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and explanatory." Now it is well known that none of Canaan's posterity settled in Africa. "The border of the Canaanites was from Sidon, as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest unto Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboim, even unto Lasha."<sup>1</sup> None, then, of the Africans come under the curse pronounced by Noah on Canaan.

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### ARTICLE III.

#### THE TÜBINGEN HISTORICAL SCHOOL.<sup>2</sup>

BY REV. R. P. DUNN, PROFESSOR IN BROWN UNIVERSITY,<sup>3</sup>  
PROVIDENCE, R. I.

"The Tübingen School" is, strictly speaking, a historical rather than a theological school. Its representatives, Baur, Strauss, Keller, Schwegler, Köstlin, and Hilgenfeld, are indeed theologians, and have pursued such investigations as are usually left to theologians. Their peculiarity, however, consists in their dealing with their materials, not from a theological, but from a purely historical point of view. While not refusing the title of theologians, and claiming for themselves a place within the broad realm of Protestant theology, they boast that they alone exhibit the genuine Protestant spirit by their independent search for historical truth. They propose to carry on their inquiries, unbiassed by any peculiar doctrinal views; they found their dogmatic system on their scientific convictions, and refuse to interpret history according to any settled system of doctrine. They claim to have sought historical truth like any other kind of

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. x. 19.

<sup>2</sup> This Article is a reproduction, in an English form and dress, rather than a close translation, of an anonymous Article under the same title in Von Sybel's *Historische Zeitschrift*, Vol. 4, 1860. It leans very decidedly towards the views of the school whose principles it proposes to exhibit; it will not, however, on that account be less interesting to American readers desirous of learning the views of this class of critics. The Article has been considerably shortened by omissions and condensations. — Tr.

truth, and to have applied the modern principles of historical science to the investigation of the history of the Christian church; especially to the study of its earliest history, its origin, its primitive character, and development, and to the examination of its oldest documents, our New Testament scriptures.

The origin of the Tübingen school belongs to the history of theology in Germany. It is the successor of that school of rationalism which followed the dead and formal orthodoxy of the century after the Reformation. It was the aim of rationalism to harmonize the biblical history, and especially that contained in the gospels, with the decisions of human reason and the dictates of universal experience; in fact, by explaining away the supernatural element in it, to reduce it to the level of ordinary history. But it is an article of the faith of the church that the biblical narrative is not only genuine history, but a supernatural or miraculous history, recording events, many of which occurred out of the ordinary course of nature. Without seeking to invalidate the genuineness of the biblical narrative, rationalism, therefore, attempted to show that a true conception of it would find in the miracles only natural and perfectly intelligible events. To do this required no small skill, for the scriptures unquestionably ascribe them to supernatural agencies. The rationalistic interpreter, however, found ample resources for his purpose in the store-house of verbal interpretation. Neglect of the peculiar diction of the Old and the New Testament, unfamiliarity with oriental figures, it was asserted, alone leads men to accept the scripture narratives as records of supernatural events. "Why," it was asked, "when in the Old Testament God is said to have spoken, need we suppose that there was an actual vocal utterance? May not the prophets have represented their own lofty and enthusiastic declarations as those of God? When in the biblical narrative the serpent is said to have spoken to Eve, or the ass to Balaam, would it not be more natural to refer this discourse to the minds of the persons addressed, and to interpret these accounts as the scriptural

method of representing the thoughts which these creatures awakened in them?" Through a similar process of interpretation, the narrative of our Lord's temptation becomes an account of his reflections before entering on his public ministry; the descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, a great increase of religious enthusiasm on the part of the apostles. Again, it was asserted by the rationalist that all men, and especially the orientals, are disposed to refer natural phenomena to the direct agency of the Deity. When, therefore, the sacred writers ascribe an event to the divine agency, they do not mean thus to exclude natural causes. The account of Jehovah's descent in fire upon Mount Sinai is only an oriental method of representing the occurrence of a storm; the fiery tongues of Pentecost were electric sparks; Paul and Silas were released from their fetters at Philippi by an earthquake. Saul was blinded on the road to Damascus by a flash of lightning, and restored to sight by the touch of the cold hands of the old man Ananias. Still further, when the narrative contains no indication of the working of material causes, the narrator may have overlooked them, or have been ignorant of their mode of operation. The rational interpreter, it was maintained, should supply the missing links in the history. His scientific culture will teach him that the miraculous cures of the gospels are not essentially unlike those daily wrought by modern physicians; the restoration of the dead to life, and even the resurrection of Christ himself were but the awakening of persons in a swoon; the impossible feeding of the multitude was but the effect of Christ's generous surrender of his own store of food, followed by similar generosity on the part of his disciples. Once more, the refinements of verbal interpretation show that Christ's walking upon the sea was but a walking on the shore, the finding of the tribute-money in the mouth of the fish was but the purchase of the fish for the sum named.

The ingenuity which thus transformed a miracle into a natural event was able to reduce the discourses of Christ and the apostles to perfect harmony with human reason.

By wisely discriminating, it was said, between the literal and the figurative, and by bearing in mind that our Lord and his followers often conformed to the popular method of speaking and to existing opinions, such unintelligible and unreasonable representations as that of the enthronement of God in heaven, or those of the preëxistence, the atoning death, the resurrection, the future advent of Christ, or the doctrines of original sin, of angels, of the devil, may be so interpreted that the most enlightened rationalist need not be ashamed to believe them. By such a method, it may be seen, the authenticity and the authority of the scriptures was left intact, though their contents were sadly distorted from the truth.

The supernaturalistic opponents of this scheme of interpretation did not find it difficult to point out its sophistry, to expose its violation of good taste, and its arbitrary torturing of the meaning of the Word. But they did not succeed in driving rationalism from the field. According to the representations of the Tübingen school, their failure may be accounted for by the timidity and the imperfection of their methods. Their faith in miracles, which they refused to abandon, was inconsistent with true historic consciousness, and their doctrine of inspiration forbade any radical criticism of the sacred writings. Moreover, they adopted some of the principles of rationalism itself. The older theology, with its faith in miracles, had unhesitatingly received the statements of the scriptures as literal truth; the new found it expedient to soften the sharp outline of some of the more striking miracles, to introduce the agency of natural causes, and to conceal the true meaning of the scripture narrative beneath indefinite expressions, e. g. to disguise the agency of an angel beneath the phrase, "the leadings of Providence." Examples of this sort are frequent in the writings of Neander and others. The first third of the present century thus presents to us in this department of theological inquiry the spectacle of a rationalism hesitating to deal with the biblical narrative after a rigid historical method, and a supernaturalism clinging with similar hesi-

tancy to its belief in revelation and its faith in miracles. The principles of modern historical criticism, which had been applied with so much success to profane history, and which, in their application to the Old Testament, had opened to interpreters a new and safer path, were rarely and very unwillingly admitted in reference to the New. Even Schleiermacher and Hegel, who have exerted so great an influence on the theological development of Germany, effected at first but slight changes in this department. For Schleiermacher, though a rationalistic critic and interpreter, by his admission of the fontal miracle of an "original Christ," opened the door for the admission of any miracle. Most of his pupils gradually, though not without many concessions to the spirit of the age, found their way into the ranks of supernaturalism, where they concealed their faith in miracles beneath such obscure phrases as "the harmony of the spiritual and the physical," "natural processes," etc. Hegel, in like manner, at first stood opposed to positive religion with a sort of rationalism, traces of which he never entirely lost. Afterwards, when the reconciliation of faith and knowledge became the watchword of his system, he explained the historical element in faith as a matter of indifference, since we are therein concerned only with the ideal. In fact he expressed himself so undecidedly on this point, that he might have been with equal justice claimed by both parties. His followers were so self-satisfied, and so happy in their fancied speculative orthodoxy, they were wont to look down with such especial contempt upon the untenable position of rationalistic criticism, that so radical an attack on the traditions of the church as soon followed was the last thing to have been expected from this party.

Such was the relation of theological parties in Germany, when, some five-and-twenty years since, Strauss published his "Life of Jesus."<sup>1</sup> Its remorseless attacks upon both the natural method of interpretation adopted by the ration-

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<sup>1</sup> *Das Leben Jesu, kritisch bearbeitet.* Tübingen : 1835. 2 Bde.

alists, and the apologetic defences of the supernaturalists awakened anger and consternation. The moderate and the indifferent of all parties found themselves obliged to define their position in reference to important questions whose difficulty they had hitherto happily avoided. Strauss was regarded as a disturber of the peace of the church; and the greatest anxiety was felt concerning the desolations wrought by so audacious a criticism in the realm of faith, of piety, and of morality. The professed aim of this celebrated work was simply this: to treat the gospel narratives precisely as we treat any other tradition, to exhibit a method of critical inquiry hampered by no prescribed results, and to claim for criticism, especially biblical criticism, independence of all foregone conclusions. The chief element of such an independence Strauss considered to be disbelief in miracles. He thought that faith in miracles rested upon an insecure foundation. He claimed that the law which inseparably connects natural causes with natural results in other departments, holds equally good in the realm of scripture history; and that what in all other cases is regarded as evidences of unhistoric character cannot in this be a sign of higher historic truth. He asserted that our frequent experience of the imperfection of human observation, of the falsity of tradition, of the untrustworthiness of narratives through designed or undesigned invention, render it much less probable that a miracle occurred than that the historian has to deal in the gospel history with a fictitious narrative. A large part of the evangelical story must then be treated as unhistorical. Not only the accounts of the infancy and the ascension of Jesus, but all the miracles which cannot be accounted for by natural causes. Many of his discourses, — almost all contained in the fourth gospel, — together with the resurrection of the crucified one, must be consigned to the region of tradition. Not a few who could not deny his general critical principles shrank from the results to which they led. The "Life of Jesus" provoked a multitude of replies, many of which successfully combated and dispelled one and another of the suspicions

and doubts which Strauss had brought upon the gospel narrative.

Some German scholars, however, felt that his objections had not been scientifically met, while at the same time they recognized that his views, like those of the older rationalists, were imperfect. They censured them as too exclusively negative. Granted that so large a portion of the gospels is unhistorical, how is this unhistorical element to be explained and accounted for? If so many narratives and discourses in them are not to be referred to the recollections of the historians, to what shall they be referred for their origin? To this inquiry Strauss answers that they are mythical; he proposes to substitute the mythical for the rationalistic and the supernaturalistic explanations of the evangelical narrative. A myth, he says, is not a history but a fiction, the work not of one but of many, a popular legend framed, not designedly or consciously, but involuntarily, yet serving for the expression of certain practical ideas, the embodiment of certain dogmatic interests. In the case of the gospel myths these ideas and interests were religious. Two of them are prominent; the desire of the early church to glorify its founder, and the need of seeing in him the fulfilment in part of the prophecies of the Old Testament, in part the realization of the Jewish idea of the Messiah. According to Strauss, the latter motive exerted the stronger influence. In obedience to it the manifold contributions of individuals — innumerable little rills — flowed together to form the stream of Christian tradition, which bore onward a picture of the Christ which in its main features was symmetrical. What the Messiah was to be, what he would accomplish, how he would show himself to the world, through what miracles he would be glorified, were matters already so well settled in the Jewish theology, that from the popular expectation on the one hand, and from the recollection of the personal history of Jesus on the other, a tradition might easily spring up in the Christian community which should exhibit in its particular features no greater discrepancies than actually appear in our gospels.



Comprehensive and satisfactory as was this explanation to many minds, it had some serious defects, which have since been recognized by its author. It must be admitted that the whole of the gospel narrative cannot be explained in the manner proposed by Strauss. His assumption of a Christian legendary tradition — a popular myth — accounts for only the common traits of the evangelical history, for only such discrepancies between the several accounts as are plainly accidental and involuntary, and indicate no individuality or characteristic spirit and tendency on the part of their supposed authors. When, however, we find certain peculiar features throughout an entire gospel, we cannot account for them by the common motives to Christian legendary composition, we must refer them to the peculiar views and interests of the author of the narrative, or of the circle which he represents. When, furthermore, the entire narrative seems planned so as to exhibit these characteristics; when this individuality appears in the arrangement of the materials, in the chronology, in the representation of accessory circumstances; when it is shared by long discourses or conversations, such as are not usually perpetuated in legends, such, for instance, as occur in the fourth gospel, and to a certain extent in the third, — we must be convinced that we have to do, not with a popular legend, but with an artistic literary composition. We are, then, prompted to examine the peculiar motives, the leading thoughts and the general plan of the several narratives, to determine the relation of the individual account to the common Christian tradition, and to explain it on historical grounds, which must ultimately be found in the divine conceptions of Christianity, existing in the early church, and in the different parties of which that body was composed. Such a procedure would add a positive element to the negative criticism of the "Life of Jesus." Strauss aimed rather to remove from the gospel narratives all unhistoric matter, than to present a true historical picture of the Author of Christianity. He shows us what he was not; but if we ask what he was, he gives us nothing but a few indeterminate

hypotheses respecting the germs from which the Christian legend was developed. We, however, may demand more than this. Although it should be admitted that no more can be gained from the gospels than what Strauss admits — that Jesus, the son of Joseph and Mary, proclaimed the approach of the kingdom of God, announced himself as the Messiah, its founder; that his character and his discourses won for him a party of enthusiastic adherents; that some of his deeds appeared miraculous to his contemporaries; that he boldly attacked the dominant pharisaic party, provoked their bitter hatred, and at their instance was crucified; that finally, sooner or later after his death, a belief in his resurrection and ascension to heaven became general among his followers, — it were still worth while to inquire whether we cannot in some other way gain a more satisfactory conception of the Author of Christianity and of his work. If our gospels are not purely historical narratives, if religious interests and doctrinal convictions had a share in their composition, they are, on that very account, trustworthy witnesses to the spirit, the views, the tendencies of the early Christian church. On these points, say the later representatives of the Tübingen school, we have other and even older and more direct testimony in the remaining books of the New Testament, in the annals of ecclesiastical authors, and in the uncanonical remains of the oldest Christian literature. By the aid of these historical sources, they propose to gain a conception as complete as possible, both of the Christianity and of the Christian church of the first century, and of the dissensions and parties which influenced its early development. They aim thus not only to advance beyond the limits of Strauss's criticism, but to add to its predominant negative results positive historical knowledge, to gain further information concerning the Founder of Christianity, not, indeed, concerning the particulars of his life, but concerning the spirit of his teaching and his works. They even expect to gain for the criticism of the gospels a more secure defensive position, by more fully determining the character of the original sources of our knowledge of

the evangelical histories, the time of their composition, and their connection with the parties in the primitive church.

Investigations of this sort had been prosecuted by Baur,<sup>1</sup> at Tübingen, before the appearance of the "Life of Jesus;" they were, however, greatly facilitated and furthered by the unflinching criticism of Strauss. The latter assailed the gospel narrative on the philosophical side, the former on the historical. Both aimed alike to set aside all untenable hypotheses, to shun the unintelligible views of the supernaturalists and the arbitrary theories of the rationalists, and to gain a satisfactory conception of the origin and earliest development of Christianity. But this can be done only by the aid of tradition; and this tradition is subjected to the tests proposed by Strauss, before it is employed by Baur in his construction of the evangelical history. Baur's views are thus conditioned by those of Strauss. This difference exists between the methods of the two men: to the one the critical attack upon tradition is only a means for the restoration of the facts of history; to the other, his positive view of history is but the result, and the almost inseparable product, of his critical analysis.

The mutual relation of the two is strikingly displayed in their respective courses. Strauss directly attacks those parts of the scriptures in which the miraculous and improbable most disturb his critical taste, partly because this element is there most abundant, and partly because he is there concerned with the central topic of Christianity, — the person and history of Christ. Baur, seeking a tenable position for new historical combinations, addresses himself, from preference, to those books of the New Testament which are best adapted to his purpose, the original and oldest documents of the primitive Christian period, — the genuine Pauline epistles. It was from the study of them that he first arrived at the conviction that a false idea of the apostolic age is generally entertained; that it could not have been the period of undisturbed harmony which it is usually con-

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<sup>1</sup> Ferdinand Christian Baur, born 1792, died 1860; Professor of Theology at the University of Tübingen.

sidered. He thought that he could discover in the words of Paul himself traces of profound opposition and earnest conflicts waged with the Jewish party in the church, and even with the other apostles. Connecting herewith information gained from later sources respecting this party, its duration and its influence, he recognized in the so-called Ebionites the same Judaizing spirit with which Paul had to contend, and employed in illustrating the earlier period the pseudo-Clementine Ebionistic writings of a subsequent age. Thus, before the publication of Strauss's views, he had laid the foundations upon which he afterwards built his comprehensive historical combinations. On the same grounds he had already begun to suspect the authenticity of the Acts of the Apostles. Besides the miraculous narratives therein contained, he detected a conciliatory purpose in their unhistorical portrayal of the activity of the apostle to the gentiles, which he deemed irreconcilable with his own declarations, and designed to veil his opposition to pseudo-Christianity. At the same time, in his work on the Pastoral Epistles, and his discussion of the Epistle to the Romans, he first attempted to discriminate between what he considered the genuine and what he regarded as the unauthentic Pauline Epistles, finally recognizing as genuine only the Epistle to the Romans, the Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Galatians. But at the time of the publication of the "Life of Jesus," he had not extended his critical inquiries to the gospel history. In 1843 the fourth Gospel, and in 1846 the third Gospel, were examined by him; and in 1847, a corresponding discussion of the first and the second was added to a revised edition of the foregoing discussions in his "Critical Inquiries into the Canonical Gospels." At the same time, in his work on Paul, published in 1845, he brought to a close his criticism of the Pauline Epistles and of the Acts.

Several of his pupils shared in these labors of their master. Edward Zeller, in 1842, established the "Theological Annals," (*Theolog. Jahrbücher*) which, edited by him, either alone or in conjunction with Baur, was princi-

pally devoted to New Testament criticism. Albert Schwe-gler, an accomplished adherent of the school of Baur, in his "Post-Apostolic Age" (*Das Nachapostolische Zeitalter* Tüb. 1846. 2 Bde.), while either anticipating his master or completing what he had left unfinished, united their views in a comprehensive and spirited historical picture of that important period. These scholars, together with Köstlin, Planck, Hilgenfeld, and Volkmar, though disagreeing with Baur in many of the results at which they individually arrive, have nevertheless pursued the historical method proposed by him.

The first demand of this school is freedom from all prejudice. Baur insists that the same laws and principles of investigation shall be applied to the study of the scriptures as apply to other writings. "Christianity," he says, "is a historical phenomenon, and as such must be historically examined." When charged by his opponents with putting Christianity in a position in which its supernatural and miraculous elements shall disappear, he replies: "Such must necessarily be the tendency of historical inquiry. Its office is to investigate events in connection with their causes and their results. A miracle, however, destroys this natural connection. It assumes a position in which, not from the want of adequate information, but from the very necessity of the case, it is impossible to consider one thing as the natural consequence of another. But how can such a position be defended? Only by historical methods. But in a historical point of view, it were a mere begging the question to assume the occurrence of an event at variance with the common analogy of historical intuition. The question of the origin of Christianity thus ceases to be a purely historical question, and becomes the purely dogmatic one: 'Is it an absolute demand of the religious consciousness, in opposition to all historical analogy, that certain events shall be regarded as simple miracles?'" A miracle and a purely historical method exclude each other. Strauss and Baur alike acknowledge that he who admits the existence of the former refuses to employ the latter.

Assuming, with Strauss, that our New Testament historical books narrate much which either did not happen, or did not happen in such a way that our account of it can be regarded as presenting a true picture of the origin and early development of Christianity, Baur seeks by another method to gain such a picture from them, when studied in connection with other books of the New Testament, and with uncanonical ecclesiastical authorities. These writings he thinks, so far as they are narrative, contain, together with much that is improbable and incredible, an important germ of historical tradition, which can be separated so soon as we can discover its determinate purpose. They may, also, without exception, though only partially applicable, and needing to be used with care, be employed as original documents in obtaining a knowledge of the time to which they owe their origin. Even the narratives of this collection are not simply historical books; they have a definite religious aim; they propose to teach, to edify, to influence the Christian community. In the epistles of the New Testament and the Apocalypse of John this design is manifest. In these writings, therefore, mirror themselves the religious position of the author and of the circle to which they belong, their relation to the parties and the practical and dogmatic questions of their time, their wishes for the future, their view of the aims to which Christianity must, with varying definiteness, be led, the circumstances of the age whence these writings sprung, and the relations of the communities which they were designed to influence. These indications Baur attempts to follow out. He would learn from the doctrinal character and tendency of the writings of the New Testament, not only what age produced them, but what was the religious character, and what were the ecclesiastical relations of that age. In the same manner would he deal with all the remaining early writings of the church, down to the end of the second century; for he regards them as occupying the same position as historical sources, and accounts for the exclusion of some of them from our canon by the fact that they were, though of equal value,

yet less in harmony with the sentiments of the subsequent age than those which find a place there. This testimony of different times and parties respecting themselves, Baur considers the safest criterion for the critical examination of the reports concerning the state of the early church, contained either in the canonical or the uncanonical books. By joining the traditions thus tested with this immediate witness, he expects, by a comprehensive combination, to restore the obscured and distorted picture of the early church — of its development and of its founder — to at least the general outlines of its original condition.

The best starting-point for this inquiry he finds in that historical fact, with the discovery of which his critical course began, and of which he subsequently became more and more firmly convinced, the opposition among the apostles and, in the apostolic age, between the Jewish and the Pauline form of Christianity. This opposition gradually diminished, until at last, after many conflicts and many concessions on either side, it ended in the second half of the second century, in the establishment of the Catholic church and the settlement of its doctrinal system. From that deeply seated opposition, says Baur, the church received an impulse which for a century controlled its development. It determined the dogmatic position of individuals and of parties. The memorials of the conflict, and of the concessions which ended it, we have in the canonical writings of the New Testament and the uncanonical writings of the early church. Each stage of her progress is indicated by works, a part of which, rightly honored with apostolic or non-apostolic names, were finally appended to the sacred books of the Jews. This later development of the church throws the fullest light on the character of the founder of Christianity. That conception only of him can be the true one which explains the circumstances and the relations of the society which he established. The important historical question respecting the person and the doctrine of Jesus is: What was he, and how must he have appeared, in order to render possible at once the narrow views of his

Judaizing disciples and the susceptibility of endless development, — the world-moving power which characterizes his work?

The adherents of the Tübingen school pay no heed to the charge that their style of criticism is irreconcilable with proper reverence for the Holy Scriptures, and utterly at variance with the views which for centuries have been entertained respecting them by the church. They simply affirm that no limits should be assigned to historical enquiry, but such as thoroughly scientific principles recognize. In like manner, they attach no value to the declarations in support of the authenticity of the scriptures made by the universal Christian consciousness. The question of the truth or the falsehood of the books of the New Testament, they contend, is not to be settled by any feeling of their harmony with our necessities, our inclinations, or our convictions, but only by adequate historical proofs. To substitute for such external testimony or internal indications, satisfactorily tested by scientific criticism, those immediate convictions, — those irresistible feelings once called the witness of the Holy Ghost, and now the evidence of inward personal experience, — is, they say, absurd and impossible.

They do, however, condescend to justify and defend a critical method which rejects the long-cherished opinions respecting the authorship of many of the books of the New Testament; transfers to the middle of the second century writings which until lately were considered apostolic; imputes to the sacred authors the invention of facts and discourses and the false assumption of the names of the apostles and their immediate disciples; admits that the church permitted the interpolation of many passages into the sacred books, and circulated and believed these falsified and corrupt productions; charges the apostles with divisions and dissensions respecting the most important topics of Christianity, and the church with the adoption of narrow Judaizing views; denies the genuineness and historical authority of John's Gospel, and recognizes in the Apocalypse



a genuine work of this apostle, the most trustworthy document of ante-Pauline Christianity, the only extant work of a personal disciple of Jesus.

Tradition gains no increased authority in the view of Baur and his disciples from its mere antiquity. We are more certain, say they, of an event which happened thirty years since than of one which happened three thousand years ago. The authorship of any writing, if proved by external testimony, can be established by only contemporary witnesses, or by such as were their immediate successors. The lapse of time weakens rather than strengthens such evidence. Witnesses who lived in the seventy years which followed the apostolic age, are of more importance than all who have lived in the last seventeen hundred years. We have, they affirm, no express and immediate testimony respecting the authorship of the New Testament writings, and very little that is mediate and indirect in the early age. We have no authoritative testimony concerning Matthew's Gospel before Justin Martyr, about 140, A. D. Papias, a disciple of the apostle John, refers indeed to a compilation made by Matthew, and a narrative dictated to Mark by the apostle Peter; but his description of them does not correspond with our gospels, and the latter seems to have been unknown to Justin. He and the heretic Marcion used a Gospel by Luke, but of its age we are ignorant. The first traces of the Acts appear about 170, A. D. We have no testimony concerning John's Gospel and the Epistles earlier than this period. Justin mentions the Apocalypse, the time of whose composition, 69 A. D., can be determined from internal evidence. Marcion, 140 - 150, A. D., bears the first direct witness to the Pauline Epistles, though quotations and allusions imply that they were known to the authors of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of James, the Petrine Epistles, and the writings of Barnabas and Clement of Rome. The Tübingen school claim that there is, therefore, no evidence which invalidates their opinion respecting these or the other writings of the New Testament.

The tradition on which the faith of the church rests has

not, they say, therefore, the completeness, the directness, the originality which alone should entitle it to confidence. An interval of from forty to one hundred years between the time of a supposed author and the first direct testimony to his authorship, affords ample opportunity for deception, especially when printing is unknown. We have no proof that these earliest witnesses did not follow an uncertain hypothesis respecting the origin of these works, or that they did not accept without inquiry the names connected with the titles of the copies in their possession. The titles of works circulated in an age unskilled in literary criticism are very unsafe guides respecting their authors. They may not be genuine. It is easy, when books exist only in MS., for an author to ascribe his own book to another, or for any owner of a copy, on the merest supposition, to prefix another name to the book, or for an author, without changing the original title or removing the writer's name, to remodel, enlarge, and enrich a work, so that without losing its original designation, it shall be completely transformed.

Such destructive hypotheses, however, seem to be forbidden by the supposed good faith of the early church, and the voice of ecclesiastical tradition. But, say the Tübingen school, the church did not at first unanimously adopt our New Testament writings. Several apocryphal gospels, differing essentially from the canonical ones, circulated, especially among the Judaizing Christians. Others were popular with the Gnostic sects. Not until the second half of the second century did our four canonical gospels become universally recognized. Even in the fourth century several of our New Testament books were rejected by some portions of the church, and other books, e. g. the Shepherd of Hermas, the Epistle of Barnabas, and the Apocalypse of Peter, were admitted into the canon, but have since been excluded. In fact, our collection of sacred writings was slowly formed; and general agreement respecting its contents was not reached for centuries.

This final agreement is not to be accounted for by the supposition that fuller information on the point had in the

mean time been gained; it was rather the result of the prejudices and religious interests of the church. For what are men more ready to believe and less disposed critically to examine than that which harmonizes with their personal or their party views and inclinations, necessities and prejudices? What is more readily rejected than what opposes them? Just in the proportion that any political, moral, religious, or doctrinal interest is associated with the adoption or the rejection of a tradition, is the certainty of its independent, unprejudiced, critical examination imperilled. The profound interest which all parties, both orthodox and heretic, felt in the New Testament writings naturally hindered that critical examination of them, that cool historical inquiry into their supposed apostolic origin which true science demands. Rather was it to be expected that their decision would be determined by dogmatic prejudices; that each party would adopt as apostolic, writings which agreed best with its own tendencies and conclusions, and reject those opposed to them; and that finally the majority, constituting the catholic church, would accept as apostolic such writings only as corresponded to the religious consciousness of a later age. This later religious consciousness might, however, be quite unlike that of an earlier period, so that many views familiar to the church during its infancy might be strange and unfamiliar to it in a subsequent age, and many views entertained in the later age would not be represented in the primitive faith. It is, then, say the Tübingen critics, not only an arbitrary but an impossible hypothesis, that the church critically investigated the origin of the New Testament writings, and consequently received as genuine nothing that was false. Moreover, the fact is not to be overlooked, that the church teachers who determined public opinion had not the means, furnished in modern times by general critical culture, for ascertaining with certainty the origin of an uncertain composition. Their circumstances, too, were unfavorable to such investigations. Intercourse between different portions of the church was not so close or so frequent that events occurring in one

region were immediately known in another. There were then no journals, no catalogues of books, none of the bibliographical aids that we possess. Who could assure himself that a work circulating in Rome had been written eighty years before by an apostle in the remote East, or that when an epistle appeared in Alexandria it had been originally addressed by an apostle to Crete or to Asia Minor? Such matters could be settled only by personal inquiries pursued in the communities in question, and in nine cases out of ten would not then lead to any satisfactory result. Should an interval of ten years separate the inquirer from the reputed author, the work would in the mean time have been quite extensively circulated in its original neighborhood, and ambition and pride would not suffer the possessors of the supposed apostolic composition to surrender willingly the prestige it conferred. Most frequently such investigations would be set on foot so late as to fail of their intended object. Everything favored literary deception. There was in that early age a striking and to us almost inexplicable want of critical acuteness. In both the pagan and the Christian literature, works were universally received as authentic which at the first glance we see to be fabrications. With a boldness equalled only by the credulity with which the deception was received, not only were the names of well-known authors prefixed to works which they could not have written, but the names of authors were invented, works were inserted into the series of a writer's productions, books were ante-dated, and well-known philosophers were credited with views utterly at variance with those which they had elsewhere expressed. The exposure of such falsehoods was the exception, not the rule, in the ages just before and after the beginning of the Christian era. With an easy faith the Fathers of the church did not scruple to accept a work as authentic if it but furthered their personal or their party interests. The Tübingen school cite a multitude of instances in which works were imputed to different writers on insufficient grounds, and then assume that the books of the New Testament were received with equal credulity, and are

not more worthy of being regarded as the genuine and venerable productions which the church believes them to be.

In reply to the obvious objections of Christian interpreters, that it is inconceivable that the sacred writers should have lent themselves to such a course of deception, and that these hypotheses and assumptions represent the Christian religion as resting on the grossest falsehood, and its first teachers as either knaves or fools, the disciples of Baur beg us to make some distinctions. They profess to admit that the New Testament has a foundation in truth; they even acknowledge that many of the writings whose genuineness they question are not ante-dated, and are not pure fabrications, in the strict sense of that term. There are several ways, say they, of accounting for their origin. An author may ascribe to another a work which he has written; this they suppose to have been done in the case of the unauthentic apostolic epistles. Without having compared the original work, he may have rewrought it, and have allowed the name of the true author to remain prefixed to it; thus they imagine that Matthew's Gospel, as we possess it, is the result of several successive reconstructions of materials which that apostle collected; Mark's the product of a combination of our first and third Gospels with another ascribed to that evangelist; the Acts of the Apostles, a revised form of a personal narrative by the evangelist Luke. Again, an anonymous production may have been ascribed by individual judgment to one or another author; thus, they affirm, have the Epistle to the Hebrews and the Epistle of Barnabas been dealt with. Finally, a book may assign its materials, but not its actual composition, to a person who is ultimately regarded as its author, and later ages may fail to make the same distinction. This appears to have been the case, say these critics, with the fourth Gospel. The author of it would unquestionably have the matter of his book regarded as John's, but he nowhere says that he is the apostle John, but, on the contrary, speaks of him in the third person. It is in this way that we must account for the title, 'The Gospel

*according* to John, *according* to Matthew, etc. A work might lawfully be thus designated, though it contained narratives quite different from those previously recorded by those apostles; it might still claim to be the genuine apostolic tradition.

Furthermore, say these critics, the refusal to receive a portion of the New Testament as genuine, is not equivalent to an admission that Christianity and the Christian church rest on a foundation of falsehood and deceit. The Christian faith and the Christian community are not the product of these writings; rather are these writings a memorial of the faith cherished at the time of their composition by the Christian church; and they continue to be such, though a few decades, or even a century, may have been required for their composition, and though the names of their authors be doubtful or unknown. Lessing, say they, triumphantly proved that the letter is not the spirit, and the Bible is not religion. For one hundred years Christianity was propagated more by oral tradition than by writings. The Christian religion and its founder remain the same, whatever may be our historical knowledge of it, and however we may regard the books to which we owe our knowledge of it.

The disciples of Baur contend that the judgment to be passed on the conduct which they impute to the early Christian writers and to the church, must be governed by the ideas and customs of the period in question. The name of an author was in that age of secondary importance; whatever weight it had, came from the worth of the matter with which it was connected. A man, therefore, who had written anything which he considered true and edifying, would not hesitate to ascribe it to another. He does the latter no wrong by surrendering to him something to which he has himself a right. As little does he wrong the reader, who is concerned to know what has been written, not who wrote it. The distinction between invention and history, and even that between justifiable and unjustifiable invention is but faintly drawn in the

popular mind. The title of the individual to intellectual property is but imperfectly recognized. It were indeed wrong to ascribe to an honored name anything unworthy of it, but to attribute to it what is excellent is not only lawful, but meritorious. By such considerations, and by references to the manner in which the ancient profane historians and authors of dialogues impute speeches and conversations to their personages, the Tübingen school sustain their assumption that unknown Christian authors attributed their conception of the doctrine of Peter and of Paul to these apostles, and then our notion of Christianity to its founder. It was of no consequence in that age whether an apostle actually had spoken thus; according to the author's view, he might, or even must, have spoken thus; — the spirit of the age demanded no greater historical accuracy. To transfer to that period our standard of the rights of intellectual property, would be as wrong as it would be to apply the clauses of an act against theft to the members of Plato's Republic, or to the inhabitants of Sparta.

Baur and his adherents account for the presence of a large amount of unhistorical matter in the New Testament by the long-continued prevalence of *oral* tradition in the early church, and the high esteem in which it was held. In proof of this, they refer to the many narratives respecting the life and discourses of Jesus, current even in the second century, many of which were gathered up by travellers who deemed them superior to the written accounts. Christianity, say they, was first diffused by preaching, not by books. It is unlikely that an unrecorded history, thus transmitted, should not undergo great changes, and be much corrupted, in a very short time. A few days, even a few hours, are long enough entirely to transform the account of something which has just happened into an extravagant legend. How much more probable is such a result when a long period is embraced in the story, when the later narrators are far removed from the time and the place of the occurrence, when the age is destitute of critical

skill, and when the shape, and even the substance, of the narrative is closely connected with popular or personal religious interests. Unless, then, it can be proved by external testimony that the authors of our sacred books were eye witnesses of the facts related, that we have their original and actual compositions, and that they had access to unquestionable sources of information, the Tübingen school feel themselves justified in assuming the possible intrusion of legendary matter into our New Testament narratives.

Just as undeniable, say these critics, was the controlling influence of religious and dogmatic interests in the formation of these legends. The age, destitute of a keen historical and critical perception, was favorable to the construction of a myth. The church was a new community, which had just undergone the profoundest revolution that ever stirred the life of man. It was filled with the bitterest feelings of opposition to the surrounding world, rent by party strife, and engaged in a mortal struggle with its foes. It was mainly composed of persons without scientific culture, — women, artisans, slaves, — incapable of observing carefully, proving critically, and judging coolly; employing the feelings and the fancy rather than the reflecting understanding, cherishing the strongest faith in miracles, and taught to expect the greatest of miracles, — the sudden destruction of the world. It was natural that such a community should transfer to their conception of the past their present expectations, feelings, and wishes, the doctrines and the tendencies which entered into their daily experience, and then seek therein the type and the justification of their own aspirations, and thus transform that history into such a shape as should meet their own ideal dogmatic views.

The future character and deeds of the Messiah were points firmly settled in the Jewish faith before the birth of Jesus. From prophetic declarations, from Old Testament types, and from private expectations, had been formed a fully developed conception of his person and his work. A Messianic system of doctrine had been sketched, which it was expected would be realized in the history of the mani-



fested Messiah. What is more natural, say our critics, than that the gospel history should gradually conform itself to this expectation, that its gaps should be filled up with materials from the prevailing Messianic notion, and that facts inconsistent with this idea should be harmonized by interpolations of suitable passages? Were certain determinate features thus once introduced into the history of Christ, it is to be expected that they would soon be more fully portrayed. Thus a dogmatic conviction transforms itself into a narrative or myth. A man thinks he knows what should occur in the history of the Messiah, and then is convinced that it must have occurred. It is only a confounding of the needful with the actual. The deception consists only in regarding as an objective necessity what one is himself convinced of, and thus imperceptibly transforming subjective notions into real history. The process is one from which science itself has been unable to protect itself, and we need not be surprised that a credulous church, finding everything probable which is edifying, should have received, as genuine history, narratives which afford numerous illustrations of both unconscious popular invention and the conscious activity of skilful authorship.

Christianity itself, the origin and the corruption of whose earliest documents are accounted for by the above hypotheses, Baur regards as a universal form of the religious consciousness corresponding to the spirit of its age, and a natural result of the previous historical development of the nations of the world. The conquests of Alexander and the subsequent establishment of the Roman empire prepared the way for its extension by mitigating or annihilating the opposition and prejudices of separate nationalities, while the universal dominion of an earthly kingdom rendered familiar the conception of a universal kingdom of God. At the same time, while on the one hand the heathen religions grew weak through the increase of unbelief and of superstition, and on the other, Judaism shut itself up in hard, proud exclusiveness, and a lifeless legalism, the foundation was laid for a new mode of viewing the world. Among

the Greeks, philosophy introduced a freer, more profound and liberal form of religious life, grounding itself on the self-consciousness of man as an inward revelation of the Godhead. Monotheism thus developed itself out of polytheism; the sensuous, cheerful, Greek view of life, delighting itself in the present, was forced out into a wider range by an idealistic dualism, and a vista was opened into a future world, to which the present served as a preparation. Judaism, transformed into the Alexandrian theology, lost much of its national form; an allegorical style of interpretation made the Old Testament scriptures present the ideas of the Greek philosophers; and for the legal ritual was substituted an inward piety, consisting largely of a regard for the poor and an all-embracing love for mankind. Christianity, according to this view, contains nothing new; it needs no miracle to account for its origin or its extension; it is but the result of rational thought, a necessity of the human heart, a demand of the moral consciousness.

The doctrine inculcated by the founder of Christianity, Baur finds very simple. Leaving out of view John's Gospel, which is not to be connected with the other three, and confining himself to that gospel which he considers most authentic, — that of Matthew, — he sees nothing in the teaching of Jesus which has not a purely moral tendency, and which does not aim to restore man to his own moral and religious consciousness. Poverty of spirit uttering its convictions of the transitoriness of everything earthly, perfect righteousness consisting in the inward purpose rather than in the outward act, self-abandonment displayed in loving others as ourselves, simplicity of heart and humility ascribing all glory to God alone, sincerity and unconditional submission expressed in the habitual address to God as our Father, are the prominent elements of the teachings of Jesus. By such a deepening and purifying of the moral and religious consciousness, he overstepped in principle the limits of the Mosaic legalism, and spiritualized the theocracy of the Old Testament into a moral kingdom of God. But neither did he absolutely break with Judaism, nor

introduce a peculiar and more developed system of doctrine. Later Christian teachers formulized the truths of sin and grace; he simply addresses himself to man's free-will, and assumes that man can, if he chooses, fulfil the law of God. According to the accounts of the first three Gospels, he does not present himself as a supernatural being. He but appropriates the national Messianic idea, feels and announces himself to be the Messiah, and as such accepts the inevitable conflict with the dominant party of the Pharisees. Only in this concrete form can the teachings of Jesus be said to have founded a new religion, a world-conquering church. In his hands the Messianic idea accomplished more than in others, only because it was embodied in a personality which by its moral greatness and purity, by the strength and depth of its religious life, exhibited as present and actual what his teaching demanded. Like Socrates, Jesus of Nazareth was a religious reformer because he *was* what he taught; he was fitted and called to establish in humanity, by his own personality, a new moral and religious life.

These facts were but gradually recognized by his adherents, and but imperfectly understood by his disciples. Deep and overpowering as must have been their impression of his personality, if their faith in him was to survive his death, and triumph after his resurrection, strong as was the hold upon them of what was new and peculiar in the teachings of Jesus, yet were they, as appears from the Pauline Epistles, none the less unconscious of the position they had assumed in respect to Judaism. Their new faith seemed to them only the complement, not a virtual abandonment, of the old. They wished to abide in the Jewish communion, and to retain within its limits the Christians who were born in it, or were admitted to it by circumcision. They were hampered by the restrictions of the Mosaic law; they saw in Jesus only the Messiah of the Jews, not the founder of a new world-religion embracing alike both Jews and Gentiles, and effacing their distinctive peculiarities. The first step in the right direction was

taken by the Hellenist Stephen; and the final independence of Judaism on the part of Christianity was established by the great Apostle to the Gentiles. In him the Christian consciousness thoroughly and definitively broke with Judaism. The principle that Christianity, and not Judaism, alone can put man in the proper relation to God, occupied, after his conversion, the central position in his system; and from this principle, as Baur attempts to show in detail, the entire Pauline doctrine develops itself.

The more fully Paul followed out this view, the more marked became his opposition, not only to the older believers and to his contemporaries, but also to the older apostles and the churches founded by them. Thus are explained the distrust with which he was met by the more moderate Judeo-Christians, and the intense hatred which he awakened in the more extreme. According to his own account, which is less conciliatory than that in the Acts, the apostolic council resulted only in a consent, forced from the Palestinian Christians by the facts in the case, to his independent administration of his own department. How little either party had abandoned its former position appears from the subsequent collision between Peter and Paul at Antioch. Each party still pursued its own path. Even in churches founded by Paul, attacks on his personal character and work were repeatedly made by his opponents, or by persons encouraged and recommended by them. Such attacks called forth the Epistle to the Galatians and one of the Epistles to the Corinthians. The Epistle to the Romans, containing the fullest exposition of Paul's views, and addressed to the church of the imperial city, founded by other than apostolic agency, and strongly tinged with Judaism, seeks to win their adherence, and to disarm their prejudices against Gentile Christianity, the successful rival of the Jewish faith and its theocratic prerogatives. It was for the reconciliation of the adverse parties that Paul urged on the collection for the saints at Jerusalem, and bore it, with such unhappy results to himself, to its destination. His conciliatory efforts, however, failed in their chief points.

In the age after his death the two parties still stood bitterly opposed to each other; and it was not until after the lapse of several generations that their gradual approximation and their final coalescence were effected.

The traces of these conflicts, and of this gradual reconciliation, Baur finds both within and without our books of the New Testament. The purest and weightiest document on the Pauline side, next to the epistles of the apostle, is, according to him, the Gospel according to Luke, which presents the evangelical history from the position of Pauline liberality, or freedom from Jewish exclusiveness. On the Judaic side, the oldest work that we have is, in his opinion, the Apocalypse of John, probably written by the apostle whose name it bears, in the year before the destruction of Jerusalem. By a profound application of the facts of history, it expresses the anticipations of a religious party, respecting the immediate future, and endeavors to unite and to strengthen that party for the endurance of coming trials. The first Christians expected daily the end of the world, and the miraculous advent of the Messiah and the establishment of his kingdom. The apostolic and the post-apostolic age — the entire New Testament, its latest books only excepted — are full of such anticipations. The nearness of the Messiah's advent was the secret of the self-sacrificing surrender of the Christian church in its conflict with its pagan and its Jewish foes. When, in the Neronian persecution, the heathen kingdom of this world first showed its extreme hatred of the church; when, in the Jewish war, the destiny of the people who had rejected the Messiah seemed about to be accomplished, and when, after Nero's death, a bloody civil war raged around the imperial throne, the probationary period of the world seemed to the Christians drawing to a close. The idea then gained credence that Nero, either escaped from his murderers or raised from the dead, would return with a mighty host from the East to Rome, and wreak upon it a fearful vengeance. The Christians beheld in him the Antichrist who, with the aid of demons, would achieve his work, destroy all true

confessors of Christ, and then fall before the returning Messiah. In such circumstances, and under such influences, was the Apocalypse written. Under the guidance of the prevailing Jewish, Messianic anticipation, it aims to encourage the church to a steadfast profession and faithful maintenance of its belief, and to prepare it for a coming martyrdom, by painting, in the familiar form of prophecy, the issue of the approaching conflict, and the rich reward of the unfaltering combatants. For its own age it was, then, a work of the profoundest import, and it was tortured, doubted, and even rejected by the following age, because later centuries did not find themselves sustained by it in their views of the past, and in anticipations which had been long before shown to be groundless by the facts of history. Still more significant is the fact that this early book ascribes to the devil's doctrine of Balaam things which Paul had defended and permitted, — that one of the chief apostles of the Jewish party here admits the Gentile Christians to communion with Jewish Christians in the Messianic church only in a sort of plebeian relation; that among the twelve apostles whose names are graven on the foundation stones of the New Jerusalem, no place is found for that of the great apostle of the gentiles, and that the Ephesian church, in which he labored so long, is praised that she had tried and found false those who would make themselves apostles. These things, Baur thinks, indicate differences from whose reconciliation alone could spring the catholic church. But it was not in the nature of things that different portions of the church, united by a common faith, should long preserve these oppositions and enmities. The points in dispute gradually lost their sharpness; common views were more prominently brought forward; the mutually hostile parties, approaching each other, borrowed much from each other, and gradually reconciled their differences, so that at last there emerged a common doctrine and a common church. A decided step had been taken in this direction when the baptism of gentile Christians was substituted for their circumcision. A still further step was taken

when Christianity, opposed in its Pauline form, was received in a Petrine, when, as in the Clementine Epistles, Peter was set forth as the only apostle to the gentiles; and, with a still surviving opposition to the person and work of Paul, his fundamental principle of catholicity is fully recognized. The Epistle of James testifies to the influence which the Pauline conception of Christianity won over such as still, in principle, strove against it. On the other hand, the epistles proceeding from a Pauline point of view—Hebrews, Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, as well as the Pastoral Epistles, aimed against the heretical Gnosis—indicate different forms and degrees of that reconciling purpose, which, in a more thoroughly conciliatory spirit, and by means of a freer enlargement and transformation of historical materials, accomplished its aim in the Acts of the Apostles. Similar confirmations of the fact of such differences and of their reconciliation are found outside of the New Testament, in the writings transmitted to us under the names of Barnabas, Ignatius, Clemens, Polycarp, and Hermas, and in the works of Justin Martyr. In the second half of the second century, the differences of opinion, which had so deeply moved the apostolic and the post-apostolic age, had disappeared; Peter and Paul appear as reconciled; and, as if to leave no doubt on this point, they are equally revered as the founders of the Church of Rome, where this fusion of ecclesiastical parties seems to have been first achieved; and in the imperial city, which it is probable that Peter never visited, the graves of the two apostles are shown as memorials of their common martyrdom. Both the Epistles of Peter, written, according to this school of critics, at Rome in the second century, reveal the same tendency.

The final step in this conciliatory movement appears in the fourth Gospel, written, as Baur thinks, in the middle of the second century, and not long afterwards universally recognized as a work of the Apostle John. From the position occupied by this Gospel, Judaism appears as a distant phenomenon of a former age; Christianity is established as the only and universal way of salvation; all

the barriers of Jewish exclusiveness are removed; in Christianity a new and absolute principle, the world-creating Word of God, has revealed itself; and the obligation rests upon every man, hampered by no bonds of any narrow form of the religious life, to surrender himself entirely to this divine being, to unite himself in love with the Son of God, and through him with God himself. This ideal representation is no longer disturbed by any of the conflicts through which Christianity had to work its earlier way. As the founder of Christianity is here raised to divinity, so is Christianity here presented as endowed with an endless life. Christian consciousness has at last reached a resting-place, and left behind the clouds which at a lower point had veiled its field of vision.<sup>1</sup>

In prosecuting the inquiries and reaching the results above stated and illustrated, the critics of the Tübingen school claim to have exercised the strictest historic impartiality towards the Christian church and Christianity, and to have aimed to gain a picture of its origin and development, as true as possible, corresponding with actual facts, and in harmony with historical possibilities and probabilities. In doing this, they must assume the position of critics, attack many almost universal assumptions, and do violence to many fondly cherished convictions. Their final aim is, they assert, the purely positive one of the acquirement of accurate historical knowledge; and however much opinions may differ in respect to the individual results reached by them, it cannot be denied, they say, that their leading principles are the same which, in another field than that of theology, have controlled all historical studies since the inquiries of Niebuhr and of Ranke.

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<sup>1</sup> Our limits will not permit us to present the reviewer's further development of Baur's views respecting the later history of the church. He shows that in the presence of Gnosticism, which rejected a large portion of the sacred volume, and of Montanism, which substituted for its teachings the revelations of a prophetic ecstasy, it sought to give greater weight to its traditions by exalting the authority of its teachers, and strengthened itself by preparing and promulgating precise statements of its faith. Thus arose Episcopacy, and, in due time, the Papacy, and thus, too, was the catholicity of the church firmly and finally established.