself in his vow, shortly before the scene in the garden: "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended!—Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee!" (Matth. xxvi: 23, 25). What a stormy inconsiderate and carnal zeal he displays in Gethsemane itself, where he grasps the sword instead of preparing himself meekly to suffer (John xviii: 10)! Soon after followed his deep deplorable fall, when through fear of men and love of life he became untrue to his Master. In the hand of God, however, this was to serve the purpose of bringing him by bitter experience to the knowledge of his own weakness, to heartfelt humiliation, and to the settlement of his strength in a better form on God's grace alone. The Lord did not forsake him; he prayed that his faith should not fail (Luke xxiii: 32), restored him again after his resurrection to the pastoral office of which he had rendered himself unworthy by his fall, and gave him the charge of his sheep and lambs. He had to meet indeed a severe trial first in the thrice repeated inquiry: "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me—lovest thou me more than these?" by which, to fill him with contrition and shame, the Saviour reminded him of his threefold denial and of the way in which he had exalted himself before above his fellow disciples. We find his pride now bowed down, his ardor purified; he ventured no more to place himself above the rest, but submitted the measure of his love to the Searcher of hearts, being well assured that he loved him and recognizing in this love the very element of his life, but at the same time painfully sensible that he did not love him as he ought and as he gladly would (John xxi: 15 ff.). That he allowed himself even after this to be hurried by the impulse of the moment into inconsistent conduct, is shown by the occasion which drew on him Paul's rebuke at Antioch (Gal. ii: 11, 14). This whole occasion also however, he had grace to improve to his own humilia-

tion, keeping in view continually the last prophetic word of his Master, that he must walk in the way of self-denial and complete his obedience and faithfulness finally by suffering without any will of his own (John xxi: 19). For otherwise we find, that before the people and the chief council, and in view of the greatest danger, he confessed his faith without fear, and maintained his love towards the Lord with fidelity through all toil and hardship even to martyrdom itself in the most excruciating form, amply justifying thus the honor bestowed upon him by his new name (Acts iii: 1-26 iv: 1-22, v: 17-41, xii: 3-17).

These traits from the life of Simon Peter give us a picture, in which great natural gifts and excellencies are strikingly combined with peculiar defects. He is distinguished from the other eleven disciples by a fiery, excitable, choleric-sanguine temperament, by an open, clearly intellectual, practical nature, bold self-reliance, prompt readiness for action, and a considerable talent for representation and church government. He is prepared at all times to speak out his mind and heart, to come to purpose and deed. This natural constitution itself, however, exposed him strongly to the temptation of vanity, self-confidence and ambition. His excitable, impulsive nature ran very easily into a false estimate of his own powers, by which he was in danger of being thrown off his guard, and so of being carried just as easily away for the moment, in seasons of temptation, by impressions of a quite opposite sort. This explains his denial of the Lord, notwithstanding the joyful firmness that characterised the profession of his faith at other times. In *depth* of knowledge and love he falls short doubtless of a Paul and a John, and he was not so well fitted as they were accordingly for the business of completion. His strength lay in the fire of immediate inspiration, in promptness of speech and action, and in an imposing authoritative manner which at once commanded respect and obedience. He was a born church prince, and his gifts were admirably suited, after proper purification by the Spirit of Christ, for the business of beginning, for the first formation and ordering of the christian community.

The Position of Peter in Church History.

What has now been said indicates the place and significance of this apostle in the history of the Church, as determined by his natural qualifications, sanctified by the Holy Ghost and made to stand in the service of the truth. The Lord knew what was

in him from the first, and at his first calling even, with reference to his subsequent activity, bestowed upon him the name *Cephas*, in the later Hebrew dialect, or *Peter*, as translated into Greek, signifying Rock (John i: 43, Mark iii: 16). This name of honor he confirmed to him a year later, and connected with it the remarkable promise which has become an occasion of strife in church history. Whilst other people took Jesus at best for a forerunner of the Messiah, and so for a mere man only however highly distinguished, Simon apprehended and confessed first with the full energy of living faith the great central mystery, the fundamental article of Christianity, namely the Messiahship of his Master, the absolute union of the divine and human and the fulness of all life in the person of Jesus of Nazareth; in an hour of crisis and sifting, in which many became apostate, he proclaimed, in the name of all his fellow disciples, from the inmost sanctuary of experience and with the emphasis of the most sure and firm conviction, this good confession: "Thou art the Christ"—the Anointed of God, the long promised and earnestly expected Messiah—"the Son of the living God!" (Matth. xvi: 16, comp. Mark viii: 29, Luke ix: 20); or according to the somewhat fuller text of John: "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!" (John vi: 66-69). On the ground of this primitive christian creed, this triumphant saving confession of faith, which flesh and blood had not revealed to him, that is, neither his own nature nor any other man, as formerly his brother Andrew (John i: 42, 43), but the Father in heaven, the Lord pronounced him blessed and said: "*Thou art Peter (Rock, a man of rock,) and on this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it*" (Matth. xvi: 18). The rich word-play of the Greek original, *ὁ ἢ Πέτρος καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ*, can be fully rendered again only in French: "*tu es Pierre, et sur cette pierre.*"¹

¹ Our Lord of course employed the Aramæan *ܩܦܝܬܐ*, which was translated by *πέτρος* instead of the more usual *πέτρα*, and for the reason doubtless that the name of a man was to be expressed, and that the masculine form was otherwise in use for such purpose (Leont. Schol. 18, Fabric. biblioth. gr. xi, 334). With the classics *πέτρος* signifies properly a stone, *πέτρα* a large rock. This distinction however is not steadily observed, and in the passage before us it is quite disregarded, since the Greek word must correspond with the Hebrew original which always means rock. In figurative speech *πέτρα* is employed by the classics also to denote firmness and stability, for instance by Homer, *Odys. xvii, 463*, but more frequently for hardness of heart and want of feeling.

In the interpretation of this passage, two false views are to be avoided. On the one side the promise may not be disjoined from the confession, and attached simply to the *person* of Simon as such.¹ For, in the first place, the name "Peter" v: 18, stands opposed to the original name "Simon Bar-jona" v: 17, and denotes thus the new spiritual man, into which the old Simon was partly transformed already and partly still to be transformed more and more, by the Spirit of Christ. And then again, the Lord himself directly after says to the same apostle, (Matth. xvi: 23), indulging his natural spirit: "Get thee behind me, *Satan* (evil counsellor, adversary,) thou art an offence unto me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." He had undertaken namely in truth with the most well meaning and good natured intention, but still with shortsighted carnality and presumption, to dissuade his Master from the way of the cross, which was indispensably required for the salvation of the world.—Just as unreasonable is it, on the other side, when many Protestant theologians under the "*petra*" from the previous "*Peter*," and make it to refer wholly to the *confession* in v: 16.. For this plainly destroys the beautiful and significant play of the words, as well as the sense of *ταύτην* which necessarily refers to the "Peter" going just before. And besides, the Church of Christ is not built upon abstract doctrine and confession, but upon living persons as the bearers of truth.

Rather the words "Thou art a Rock, &c.," are by all means to be referred indeed to Peter, but only to him as he comes before us in the immediate connexion of the text, that is to the renovated Peter, so far as the mystery of the Incarnation has come to be revealed to him by God (v: 16 and 17), to Peter the courageous confessor of the Saviour's Divinity, in one word to *Peter in Christ*; and the sense is accordingly: "I appoint thee as the living witness of this fundamental truth which thou hast now acknowledged, to the first and leading agency in the founding of my Church." Our Lord describes thus the *official character* of this apostle, and prophesies to him his *future place in church history*. The believing and boldly witnessing Peter appears here as the foundation stone, Christ himself as the builder of that glorious spiritual structure, which no hostile power can destroy. In the absolute sense Christ is indeed called the foundation (*θεμελίον*) of the Church, besides which no other can be

¹ Then we should have in Greek rather: *ἐπὶ αἱ τοῦ πέτρον*.

laid (1 Cor. iii: 11); but in a secondary or relative sense so are the Apostles also, whom he employed as his instruments. Hence it is said of the saints Eph. ii: 20, that they are built "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets (*ἐπὶ τ. θεμελίω τῶν ἀποστόλων κ. πρ.*), Jesus Christ being himself the chief corner-stone; and hence also the twelve foundations (*θεμέλιοι*) of the new Jerusalem bear the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev. xxi: 14). If now the Apostles in general are the human founders of the Church, under the guidance of course of the Holy Ghost, as Christ's ministers and "laborers together with God" (1 Cor. iii: 9), the true Builder—this holds of Peter, as their representative and leader, in a sense altogether peculiar.

This view is supported accordingly also by the Acts of the Apostles, the first twelve chapters of which form a continuous commentary on the prophetic word of Christ Matth. xvi: 18. If even before the Resurrection Peter stands at the head of the apostolic college,¹ he is still more plainly after it, till Paul comes on the stage, the leading spirit, the acting and speaking organ of the entire christian body. He plays the principal part at the election of Matthias to fill the place of Judas, on the day of Pentecost, at the healing of the lame man, and in the punishment of Ananias; he it was, who more than any one else extended the Church by word and deed in Judea and Samaria, boldly defended the christian cause before the sanhedrim, and refused to be deterred from doing so even by chains and bonds; and as he stood at the head of the Jewish mission, so also did he lay the foundation of the mission among the Gentiles by the baptism of Cornelius without previous circumcision. In short, on to the apostolic council at Jerusalem, a. 50 (Acts xv), Peter is without question the most important personage in the church, and asserts a primacy, which so clearly belongs to him by his natural qualifications as well as by the prophetic word of his Master, and is so fully confirmed by manifold facts in the sacred narrative, that only the most blind party spirit can explain, without in the least justifying however, the headstrong humor which affects to deny it.² But we meet with no trace ever of hierar-

¹ As appears from every list given of the Apostles, as well as from many other passages: Matth. x, 2 ff. xiv, 28, xvi, 16-19, xvii, 4, 25, 26, xviii, 21, xix, 27, Mark iii. 16 ff., viii. 29, ix, 2, xiv, 23, Luke vi, 14, ff., xii, 41, xxii, 31 ff., John vi, 68, xxi, 15 ff., &c.

² Of course nothing follows still from this concession for the known pretensions of the Papacy, since these rest not simply by any means on the fact here noticed, but on two other suppositions also which are not to be

chical pretension on this ground in the later history of Peter, who describes himself rather quite modestly as a "co-presbyter and witness of the sufferings of Christ, and exhorts the elders to feed the flock of Christ, not in the spirit of covetousness and ambition, but with the pattern of a godly life. (1 Peter v: 1-3). Then again, the supremacy never came into collision with the independence of the other apostles, in their proper spheres of labor, and did not pretend to keep pace with the universal spread of the church, or at least did not stretch itself with like authority over every part. From the council of Jerusalem on, Peter appears no longer, but James, at the head of the congregation in that city and of the strict Jewish-Christian party. On the field of the mission to the Gentiles, and of the first literature of christianity, he was completely overshadowed by the later called Paul (comp. 1 Cor. xv, 10); who sustains to him, according to the representation of the same book of Acts that places Peter so high in the beginning, a similar relation, so to speak, with that of the rising sun to the setting moon. At all events his position with regard to him was one of the most perfect independence, as is shown abundantly by the first two chapters even of the Epistle to the Galatians. The last stadium in the pro-

proved directly from the New Testament. The first is, that the primacy of Peter allowed *transmission*. This however is not merely without a syllable of mention, but is at once also rendered improbable by the fact that all other surnames given to the apostles express purely *personal* gifts and *personal* relations—as the epithet "Sons of Thunder" given to James and John (Mark iii, 17), the "Zealot" to the other Simon (Luke vi, 15, Acts i, 13), and the "Traitor" to Judas Iscariot (Luke vi, 16). That the same held good of the peculiar position of Peter, was a widely prevalent view in the ancient Church. So *Firmilianus*, bishop of Neo-cæsarea in Cappadocia, a cotemporary of Cyprian, among other things reproaches the Roman bishop Stephen in the name of the Asiatic bishops with wishing to bring in, instead of the *one* rock on which Christ had built his Church, *many* rocks, by extending the prerogative of Peter to all his successors (Cyp. Epist. 75. "Atque ego in hac parte juste indignor ad hanc tam apertam et manifestam Stephani stultitiam, quod, qui sic de episcopatus sui jure gloriatur et se successionem Petri tenere contendit, super quem fundamenta Ecclesiæ collocata sunt, *multas alias petras* inducat). The second supposition of the Papacy which cannot be proved, is that *Peter actually did transmit* his primacy, and this not say to the bishop of Antioch, or of Jerusalem where at least he spent many years, but to the bishop of Rome, where at best he could have held the episcopal office only for a very short time, and this not in the *later* church sense. Finally however, if it even stood better with both these arguments, there would be a huge difference still, between the purely spiritual superiority of Peter, with his exercise of it, and the ecclesiastico-secular primacy of the Pope in the form in which this is now asserted.

gress of the Apostolical Church, finally, after the death of Peter and Paul, it devolved on John properly alone to lead and with his genius to complete. But who besides can even for a moment bear the thought, which flows necessarily from the Roman view of the *enduring* force of the Petrine primacy, that the beloved disciple, who leaned on the breast of the God-man, was subject to the bishop of Rome, a Linus or a Clemens, as the successor and heir of Peter's authority, or that this last exercised a papal supremacy over the first? The special position which was assigned to Peter had regard thus manifestly to the work of *laying the foundation* of the Apostolical Church, and there is room to speak of it as of perpetual and universal force by succession, only so far as the gifts of all the *other* apostles perpetuate themselves in the christian world, and as they may be said, by their past deeds as well as by the unbroken action of their word and spirit, to condition the progressive character of the church in every stage of its history.

Peter in Rome.

It is the unanimous testimony of tradition that Peter suffered martyrdom in Rome under Nero. This testimony was indeed in a short time obscured by all sorts of unhistorical and in part directly contradictory embellishments, and has been abused by the Roman hierarchy in support of boundless pretensions, on which account the truth of it has been at times called in question, out of polemical zeal against the papacy¹ and partly from historical skepticism;² but by the great body of Protestant historians we find it always acknowledged as in its main substance at least entitled to credit.³ We will notice first the main voices

¹ Particularly by the Hollander *Frederick Spanheim*, who in his celebrated "Dissertatio de ficta protectione Petri Apostoli in urbem Romam, deque non una traditionis origine," first brought the matter from the year 1679 to a thorough inquiry, and endeavored by critical trial of the evidence to establish the doubts in regard to Peter's sojourn at Rome, which had been before thrown out by the Waldenses and certain declared enemies of the Papacy, such as Marsilius of Padua, Michael of Cæsena, Matthias Flacius and Claudius Salmasius. He derived the story mainly from the ambition of the Roman Church.

² Namely by the modern hypercritics, *Baur*, in several articles of the *Tübingen Zeitschrift* and in his work on Paul p. 212 ff. and *Schwegler*, *Nachap. Zeitalter*, I, p. 30: ff. They derive the story from the jealousy of the Roman Jewish Christians towards the Pauline Gentile Christians, an effort to set the Jewish apostle Peter above Paul. So *de Wette*, *Einl. in's N. T.* p. 314.

³ Namely by all the older Reformed theologians who have devoted specia

of the tradition on the subject, then try to determine the probable length of Peter's residence at Rome, and finally examine the statements made concerning the manner of his death.

The testimonies in regard to Peter's settlement in Rome.

The oldest is that of Peter himself in the date of his abode subscribed to his first Epistle, taken according to its oldest interpretation, c. v : 13 : "The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you, and so doth Marcus my son (the Evangelist)." True, the sense of *Babylon* here is controverted. *Neander, Steiger, de Wette, Wieseler* and others, understand by it the celebrated Babylon or Babel on the Euphrates. The prophecy of the Hebrew prophet against this great city (Is. xiii : 19ff., xiv : 4, 12, xvi : 1f.) had been indeed terribly fulfilled, and it presented to view in the time of the Apostles, as *Strabo, Pausanias* and *Pliny* with one voice assure us, only a scene of ruins (*οὐδὲν ἑμὴ τείχος*), a desolation (*solitudo*).¹ Still it may be assumed surely, that some portion of it yet remained habitable, and as we know that there were many thousand Jews in the satrapy of Babylon,² the case in and of itself allows the supposition that Peter may have chosen just this region as the seat of his labors. But if so, we might reasonably expect that some trace would have been preserved of his activity there afterwards. Tradition however knows nothing of a sojourn of Peter in the kingdom of Parthia, while yet it follows there the steps of the apostle Thomas.³ Then again, it is scarcely possible to explain, on this interpretation, the acquaintance

study and inquiry to the field of ecclesiastical antiquities, then by *Schröckh, Mynster, Giesel, Neander*, (who however in the latest edition of his work on the Acts, staggered apparently somewhat by the argument of Baur, speaks no longer so decidedly in favor of the tradition as before,) by *Credner, Bleek, Olshausen* and *Wieseler* (in the second excursus of his chronology), not to mention a number of others who have not entered into any close investigation of the subject.

¹ See the passages in *Meyerhoff's* Einl. in die petr. Schriften (1835) p. 129.

² *Josephus* Antiq. xv, 3, 1, *Philo* de legat. ad Caj. p. 587. True, *Josephus* also informs us xviii, 9, 8, that under the emperor Caligula many Jews from fear of persecution removed from Babylon to Seleucia, and that the rest were driven away five years after by a pestilence. They might however very well have returned again before the date of Peter's Epistle, as Caligula was already dead a. 41.

³ Origen in *Eusebius* Hist. Eccl. III, 1.

which our Epistle is acknowledged to show with the later Epistles of Paul, since between Babylon and the Roman empire there was but little communication. Equally hard to understand would be Peter's association with Mark (v: 13), since this last in the years 61-63 was in Rome (Col. iv: 10, Philem. 23), and shortly after is supposed to be in Asia Minor, from whence he is again called to Rome by Paul a short time before his martyrdom (2 Tim. iv: 11). If he followed this invitation, as we have a right to suppose, he could not so readily find his way again to the banks of the Euphrates. The case however becomes quite simple, if Peter himself about that time or soon after came to Rome and there wrote his epistle.—These difficulties constrain us to return to the earliest and in ancient times only prevalent interpretation of Babylon, by which it is taken to mean *Rome*. This is known to be its sense in the Apocalypse, as even Roman Catholic expositors allow, c. xiv: 8, xvi: 19, xvii: 5, xviii: 2, 10, 21, comp. the allusion xvii: 9 to the seven hills, and xvii: 18, to the universal dominion of Rome.¹ It has been objected indeed, that this symbolical designation of the metropolis of paganism suits well enough for a prophetic poetical book, such as the Apocalypse, but not for the prose style of a common letter. But this objection is completely borne down by the following considerations in favor of the figurative sense: namely, 1. The unanimous testimony of the ancient church;² 2. The analogy of the other titles in the form of salutation, which require to be taken also figuratively. Neander will have it indeed, that “*συνηλεκτή*” is to be understood of Peter's wife, and that “*Marcus my son*” stands for his son literally according to the flesh.³ But although the apostle according to 1 Cor. ix: 5, did take his wife along with him in his missionary journeys, the mention of her in an official circular, and particularly to churches with which according to Neander's view he had no personal acquaintance, would still be certainly out of place and without all analogy in christian antiquity; and we

¹ In the same way in a fragment of the Sibylline Books, supposed to belong to the first century, (v: 143, 159) Rome is called Babylon.

² So already Papias or Clemens Alex. in Euseb. 11, 15, the subscription of the Epistle, Jerome catal. s. Petr., Oecumenius, &c. The allusion to Rome is held also, though not with all on the same grounds, by Grotius, Lardner, Cupe, Semler, Hützig, Baur, Schweigler, Thiersch.

³ Apostelgesch. II, 8, 590, Anm. 4. So also Mill, Bengel, Meyerhoff. On the other hand Steiger, de Wette, and Wieseler, though they take Babylon literally, refer *συνηλεκτή* still to the church in that place and “*Marcus*” to the Evangelist.

see not besides, how *συνεκλητή* should just of itself express the notion of a wife, nor why in that case the clause *ἐν Βαβυλῶνι* is added just in this grammatical connection. All these difficulties disappear, if we supply *ἐκκλησία* and understand by it the christian congregation, as is done already by the Peschito and the Vulgate. So far as Mark is concerned, tradition knows nothing of a son of Peter according to the flesh by any such name.¹ It is altogether natural, on the other hand, to understand here the well known missionary assistant of Paul and Peter, the *Evangelist* of this name, who sprang from Jerusalem and had been probably converted by Peter (Acts xii: 12ff.), but at the same time formed also a bond of connection between him and the Apostle of the Gentiles, as did Silvanus likewise the bearer of the Epistle. If we are required thus, in harmony with the older expositors, to take *υἱός* tropically according to the familiar usage of the N. T. (comp. 1 Cor. iv: 16–18, Gal. iv: 19, 1 Thes. i: 2, 18, 2 Tim. i: 2, ii: 1), and to refer *συνεκλητή* to the congregation, it forms an argument in favor of the symbolical sense also of Babylon. Nay, we find just in this combination of the two terms a significant contrast, particularly under the oppressed condition in which the christians are regarded as standing. The Apostle speaks of the churches to whom he writes as “elect” (*ἐκλεκτοί* 1. 2.), and so now also of the church from whose midst he writes as “co-elect,” chosen of God to everlasting life in the very seat of the deepest Pagan corruption, that must necessarily call up to a writer in particular like Peter, so thoroughly imbued with the prophetic style of the Old Testament, the description which is there given of the ancient Babylon. If we assume moreover that the epistle was written in the later years of Nero, when cruelty and tyranny were in full force, and shortly before the terrible scenes of Nero’s persecution, at a time thus when the Christians, as the letter itself and the testimony of Tacitus show, had already become the object of foul suspicion and outrageous calumny,—it must be allowed that the symbolical designation of Rome, which Silvanus could easily explain to the readers in case they should not at once understand it, falls in very well with the entire contents and circumstances of the communication. The naming of Rome literally would have been clearly in this connection far less characteristic.

¹ *Clemens Alex.* speaks indeed in a general way of Peter’s having children. Strom. III. f. 448: Πέτρος μὲν γὰρ καὶ Φίλιππος ἐπαίδουσι θύσαντο, and tradition names a daughter, Petronilla, (comp. Acta Sanct. 30 May); but no Marcus is ever mentioned as his son.

To pass on now to the apostolical fathers, the Roman bishop *Clement*, a disciple of Paul, informs us indeed that Peter after having endured many sufferings died as a martyr, but gives neither the place nor the manner of his death; probably because it came not in his way, and was something which he could consider as generally known.¹ For wherever else the place of Peter's martyrdom is mentioned, it is always Rome, and no other church laid claim to this honor, although it was a great point with the churches then to possess distinguished martyrs.—Omitting the testimony of *Papias* in a somewhat obscure passage in Eusebius (II, 15), the Epistle of his cotemporary *Ignatius* to the Romans takes for granted that Peter had preached to them;² as does also a fragment from the *Prædicatio Petri*, which belongs to the beginning of the second century.³ Still more distinctly *Dionysius*, bishop of Corinth, (about a. 170), in his Epistle to the Romans, speaks of the *Roman* and Corinthian churches as the common planting of Peter and Paul, and adds: "For both taught alike in our Corinth when they planted us, and both also in Italy at the same place (*ὁμοίως*, which can be understood in its connection only of Rome), after teaching there suffered alike at the same time the death of martyrdom."⁴ That Peter is here styled one of the founders of the Corinthian church is indeed in any case very inaccurate, and possibly may be drawn simply from a misunderstanding of what Paul says 1 Cor. i: 12 of the party of Cephias, whose existence in this church implies some relation to it at least indirectly on his part. But we have no right on account of this error to reject the whole state-

¹ In his first Epistle to the Corinthians, which belongs still to the second half of the 1st cent., c. 5: Πέτρος διὰ ἡλὸν ἀδικῶν οὐκ ἔνα, δοτὲ δὲ ἄλλα πλείονας ἐπίμεινεν (according to others ἐπήνεγκεν) πόνους καὶ οὕτω μαρτυρήσας ἐπορεύθη εἰς τὸν ἀφειλόμενον τόπον τῆς δόξης. Then follows a more full and definite testimony in regard to the end of Paul. The word μαρτυρήσας is to be understood here probably in its original sense of witnessing by word, as in the passage immediately following, and not in the sense of martyrdom as it is usually taken. The last follows however out of the whole context, particularly the clause going just before which *Clement* then illustrates by examples: διὰ ἡλὸν καὶ φθόνον οἱ μέγιστοι καὶ δίκαιοι ἀπόστολοι ἐδιώχθησαν, καὶ ἕως θανάτου ἦλθον.

² c. 4: οὐκ ὡς Πέτρος καὶ Παῦλος διατάσσαι ἑμῖν.

³ In *Cyp. Op.* ed. Rig. p. 139: liber qui inscribitur Pauli prædicatio (which was the last part probably of the *prædicatio Petri*, comp. Credner's *Beit. zur Einl.* I, 360), in quo libro invenies, post tanta tempora Petrum et Paulum, post conlationem evangelii in Hierusalem et mutuam altercationem et rerum agendarum dispositionem, postremo in urbe, quasi tunc primum, invicem sibi esse cognitos.

⁴ In *Eusebius H. E.* I, II, c. 25.

ment, and it is after all possible even that Peter, after Paul's confinement, on his way perhaps to Rome, may have visited Corinth, in which case he could not indeed literally found the church but still might strengthen it and confirm it in the faith. —*Irenæus*, who stands connected through Polycarp with the Apostle John, says of Peter and Paul, that they preached the gospel and founded the church at Rome.¹—Somewhat later, about the year 200, the Roman presbyter *Caius*, in his tract against the Montanist Proclus of Asia Minor, writes:² “I can however show the monuments (*σπονδαί*) of the Apostles (Peter and Paul). For if you go to the Vatican or on the way to Ostia, you will find the monuments of the men who founded this church.”—*Tertullian*³ congratulates the Roman church, because there Peter had been made conformable to the sufferings of Christ, (that is crucified), Paul crowned with the end of the Baptist, (that is, beheaded), and John after being plunged in seething oil, without hurt, (a fabulous addition no doubt), banished to Patmos.

These are the oldest and most important testimonies, which are drawn from the most different parts of the church. They show it is true some want of accuracy, since Peter cannot be called strictly the founder of the church at Rome. Still more are the statements we meet with in the apocryphal writings, and in the later church fathers, as *Eusebius* and *Jerome*, nay in *Clemens Alexandrinus* already (in Euseb. II, 15), full of fabulous embellishments, particularly in regard to Peter's meeting with Simon Magus at Rome, which rests probably on false conclusions drawn from the narration Acts viii: 18ff., and on a mistake of Justin Martyr who supposed he had seen a statue of Simon Magus in that city. But such accumulations, gathered by the onward progress of an old tradition, by no means authorise us to discard also its primary substance. This is not to be explained in the case before us certainly from the rivalry of the Roman Jewish Christians towards the Pauline Gentile Christians; for it must then have been met by these last with early decided contradiction; whereas on the contrary just the oldest witnesses for it belong mainly to the school of Paul and John. Just as little did it spring from the hierarchical ambition of the

¹ Adv. haer. III, 1, comp. 3, where the Roman church is spoken of as “a gloriosissimis duobus apostolis, Petro et Paulo, fundata et constituta ecclesia.”

² In *Eusebius* H. E. II, 25.

³ De praesc, haer. c. 36.

Roman bishops, although this soon laid hold of it indeed and used it for its own ends. Because the tradition itself is demonstrably older than the abuse of it for hierarchical purposes, and had there been any sufficient ground for calling it in question, this would certainly have been done in the first centuries by the opponents of the Roman pretensions in the Greek and African Churches. But no such contradiction was raised in any quarter, either by the Catholics or on the part of heretics and schismatics. The gigantic structure of the Papacy could never have risen, without any historical foundation, out of a pure lie; rather just the fact of the presence and martyrdom of Peter and Paul in Rome, in connection with the political position of this world-metropolis, must be taken as the indispensable main condition of its growth and the authority it gained over Christendom for so many hundred years.

The duration of Peter's settlement at Rome.

The questions, *when* Peter came to Rome, *how long* he labored there, and in *what capacity*, are not determined by the older testimonies. When Dionysius of Corinth, Irenæus and Caius, ascribe to Peter and Paul the joint founding of the Roman church, it is not necessary to take it chronologically, in the sense that these Apostles had brought the first knowledge of the gospel. For in such sense Paul himself was not its founder, as little as Peter was the founder of the Corinthian church, which yet the same Dionysius affirms. In fact however this expression, which in and of itself might denote merely the important part which Peter took in establishing a church of long previous standing but still in an imperfect state, came soon to be taken exclusively in the chronological sense, whereby there arose a confusion in the tradition, favored by the silence of the N. T. in regard to the later labors of Peter. Eusebius is the first, who in his *Chronicon* brings our Apostle to Rome under Claudius already a. 42, sets him over the church there for twenty years (according to the Armenian version of the original Greek text now lost), or five and twenty (as Jerome gives it), and places his martyrdom in the last year of Nero a. 67 or 68. Resting on Eusebius, Jerome also reports, that Peter was bishop first of

¹ So with full right we may speak of Calvin as the founder of the Reformed Church in Geneva, although the Reformation was introduced there several years before him by Farel.

Antioch (according to a later view for seven years), and then from the second year of Claudius, that is from a. 42 on, was bishop twenty five years of Rome;¹ in which representation he is followed by the older Catholic historians.²

But this view contradicts the plainest facts of the New Testament, and cannot stand a moment before the bar of criticism. The Acts of the Apostles, which describe so fully the earlier labors of Peter, allow in no case the supposition of his absence from Palestine before his imprisonment by Agrippa, Acts xii : 3, 17; and as this falls in the year of the death in Palestine (comp. Acts xi : 28, xii : 1), that is a. 44 (not a. 42, according to the wrong calculation of Eusebius), it serves at all events to set aside the chronological term of seven years for the episcopate of Antioch, as well as to shorten by several years, the quarter of a century assigned to the Roman episcopate. After his deliverance from prison, that is in the fourth year of Claudius, the Apostle might indeed possibly have travelled to Rome; as Luke remarks indefinitely, Acts xii : 17, that he departed to another place, and from this on to the Apostolic council a. 50 (c. xv.) leaves him out of sight.³ But this possibility becomes at once highly im-

¹ De script. eccles. c. 1, Simon Petrus—post episcopatum Antiochensis ecclesiae et praedicationem dispersionis eorum, qui de circumcissione crediderant in Ponto, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia et Bithynia, secundo Claudii imperatoris anno ad expugnandum Simonem magum Romam pergit ibique *reginti quinque annis cathedram sacerdotalem tenuit*; usque ad ultimum annum Neronis, id est decimum quartum.

² Even the most zealous friends of the Papacy however are driven to a modification at least of the Eusebian tradition. *Baronius*, in his Annals (ad ann. 39. no. 25), makes Peter indeed to be 7 years bishop of Antioch and then 25 years bishop of Rome, but assumes at the same time that the Apostle was frequently absent from his see, when the N. T. facts for instance imperiously require it, and refers this to his papal dignity, or the care of the general Church devolved upon him by God. Sic videtur—he says—*Petrum his temporibus numquam fere eodem loco consistere, sed ut opus esse videret, peragraré provincias, invisere ecclesias, ac denique omnes quae sunt universalis praefecturae functiones pastoralis sollicitudine exequi ac consumere.*

³ This period according to the most recent acute and learned defender of the Roman tradition, *Fr. Windischmann* in his “*Vindiciae Petrinae*” Ratisb. 1836 p. 112–116, fixes upon for the first journey of Peter to Rome. With him agrees somewhat too hastily in this the Protestant theologian *Thiersch*, when he says in his work on the N. T. Corn, p. 105f.: “It is certain that, before the banishment of the Jews from the city by Claudius, a christian church, mainly if not wholly of Jewish origin, had been formed there. And we see not what objection of any force can be urged against the tradition, that Peter was its founder. This may well have taken place between the year 44 and a. 50 or 51, that is between Peter’s flight from Jerusalem

probable, or rather almost wholly inconceivable, when it is considered that the Epistle to the Romans written a. 58 contains no hint of any previous presence of Peter in Rome, but of itself rather implies the contrary; since Paul repeatedly declares it to have been his principle, not to build on foreign ground and not to encroach on the sphere of another Apostle's labors (Rom. xv: 20, 21, 2 Cor. x: 15, 16). We must assume thus, to uphold the tradition, a twofold Roman church, one founded by Peter under Claudius, which was afterwards dissolved by his edict against the Jews, and another wholly new one gathered after the year 52 through the influence mainly of Paul. But this resort also is overthrown, when we come to think how easily the whole story of Peter's journey to Rome under the Emperor Claudius can be explained from a reigning mistake and from false reasoning. Justin Martyr namely had reported,⁴ that Simon Magus betook himself *under Claudius* to Rome, and there gained many followers and even divine honors, as was shown by a statue erected to him on an island in the Tiber. This statue was in fact found a. 1574 in the place described, but turned out to be a statue, not of *Simo Sanctus*, but of the Sabine Roman divinity *Semo Sancus* or *Sangus* (comp. *Ovid's* fast. vi, 213), of whom the Oriental Justin probably had never heard.⁵ But the tradition now laid hold of this report, and sent Peter, in its zeal to glorify him as much as possible, on the heels of the supposed Samaritan arch-heretic, to vanquish him in Rome also as triumphantly as he had before done, according to Acts viii, in Samaria.⁶ To this was added the statement of Suetonius concerning the edict of Claudius, which expelled the Jews and probably also the Jewish Christians (on account of the "*impulsore Chresto*") from Rome, presupposing consequently the existence of a christian church in the place; and since Peter was regarded as the proper founder of it, the inference followed of

(Acts xii, 17) and the Apostolic council (c. xv), so that the banishment of the Jews from Rome precisely may have forced him also to leave that city, and led him to return to Jerusalem, where we find him when the council met."

⁴ Apol. maj. c. 26 and 56.

⁵ See *Hug's* Einl. II, 69ff. *Gieseler's* K. G. I. 1 p. 64, and *Neander's* K. G. II, p. 783 (2nd ed.).

⁶ Of this conflict notice is taken already in the Pseudo-clementine writings, particularly the *Recognitions*, the composition of which is to be referred to the first quarter of the third century. That *Eusebius* was guided in his chronology by the narration of Justin, to which he himself appeals, is shown clearly by his *Eccl. Hist.* II, 13-15.

itself that he had already under this emperor betaken himself to Rome. The more readily the chronological determination of Eusebius and Jerome, in regard to so early a presence of the Apostle in this city, admits of being explained in this way from erroneous combinations, the less claim can it have to be regarded as worthy of credit.

Much less still however can it be shown, that Peter was in Rome continuously, or even for any considerable period, on from the time of Claudius. In the Acts of the Apostles and in Paul's Epistles we find on to the year 63 or 64, that is on to the salutation in his own first Epistle (v : 13), no trace of his presence in this city, but incontrovertible evidence enough of his absence from it. For in the year 50 he was in Jerusalem at the council of the Apostles (Acts xv.), and had to this time labored mainly, not among the Gentiles, of whom the greater part of the Roman church consisted according to Rom. i : 5, 7, 13, xi : 13, 25, 28, xiv : 1ff., xv : 15, 16, but among the Jews, which he proposed also to do in the time immediately following, according to his agreement then entered into with Paul and Barnabas (Gal. ii : 7, 9). Soon after this we find him at Antioch (Gal. ii : 11ff.). At the time of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians, that is a. 57, he had yet no fixed settlement, but travelled about as a missionary with his wife (1 Cor. ix : 5). In the year 58 he cannot have been in Rome, for then Paul would certainly have named him among the many salutations which he then forwarded there in Rom. xvi. Altogether the Epistle to the Romans knows nothing of the labors of Peter, either then or before, in that great metropolis, but as already remarked supposes rather the contrary. In the spring of a. 61 Paul came himself as a prisoner to Rome; the Acts informs us of his meeting with christians of that placè, (xxviii : 15ff.), but say not a syllable of Peter, which on the supposition of his being there would be utterly inexplicable. In the years 61-63 Paul wrote from Rome his last Epistles, in which he introduces by name his companions and helpers, presents salutations from them, and complains finally of his being left alone (Col. iv : 10, 11, Phil. 23, 24, Phil. iv : 21, 22, 2 Tim. iv : 9-22, i : 15-18), but passes over Peter in profound silence, and this surely not out of jealousy or dislike, but because he was not in his neighborhood.

Peter can have come to Rome first therefore only after the second Epistle to Timothy, and not long before the date of his own Epistles, that is in the last half of the year 63 or in the

beginning of the year 64; and so accordingly, as he suffered martyrdom in the persecution under Nero, we can hardly extend his sojourn there above one year.⁷ Eusebius and Jerome indeed place his death in the year 67; but since they affirm at the same time, along with universal tradition, that he died at the same time with Paul in the persecution under Nero, which according to Tacitus broke out in July a. 64, and since a second persecution under the same emperor cannot be proved, the chronological date thus given is clearly erroneous; and is owing to the fact in part no doubt, that the fathers in this point, instead of following the accurate and full statement of *Tacitus*, made use rather of *Suetonius*, who separates the persecution from its occasion, the burning of the city, and altogether is not chronological in his narration.⁸

That Peter, as long as he was in Rome, stood in conjunction with Paul at the head of the affairs of the church and exercised a leading influence, needs no proof; but that he was *bishop* in the proper sense, and so the *first* bishop of Rome, contradicts the nature of the Apostolic office, which has regard to the church as a whole and not to any single diocese, and is a fiction of the Ebionitic Clementine Homilies, from which, as wrought afterwards into more orthodox form in the Recognitions, it passed over into the Catholic Church. *Clement* himself, the third Roman bishop, knew nothing of it, and from the glowing description he gives of Paul in the 5th chapter of his first epistle

⁷ This is confirmed in substance also by *Lactantius* († 339), who brings Peter to Rome first under the reign of Nero (*De mortibus persec. c. 2. Cumque jam Nero imperaret, Petrus Romam advenit etc.*), and by *Origen* († 254), who brings him there at the close of his life (*ἐπιτελεῖ*, in Euseb. H. E. III, 1.).

⁸ As even an unprejudiced Roman Catholic writer grants in an article of the *Theol. Quarterly* published by Drzy, Herbst and Hirscher, Tübingen 1820 p. 567f. *Windischmann* will have it indeed, that Peter resided in Rome during the intervals also of which we have no direct notice in the N. T. as regards the question here in hand, namely in the years 44–49, 52–58, 60–61 and 64–68. But if so, he must have been there in very furtive style, must have kept purposely out of the way of the Epistle to the Romans and of Paul's arrival in the city, and according to Paul's Epistles left no trace of his presence there before the year 63! In zeal for the honor of the Prince of the Apostles must we cry out to such an advocate; *Non tali auxilio, nec defensoribus istis!*

⁹ Comp. on this defect in the Eusebian chronology *Wiese's* p. 544ff. The influence of Suetonius appears most plainly in *Orosius*, *Histor. VIII, 7*. Only *Sulpitius Severus* *Hist. sac. II, 29*, seems to have used the statement of Tacitus. Possibly the condemnatory judgment, which the stoical historian pronounces on the christians (*Annal. XV, 44*), was the ground of his being slighted by the church fathers.

to the Corinthians, we can see clearly that he ascribes a greater significance to this Apostle for the Roman church than he does to Peter. *Irenæus* and *Eusebius* name *Linus* rather as the first Roman bishop, and even *Epiphanius* himself makes a distinction plainly between the apostolical and episcopal offices.¹⁰

The martyrdom of Peter.

It is the universal voice of antiquity, that Peter was crucified in the persecution under Nero. Consequently, as already remarked, his death cannot fall in the year 67, as even most later historians give it, following *Eusebius* and *Jerome*, but must be placed in the year 64, in which this persecution broke out directly after the firing of the city in July, and in which also an end was put to the earthly labors of Paul, only perhaps somewhat earlier and by the less degrading process of decapitation. As the place of his punishment, according to the testimony of *Caius* already quoted, was pointed out at the end of the second century the Vatican hill beyond the Tiber, where lay the Circus and Nero's Gardens, and where according to *Tacitus* the persecution of the Christians actually took place. There also was built to his memory the church of Peter, as over Paul's grave on the way to Ostia without the city the church of Paul.

The oldest testimony for the crucifixion of Peter we find already in the appendix to John's Gospel c. xxi: 18, 19, where our Lord himself, in the memorable dialogue there recorded, foretells to him that in his old age he would stretch forth his hands, and that another should bind him and lead whither naturally he would not wish. *Tertullian* remarks expressly, that Peter in his passion was made like the Lord.¹¹ The statement, that he suffered crucifixion with his head downwards toward the earth, meets us first in *Origen*,¹² and this was taken afterwards

¹⁰ See *Schliermann's* *Clementinen* (1844) p. 115, and *Gieseler's* *K. G. I.* 1, p. 103, 281.

¹¹ *De praeser. haeret. c. 36.* - - Romam - - - ubi Petrus passioni Dominicae adaequatur.

¹² In *Euseb. H. E. III.* 1: Πέτρος - - - δε' και ἐνὶ τῆλει ἐν Ῥώμῃ γενόμενος ἀποκολλοῖσθαι κατὰ κεφαλῆς, οὐτως αὐτοῦ ἀξιώσας καθέσθαι. This is then thus paraphrased in the spirit of monkish piety by *Rufinus*: crucifixus est deorsum capite demerso, quod ipse ita fieri deprecatus est, ne exaequari Domino videretur. In like style *Jerome*, who had a special relish for such traits, *De vir. illustr. c. 1*: a quo (Nerone) et affixus cruci, martyrio coronatus est, capite ad terram verso et in sublime pedibus elevatis; asserens se indignum, qui sic crucifigiretur ut Dominus suus.

as an evidence of his special humility, by which he felt himself unworthy to die in the same manner with Christ. When we read in Tacitus of the unnatural tortures to which the christians were subjected by Nero, the fact of such a mode of death seems not improbable, although the motive brought in to explain it betrays a later sickly conception of the nature of humility, whereas the Apostles counted it their greatest honor and joy rather to be like their Lord and Master in all particulars. It is related by Ambrose, that Peter shortly before his death, being overpowered by his former love of life, made his escape from prison, but was arrested and confounded in his flight by the appearance of the Saviour bearing his cross, who in reply to the question, "Lord, whither goest thou?" solemnly responded: "I am going to Rome, to be crucified again!" Whereupon Peter hastily turned back and met death with joy. This tradition still lives in the mouth of the people of Rome, and is embodied in a church styled *Domine quo vadis*, in front of the Sebastian gate, on the Appian way. It is one of those significant stories, that rest on no historical fact indeed but still on a right apprehension of the character in question, and to which may be applied the Italian proverb: *se non è vero, è ben trovato*. To shrink from suffering was in truth a characteristic trait of the natural Simon (comp. xvi: 22, 23, the account of his denial of Christ and what Christ says to him John xxi: 18). But at so great an age he had no doubt long surmounted this feeling, and welcomed the hour, when he was counted worthy to seal his love to the Saviour with his blood and permitted to put off his earthly tabernacle (2 Peter i: 14), for the purpose of entering on "the inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away" (1 Peter i: 4), which he knew to be reserved for him in heaven.

Translated by J. W. N.