
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

But, these secondary qualities of style — the beauty, and the elegance, and the harmony — derive all their charm and power from springing out of the primary qualities, and in this way ultimately, out of the deep and clear culture of the mind itself — from being the white flower of the black root.

Style, when having this mental and natural origin, is to be put into the first class of fine forms. It is the form of thought; and, as a piece of art, is as worthy of study and admiration, as those glorious material forms which embody the ideas of Phidias, Michael Angelo, and Raphael. It is the form in which the human mind manifests its freest, purest, and most mysterious activity — its thought. There is nothing mechanical in its origin, or stale in its nature. It is plastic and fresh as the immortal energy, of which it is the air and bearing.

ARTICLE III.

THE FOUR GOSPELS AS WE NOW HAVE THEM IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND THE HEGELIAN ASSAULTS UPON THEM.

By C. E. Stowe, D. D., Bowdoin College.

In this essay I propose to discuss the following topics:

I. The value of the four gospels as we now have them in the New Testament.

II. Religious character of the Hegelian philosophy.

III. Analysis and characteristics of the principal Hegelian assaults on the gospels.

IV. The real importance to be attributed to these assaults.

V. Comparison of the canonical gospels with the apocryphal gospels still extant.

VI. Comparison of the canonical gospels with the fragments of gospels supposed to be lost.

VII. What may be actually known as to the genuineness and incorruptness of the gospels as we now have them in the New Testament.

VIII. General results of the whole discussion.

For the benefit of the reader who may wish to pursue the investigation, I will also select, from the very copious literature of the subject, a few of the best and most instructive works on both sides.

1. Strauss (Dav. Fred.), Das Leben Jesu kritisch bearbeitet. 2te Auflage, 2 Theile, Tübingen, 1839. 2. Weisse (Chr. Herm.), Die evangelische Geschichte kritisch und philosophisch bearbeitet. Leipzig, 1838. 3. Gfrörer (Aug. F.), Geschichte des Urchristenthums. 5 Theile, Stuttgard, 1838. 1 and 2 Das Jahrhundert des Heils. 3 and 4 Die Heilige Sage. 5 Das Heiligthum und die Wahrheit. 4. Gfrörer (Aug. F.), Philo und die Alexandrinische Theosophie, oder von Einfluss der jüdisch-egyptische Schule auf die Lehre des Neuen Testament, 2te Auflage, Stuttgard, 1835. 5. Bauer (Bruno), Kritik des Evangeliums Johannis. Bremen, 1840. 6. Bauer (Bruno), Kritik der Evangel. Geschichte der Synoptiker. 3 Theile, Leipzig and Braunschweig, 1841–42. 7. Feuerbach (L.), Das Wesen des Christenthums, vierte, vermehrte und umgearbeitete Auflage. Leipzig, 1849. 8. Neander (Aug.), Das Leben Jesu. Hamburg, 1837. 9. Tholuck (Aug.), Die Glaubwürdigkeit der evangelischen Geschichte. Hamburg, 1837. 10. Ullmann (C.), Historisch oder Mythisch? Hamburg, 1838. 11. Ebrard (A.), Wissenschaftliche Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte. Frankfurt a. M., 1842. 12. *Dasselbe* — Zweite gänzlich umgearbeitete Auflage. Erlangen, 1850. 13. Guerike (H. E. F.), Historisch-kritische Einleitung in das Neue Testament. Leipzig, 1843. 14. Lange (P.), Das Leben Jesu nach den Evangelien dargestellt. Heidelberg, 1844. 15. Sepp (J. W.), Das Leben Christi. Mit einer Vorrede von Jos. von Görres, 4 Bde. Regensburg, 1843–45.

I. The Value of the Four Gospels, as we now have them in the New Testament.

To every man who feels the need of religion, and cannot surrender his reason to the tyrannical and preposterous claims of the papacy, the four gospels, as we now have them in the New Testament, are of priceless value. The human soul, in its wants and sorrows and conscious weaknesses, in view of its brief existence on earth, and the dread unknown which awaits it beyond the grave, is greatly in want of some *objective truth* to rest upon; and without it, the only wise philosophy is that which says, *Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* If the four gospels be received as objectively true; if Jesus Christ, as therein described, be an actually existing personage, and our ever-living, ever-present friend and guide, then we have what we need; then the soul can rest and rejoice; then the spiritual can gain a permanent victory over the physical; our life on earth can be

made a time of usefulness and peace, and our death a season of triumph and joy. Moreover, having Jesus and the gospels objectively true, on their authority we have also the other writings of the New Testament, and the historians, the poets, and the prophets of the Old; and now, with an unmutilated, unimpeachable Bible in our hands, we, like our fathers, can march through the world with heads erect, and a joyous courage, bidding defiance to Satan, and sorrow, and wicked men.

But weaken our confidence in the gospels; let them be regarded as a jumble of traditions, partly true and partly false, then the chief effect of the Christian religion is, to raise our hopes only to sink us the deeper in despair; to increase our fears, without showing us definitely our danger, or teaching us how to escape it; our life on earth is equally unfitted for sensual pleasure and for spiritual enjoyment; and beyond the grave we have only just light enough to make the darkness visible. With the mere mockery of a revelation which is then left us, there are but two classes of men who can be satisfied with life as it now exists — namely, those whose desires and aspirations never go beyond the physical comforts of the external world, and the proud, cold, self-sufficient thinkers, whose chief pleasure it is to despise the weaknesses of their fellow creatures, and think themselves above them.

Entertaining such views, I confess I never can read, or listen to a critique on the sacred writings, and especially on the gospels, without deep feeling. If indifference as to the result, be an essential qualification for a good investigator of the Scriptures, then I must give up all hope of ever being one. To the result I cannot be indifferent if I would, for there are all my hopes. Who would be expected to be indifferent, if the object of the investigation on which he is obliged to enter, were to ascertain whether his father were a cheat, or his son a thief, or his wife false?

'But we must have a zeal for science; we must let truth work its way; we must be willing that every falsehood, and every mistake, however long and lovingly cherished, should be torn from our embrace.' Very true, so we must; but does a proper regard for science, a proper love of truth, a proper hatred of error, require the sacrifice of every humanizing and ennobling feeling? Is man, or is he required to be, all intellect and no heart? To honor the mind, must we crucify the soul? Is he the only anatomist who can lay bare to his knife the body of a beloved sister, with the same indifference with which he would hack upon the carcass of an unknown culprit just snatched from its dishonored grave? I believe no such thing;

and while Christ is to me more than father or mother, more than wife or child, or my own life even, I do not believe that sound philosophy requires me to see that holy gospel, which contains all that I know of him, treated by an irreverent critic, as the greedy swine would treat a beautiful field of growing corn. Nor do I believe that an irreverent, ungodly critic is the man to do justice to the gospels, or tell the truth about them fairly, in any sense. He may investigate their language, and examine their history, and give correctly the results of his verbal criticisms; but the real substance of the gospels is far above, out of his sight; he can have no sympathy with Christ; he can have no conception of the motives which influenced the apostles; he can have no idea of the feelings which animated the sacred writers; he is a total stranger to the whole soul of that which he criticises. When a man who has never seen, can accurately describe colors, or one who has never had the sense of hearing, can give a good account of sounds, or a horse with iron-shod hoofs can play tunes on a church organ, then I will not refuse to believe that an ungodly critic can write a reliable book on the New Testament. It is only the very lowest part of the work, that such a critic can perform; and when he comes to the higher criticism, the interior life of the word, he is wholly out of his sphere. How can a man with no poetry in his soul, review a poem? How can a man with no mathematics, properly estimate a treatise on fluxions? How can one destitute of the first principles of taste, be a critic in the fine arts? And how can a man wholly irreligious, be a fit judge of the most religious of all books? Let the gospels be estimated according to their real worth, and the writers upon them according to their real worth, and then justice will be done on both sides. We will refuse no help, and we will repel no truth, though it come from the most ungodly; but we will not idolize intellect which has no heart, nor allow profane hands to filch from us our choicest treasures.

There is a decided tendency, in our times, to award peculiar consideration and deference to profane writers on sacred subjects. If an author with the spirit and principles and talent of Voltaire, were to write a life of Christ, or a commentary on the gospels, or especially an introduction to the Old Testament, it would be just in accordance with the spirit of the age to study and quote such works with more profound respect than is awarded to the writings of Luther, or Calvin, or Bengel, or any other writer who loves and venerates the Word of God. This whole tendency is most particularly to be despised or deplored.

II. Religious Character of the Hegelian Philosophy.

The recent assaults on the gospels have proceeded almost entirely from the Hegelian school of philosophy. The influence of this philosophy extends far beyond the circle of its professed disciples. It is found where the very name of Hegel is almost unknown, and where not a syllable of his writings has ever been read. It invades Christian and even orthodox pulpits, and sometimes neutralizes the power of the Gospel under the most evangelical forms. It is a proud and a godless philosophy; and, like a cholera miasma in the atmosphere, often deals desolation and death where its very existence is unsuspected. Though the most abstruse of all speculations, it never exists as a mere speculation, but immediately proceeds to action — and its first acts are the annihilation of human responsibility, and of the spiritual world, and of God himself. While in some cases it retains the words and phrases of the most evangelical faith, it expels from them all their meaning, and leaves them the mere hieroglyphs of an atheistic mystery.

In thus describing the religious character of this philosophy, I am far from intending a personal attack on its great founder. In many of the qualities which make up a man, he was among the noblest of men, — a fine physical organization, a prodigious intellect, and a generous heart; and he would probably himself be one of the first to protest against the atheistic extremes of some of his followers. Nor are his disciples all alike. There is the *extreme right, the central,* and the *extreme left* — or, as I would characterize them, the *religious,* the *non-religious,* and the *anti-religious.* On the *extreme right* was Marheineke, a clear-headed and sound-hearted Christian theologian and preacher, one of the best of historians and one of the most accurate of reasoners; and how he could be a Hegelian and the author of such works as his *History of the Reformation* and his *Christian Symbolik* was always a mystery to me. There, too, is Goeschel, a truly pious and eminent jurist; but inasmuch as he could find in Goethe an apostle of Christianity, and in the Faust a high development of the Christian spirit, it is not so surprising that he can see in Hegel the Christian philosopher. Dorner, too, one of the best of men, one of the most learned, conscientious and reliable of writers, the author of that most admirable work, the *Development-history of the Doctrine respecting the Person of Christ,* is said to be a Hegelian of this class.

The assaults on the gospels have proceeded from the *extreme left,*

represented by such men as the younger Feuerbach, and Strauss and Bruno Bauer. This, I suppose, is the legitimate result of the Hegelian philosophy, and these men, whatever Hegel himself might think of them, I regard as his true followers.

But what is the Hegelian philosophy? I have been admonished more than once to treat this philosophy with respect, to admire it at least as an "exquisite work of art if not a system of absolute truth." I shall do my best in this particular. I have acknowledged before, and here repeat the acknowledgment, that I have no very definite knowledge of it. It stands before me, in its bulk and its unintelligibleness, as a huge, shapeless, threatening spectre, most fitly described in the words of Virgil:

> *Monstrum horrendum, informe, ingens, cui lumen ademptum.*
> (A monster, horrid, hideous, huge and blind.)

But when I think of the tremendous influence it exerts, and the mighty mischief it is making, it assumes, to me, (in the language of Milton,)

> "The other shape,
> If shape it may be called, which shape has none
> Distinguishable in member, joint, or limb;
> Or substance may be called that shadow seems,
> For each seems either; black it stands as night,
> Fierce as ten furies, terrible as hell,
> And shakes a dreadful dart; and what seems its head
> The likeness of a kingly crown has on."

We speak here of the Hegelian philosophy only in its connection with religion, and as it now exists. Whatever of obscurity may rest over some of its speculations, its principal bearings on religion are perfectly intelligible, and are carried out to their extreme consequences with a cool audacity that is almost frightful. According to Hegelianism the *subjective* is not only more than the *objective*, but the subjective is the whole, it is the entire substance, and the *objective* has no existence except as the shadow or reflection or creation of the *subjective*. The great discovery boasted by Hegel and his followers, the great first principle of all truth, the honor of whose development Schelling in vain attempted to dispute with Hegel, is the *absolute identity of subject and object*, that is, I suppose, the thing perceiving and the thing perceived are one and the same thing.

Admitting this as a fundamental principle, what is God? Is God the creator of man, or is man the creator of God? The latter of course. The human mind is the only development of God, — only by the

workings of the human soul does God arrive at self-consciousness; and if there were no men there could be no God. There seems to be recognized a sort of *natura naturans*, a sort of blind, unconscious, fermenting leaven, constantly working; but this never attains to personality or consciousness except in the human soul.

We will not ourselves undertake to make the statements of the doctrines of this sect — we will take them just as they are made by one of the most able and active of the living advocates of the system, in his work entitled *Das Wesen des Christenthums*. This is a favorite book among the Germans of our own country, and can be obtained in any quantities at our principal German bookstores. A brief, but very satisfactory, notice of it has been given in the Christian Examiner published in Boston, No. CLXI.

Says this writer, "The absolute Being, the God of man, is man's own being." "Since God is but our own being, the power of any object over us, is the might of our own being. In willing, loving, feeling, etc., there is no influence but of ourselves over ourselves." "All limiting of the reason rests on error." "Every being is all-sufficient to itself." "It is delusion to suppose the nature of man a limited nature." "Religion is the consciousness of the infinite; it is and can be nothing but man's consciousness of his own infinite being." "If you think infinity, or feel infinity, it is the infinity of thought and feeling, nothing else. The knowledge of God is the knowledge of ourselves; for the religious object is within us." "God is man's revealed inner nature — his pronounced self. Religion is the solemn unveiling of the concealed treasures of humanity, the disclosure of its secret thoughts, the confession of its dearest secrets. The Christian religion is the relation of man to his own being as to another being." "Religion is the dream of the human soul."

This is not caricature, nor ridicule, nor misrepresentation. It is just a plain statement of some of the prominent doctrines of the system, by one of its most able advocates. There is no God; and the devout man, when he thinks he is worshipping God, is simply worshipping himself. There is no accountability; there is no individual immortality; when a man dies, his soul is reäbsorbed into the great mass of being, by the *natura naturans* to be again, perhaps, in time developed, and so on from eternity to eternity. These principles are boldly and openly avowed, and find able and popular advocates both in Germany and in this country. One of the most eminent of the German republicans, Dr. Voight of Giessen, during the summer of 1848, declared publicly in the Frankfort parliament, that there could

be no permanent freedom, till the idea of God and of all responsibility to God were entirely banished from the human mind. No wonder that the German revolution, with such men to lead it, proved a miserable failure. No wonder that the pious, intelligent, sober men of Europe, viewed the whole movement with distrust, and finally abandoned it altogether. Atheistic liberty is the worst kind of tyranny. An editorial article in a political newspaper published in Cincinnati during the present year, says, "Religion is the cause of all the oppression which exists; inasmuch as it cajoles poor sufferers with the chimerical idea of a heaven hereafter; and the source of religion is want of education, ignorance. This is the origin of all evil." The same principles, with a little more regard to a religious public sentiment, and partially disguised under a garb of specious phraseology, are zealously propagated in New England, and infect large numbers especially of our educated young men. Before they begin to feel the need of religion, the foundation of religious faith is taken away. For this work of ruin, the genius of Hegelianism has peculiar facilities. It can approach unperceived, and accomplish its purpose before its presence is suspected. It can use the language of any theology, even the most orthodox, and convey its own ideas in the words of an evangelical faith.

One of the phrases already quoted from Feuerbach, may serve as an example of the deceptive manner in which language may be used. It is this, "God is man's inner nature, his pronounced self." Here, it may be alleged, is the New Testament doctrine of the Logos, the God-man, God revealed; and in like manner we may get the Holy Ghost, as that may be considered to be the inner nature of man reäcting upon itself, and this may be called that spiritual influence which good men crave and pray for. Thus can the Hegelian atheist, with most conscientious deceptiveness, use all the language of the Trinitarian christian. For the Trinity of Hegel, see the last Number of the Bibliotheca, p. 293.

With this philosophy, testimony is nothing, objective narrative is nothing, history is not to be learned from external sources, it must be developed from within — facts must not be sought for, they must be made; and on this principle they act with great consistency and vigor, as we shall see when we come to examine their theories of the gospel history. Another of the principles of this philosophy is eminently a practical one, namely, that "man is God, and must worship himself." This the Hegelians do with the most enthusiastic devotion. Such self-worship was never before witnessed on earth. The enor-

mous self-conceit of these men, the self-conceit of Hegel himself, the pitiful folly of his admirers who pronounced their eulogies over his grave, are among the greatest monstrosities which ever existed on this planet of monsters, comparable to nothing but the lizards larger than ten whales, and the frogs bigger than elephants, which are said to have existed on the pre-Adamite earth. Self-conceit is a symptom of the disease. The venerated Neander, in a letter to Prof. Schaff of Mercersburg, justly characterizes the system as "the philosophy of a one-sided logic, of intellectual fanaticism, and of *self-deification*." My respected friend, Prof. S., himself, I am happy to see, takes no exceptions to this view of the subject. Indeed, he himself calls this kind of Hegelianism, an "arrogant pantheism, different from atheism only in form" — "a lifeless formalism of the understanding, that destroys at last all soul in man, and turns him into a pure speculator on the open heath, an unfruitful thinker of thinking, a heartless critic and fault-finder." (Schaff's Kirchenfreund for Jan., 1851, also Mercersburg Review, Vol. III. p. 81, ff.

There is no disinterestedness in this philosophy, there is no veneration, there is no love. Each being is all-sufficient to itself, and each revolves around itself as its own centre, and each is at the same time both planet and sun, both axis and orbit. And what can come of such kind of principles, but selfishness, and animalism, and every evil work?

Now, it is such philosophers as these, who presume to sit in judgment on the New Testament, to estimate the characters therein portrayed, to determine as to what is, and what is not, fitting in a revelation from God to man; to decide with solemn majesty, *à priori*, from internal marks only, out of the depths of their own consciousness, and with nothing else to aid them, as to what is spurious, and what is genuine, in the sacred writings! How well they succeed, we shall see under our next head; and we will only say here, that if opposites are the best judges of opposites, if goats are the best judges of perfumes, if worms have suitable qualifications to decide on the merits of eagles, then are these men qualified to sit in judgment on Jesus, and the apostles, and the writers of the gospels. Yet their writings are published, translated into different languages, and extensively read. In various ways they exert a great influence even over those who never read them; the echoes of their voice reverberate from many a newspaper and popular periodical; their sound is heard in many a lyceum, and mechanics' institute, and mercantile association, and debating club; they inflate the vanity, and heighten the

self-conceit, and set loose the passions of many a young man in our institutions of learning, and produce extensively a ruinous infection in the whole intellectual atmosphere — not sparing even the theological school, the ministerial study, or the Christian pulpit.

So many ingenious ways do poor short-lived men devise, and such infinite pains do they take, to rid themselves of God their heavenly Father, of Christ their gracious and only Saviour. It is often and justly remarked of rogues and freebooters, that they employ far more ingenuity, and energy, and perseverance, to get a living by dishonesty, than would be necessary to make them securely and reputably wealthy in an honorable calling; yet, they are always poor, and in constant dread of detection and punishment. So these proud thinkers tax their minds and hearts more severely to be irreligious, than would be necessary to secure an eminent place in the Christian walk; while they can look only for the *wages of sin*, which is *death*, while *the gift of God*, and that only, *is life and peace*. According to the Scripture, it is *the fool who hath said in his heart, there is no God;* and the same Scripture says, *The fool is wiser in his own conceit, than seven men that can render a reason;* and, *though you bray a fool in a mortar with a pestle among wheat, yet will not his folly depart from him.* How wonderfully descriptive of the foolishness of Hegelian pantheistic atheism!

III. Analysis and Characteristics of the principal Hegelian Assaults on the Gospels.

The four gospels exist, they have for ages existed in all the languages of the civilized world, they have produced the most astonishing revolutions, they lie at the foundation of all modern civilization; they did not arise in a remote antiquity nor in a fabulous era, but in the zenith of the Roman empire and in immediate contact with the Grecian culture. The problem of the philosophic sceptic is to account for all this, on any other supposition than that of the historical truth of the gospel narrative and the reality of miraculous interposition. The first regular, systematic, Hegelian attempt towards the solution of this great problem was made in 1836 by David Frederic Strauss, then a young man just commencing his career as a teacher in the university of Tübingen. We were in Germany at the time when Strauss's Life of Jesus first appeared, and it was exciting as great a commotion among the learned of Germany then, as a few years after the prophesyings of the millenarian Miller excited among the unlearned in

America. That was the year fixed on by Bengel for the end of the world; and many who had no faith in Bengel or the apostle John, yet devoutly believing in Strauss, thought surely the end of Christianity had come. Prof. Tholuck told us he considered it the most formidable attack the New Testament had ever sustained, and he was right heartily at work in answering it, and soon after published his excellent book on the Credibility of the Gospel History. The answers to Strauss were numerous, almost numberless, the controversy raged with great vigor for some six or eight years; but now Strauss, before he is an old man, finds himself an obsolete and antiquated writer; as much so as was, when he began, the old Paulus whom he treated so cavalierly. But though Strauss is already intellectually dead and buried, never to rise again, among the Germans, he just begins to live among those who use the English language, and translations of his book are read with the most innocent wonderment by many of our young men, who have no knowledge of the fact that it has long since been thoroughly exposed and exploded in the land of its birth. In the track of Strauss, with more or less of divergency, followed Weisse, Gfrörer, Bruno Bauer, Wilke, Schweitzer, Schwegler, Luetzelberger, F. C. Baur, and many, many others; the greater part of whom *remain unto this present*, though, as to any influence, they have already mostly *fallen asleep;* for even *the eighth is of the seven, and goeth unto perdition.*

In analyzing some of the principal Hegelian hypotheses of the gospel history, as specimens of the whole, we shall avail ourselves liberally of the labors of Ebrard, who, in his admirable work, entitled *Wissenschaftliche Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte*, has with great industry, skill and fairness, epitomized, arranged, and made them intelligible.

(1) *Hypothesis of Strauss.*

(a) *The facts out of which the gospel narratives have arisen.* These, according to Strauss, were very few, and mainly the following: The Jewish nation, during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius, had the expectation of a national Messiah, predicted in the Old Testament, who would be a political deliverer and work miracles greater than Moses wrought. At this period there was a Jew born at Nazareth in Galilee named Jeschuah, (the sceptic sometimes gains considerably by simply changing the orthography of a well-known name); and another Jew, by the name of John, became a celebrated ascetic preacher and baptizer. Jeschuah attached himself to John as one of

his disciples; and after the imprisonment of the latter, prosecuted the same work, and gathered disciples of his own. Jeschuah now formed the design of effecting by his doctrine the moral regeneration of his countrymen; and being under the influence of the supernatural prejudices of his times, imagined that God would interpose to help him in so worthy an attempt, and to reëstablish the kingdom of David. This idea corresponded very nearly to the Messianic expectations of the Jews; and they, hearing him preach from time to time, began to think whether he might not be the expected Messiah. At first, Jeschuah shrunk from such a thought, but gradually became reconciled to it, and at length it gained full possession of his mind. He was, however, entirely destitute of the means of carrying out this idea in practice, for he had no political influence nor any power of working miracles. He saw that the all-powerful priest party was daily becoming more and more incensed against him; the unhappy fate of the persecuted prophets of the Old Testament dwelt on his mind; some texts of the Old Testament, as he began to think, indicated a suffering and dying Messiah; and, on the whole, he at length anticipated a violent death from the hands of his enemies. His anticipations were realized, and he perished on the cross in early life.

This, according to Strauss, is the whole of the historical basis of the gospels. There were no miracles wrought, nor even pretended to be wrought, during the lifetime of Jesus; nor did he, at the commencement of his career, imagine himself to be the Messiah, nor anticipate the sad fate which at length overtook him.

(b) *Origin of the miraculous stories of the gospels.* The disciples of Jeschuah believed him to be the Messiah; and when the first shock of his terrible end and of their own bitter disappointment was past, they set themselves to devise some method of reconciling actual facts with their cherished expectations, and especially to see if they could not in some way get the idea of suffering and death into their notion of the Messiah. They searched the Old Testament, and found many passages which represented men of God as plagued, persecuted and slain; and these answered to them for Messianic predictions. The Messiah, then, though departed, was not lost; he had only gone into his glory; he must still love and care for his own. This idea took such complete possession of their minds, that some of the women began to imagine they had actually seen him after his burial, and they so said to the men — and the whole company became so excited and talked about the matter so much, and got their imaginations so inflamed, that two or three times, when they were gathered together,

some object dimly seen in the mountain mist, or some unknown person approaching them, gave them the impression that they had actually seen the Lord in bodily presence.

The great miracle of the resurrection, being thus generated and born and brought into the world, becomes the fruitful parent of other miracles. According to the expectation of the Jews, the Messiah must work miracles, and if Jeschuah wrought no miracles, how could he be the Messiah? The matter was anxiously thought of, and the remembered words and deeds of Jeschuah were scrutinized to see if they might contain any germs out of which miraculous narratives could naturally grow. He had told them they should be *fishers of men* — happy reminiscence! what more natural than that out of this should grow the story of the miraculous draught of fishes? He had said the unfruitful tree should be cut down; and here we have the nucleus of the fig-tree which was cursed and withered away. True, the apostles could not themselves imagine that they had with their own eyes seen these miracles; but knowing as they did, that the Messiah must work miracles, they could not doubt that such miracles actually occurred. At least, if this was not the idea of the apostles, it must have occurred to those who had seen but little of Christ while he was on earth, and became the popular belief of most of the Christian congregations.

The miracles being thus set on growing by Strauss, their increase is very rapid, and many a scion from the Old Testament tree is grafted into the New, and immediately bears fruit. The hand of Moses, the face of Miriam, the body of Naaman, had been leprous, and were cured at a word; and the Messiah of course could heal leprosy as well as Moses and Elijah, and therefore he did. As Jordan occasioned miraculous cures in the Old Testament, so Siloam in the New; as Elijah struck men with blindness in the Old Testament, so Christ cured blind men in the New; as Jeroboam's withered hand was restored in the Old Testament, so Christ healed withered hands in the New; as Moses divided the Red Sea, so Christ stilled the Galilean Sea; as Moses turned water into blood, so Christ turned water into wine — and so all the miracles of the Old Testament find parallels in the New; and this accounts for very many of the miraculous narratives of the New Testament. But Strauss does not so clearly tell us how to account for these miracles of the Old Testament. On his principles, however, it is very easy to invent methods, and any invention is preferable to the plain, simple, matter-of-fact truth.

As with the doings of Christ, so with his sayings; those which

stand recorded are compositions, amplifications, from brief hints of his remembered apothegms.

Now we have the materials of the gospel story, and after a while, one and another writer works up these materials into a written narrative, of which we have four still extant, ascribed severally to Matthew and Mark, to Luke and John.

(c) *Estimate of this hypothesis.* Such is the hypothesis of Strauss; and this sort of stuff forms the staple of two thick, heavy volumes, written with great energy, clearness and show of learning, apparently in the most sober earnest, and giving evidence of untiring industry. And these volumes have set the world on fire, and in the opinion of many have demolished the very foundations of Christianity, and left the world without a Saviour, and almost without a God. What a monstrosity; in every view of it a monstrosity! The church of Christ is an accomplished fact, a most mighty, efficient, working fact — a fact which confessedly began at the time alleged — and does the hypothesis of Strauss give us means in the least degree adequate to account for this fact? The African who imagines that when the moon is in an eclipse, there is a great serpent attempting to swallow her, and the child who supposes that when it thunders, God is riding in a big waggon over a tin bridge, are philosophers of the highest order in comparison with Strauss as he exhibits himself in his *Leben Jesu.*

What an inexplicable enigma is that Jeschuah, for whose existence we are indebted solely to the imagination of Strauss. What unheard of, unaccountable compounds of knavery and goodness, of silliness and greatness, are Strauss's disciples of Jeschuah! What wonderful proficients in stupidity must have been the men of that generation, and the generation immediately succeeding! How could *myths* arise and gain credence, in the manner and to the extent which he dreams of, in the same generation and the same country wherein the facts are alleged to have occurred? This difficulty is felt by Strauss, and he attempts to get rid of it by supposing that the stories originated mostly in those parts of Palestine east of the Jordan, where Christ had personally seldom appeared. The whole of Palestine was not so large as the State of Maine; and can men in Maine lie with impunity, by going east of the Penobscot? That was an active, enlightened, revolutionizing, realistic age. The whole world was in motion, nations intermingled with each other, languages were cultivated — commerce, literature, the arts, military operations, kept every thing a-stir, and there was neither sluggishness, nor stagnation,

nor mental stupor to favor the growth of a new mythology. One might as well look for the growth of mushrooms at midday on the pavement of the Royal Exchange in London, under the tread of the thousands of feet which daily there perambulate, as expect the prosperous development of such myths as Strauss dreams of, in such an age and country as that which witnessed the lives and deeds of Christ and his disciples.

Again, how does Strauss know that matters came about in the way which he represents? Who told him? or was he there to see? What authority does he bring, that we should postpone to his single statement the testimony of prophets and apostles and martyrs? Ah! he knows it by the Hegelian power of intuition — by means of which history is constructed subjectively, instead of being objectively learned from the proper sources. In such constructive history, or rather theories of history, we have no confidence.

Yet there is in Strauss's book not a little of learning, and a great amount of acuteness and ingenuity. He starts many difficulties in the gospel narrative, which it requires a clear head and a steady hand and a thorough acquaintance with the subject, effectually to obviate. His book has exerted a great and pernicious influence in Europe, and is doing the same in this country. By means of English translations he is in the hands of many young men who are greedily reading him without any sufficient knowledge of the subject to detect the groundlessness of his assumptions or the fallaciousness of his reasonings; and without dreaming that he has already been thoroughly refuted and antiquated in his own country. In the German bookstores the *critical writings* of Strauss and the *theological writings* of Tom Paine stand on the same shelf, and are apparently held in equal honor. Why should it not be so with us? In what respects is Strauss so much better than Paine, that he should be respected while Paine is despised? If he has more learning and more decency than Paine, he certainly has much less of sound, practical, common sense. And we are sorry to be obliged to add, that much of what De Wette has said about the Old Testament (made current among us by Parker's translations) is very little better than what Strauss says about the New.

(2) *Hypothesis of Weisse.*

Chr. Herm. Weisse is an older man than Strauss, a philosopher of no mean pretensions, and a metaphysician. He had published a work on the *Fundamental Principles of Metaphysics*, another on the

Idea of God, a *System of Aesthetics*, etc.; and in 1838, awakened by the celebrity of Strauss, he publishes a book entitled the *Gospel History critically and philosophically investigated* (*bearbeitet, belabored.*) Weisse understands animal magnetism, and all the mysteries of clairvoyance.

(a) *The facts out of which the gospel narratives have arisen.* There lived in Palestine during the reign of Tiberius a good man, one Jesus of Nazareth, who, among other happy gifts, possessed the magnetic power of healing. He was in fact a full-charged galvanic battery, ready at any touch to be discharged. He went about Galilee preaching, collecting disciples, and applying his magnetic power to the healing of diseases and the quieting of demoniacs; so that he very naturally gained the affections of the Galileans, who recognized in him the Messiah, and would have been glad to make him king. But, though he felt his Messiahship, he had no political ambition, and sought rather the moral elevation of the people; and in prosecution of this purpose he uttered many parables. Thus he represented the blessed effects of his ministry under the image of the opening of the heavens and the descent of a dove; the strong faith which men should exercise in the grace of God, by the parable of a Canaanitish woman seeking help of a Jew, and taking no denial; the judgment which is to come upon men spiritually unfruitful, by the image of a barren figtree cursed and withered; the regeneration of the world by his word he compares to turning water into wine, etc. He once occasioned great excitement by awakening a maiden who had fallen into a swoon and was supposed to be dead. He never went to Jerusalem but once, and that was at the feast of the passover, when he was immediately apprehended and crucified. We have no reason to believe that he prayed aloud the night before his apprehension; or that he said when they were nailing him to the cross, *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* During his crucifixion there was an accidental obscurity of the heavens which made much talk. He was buried, and his body remained in the tomb; but his *nervo-magnetic* spirit once appeared to his disciples and passed up into the clouds.

(b) *Origin of the miraculous stories.* These all came very naturally. After the death of Jesus, his parables were turned into stories, and men thought they were actual occurrences. (How many times has this happened in respect to Æsop's fables!) These stories were not propagated by the apostles; they busied themselves only with teaching the doctrines of their Master, and said nothing about his biography. But somebody told the stories and found people to

believe them; and other stories were made from very trivial circumstances. From what he once casually said, that *he whose feet are washed is every whit clean*, arose the story of his having washed his disciples' feet; the apostles practised baptism, and after a while began to think (Weisse does not tell us why) that Jesus had instituted such a rite. Once, after Jesus' death, when the apostles were at supper together, they became greatly excited with the idea of prosecuting the work which he had left unfinished; and this gave rise to the story that Christ himself had instituted the Lord's Supper; and also to the tradition, so much like the theophanies of Homer, of his supping with the two disciples at Emmaus after his crucifixion.

(c) *Origin of the written Gospels.* According to the testimony of Papias, (says Weisse,) the Apostle Matthew wrote in the Hebrew of that time, a collection of the *discourses* of Jesus. According to the same authority, Mark, a scholar of Peter, wrote a *biography* of Jesus, as he had heard Peter relate it; and afterwards this narrative of Mark was combined with Matthew's collection of discourses, (now translated into Greek,) and this compilation is our present Greek Gospel of Matthew. Meanwhile, Luke, the companion of Paul, had written another biography from independent sources. Here we have the first three gospels. As to the fourth gospel, ascribed to John, it was not originally intended for a biography at all; but the Apostle John, when he was a very old man, continually pondering over his ideal of the life of Christ, (now growing very. dim and shadowy,) that he might not lose entirely this image out of his mind, wrote down fragmentary notices, as they happened to occur to him, without any view to publication, and not even intending any real *objective* biography, but merely for the purpose of defining and fixing his own *subjective ideal*. But, after the good apostle's death, some unlucky elders found these papers in his study, and imagining they were written as an actual memoir of Jesus, arranged them for publication, and gave them to the world, with such modifications, additions, and connecting sentences, as the exigencies of the case seemed to require. Thus we have our present Gospel of John.

(d) *Estimate of this hypothesis.* The reader must understand that Weisse does not even pretend to have any testimony as to the facts being as he states them. He would think it unworthy of a philosopher like him to come at a historical result in that way. It is but a specimen of the developing of history from internal consciousness, instead of learning it from external evidence. To illustrate the safety and accuracy of this method of developing historical facts, let

us try it in reference to some book of American biography. Marshall's Life of Washington, as we now have it, was not written by Judge Marshall, except detached portions of it, nor has the book been seen in the United States, till within a few months past. The origin of the work was this: During the nullification excitement of 1827, Hon. John Holmes of Maine amused himself by writing notes across the Senate Chamber, to Hon. T. H. Benton of Missouri. Mr. Benton preserved these notes, thinking he might sometime have occasion for them, and he added some of his own. Last winter, during Mr. Clay's compromise efforts, Mr. B., perceiving that his time had come, committed these papers to Hon. Amos Kendall, who, out of them and Judge Marshall's papers, forged the book called Marshall's Life of Washington. In consequence of this publication, Col. Benton was elected President of the United States, and Gen. Cass, amid much *noise and confusion*, migrated to California! This, if not exactly like the Hegelian hypotheses of Scripture history, is just as good and just as true as the most of them.

(8) *Hypothesis of Gfrörer.*

Aug. Gfrörer is a countryman of Strauss, and a writer of reputation. His church history especially (published in 1841–45) is spoken of by competent judges as a work of great merit. He began (as he says) to meditate his theories earlier than Strauss, but they are no better, and if possible, in some respects even worse. The gospel of John he considers genuine, but the other three, spurious and mythical. A few miracles, such as the healing of the nobleman's son and the sick man of Bethesda, he admits, and does not sympathize with Strauss in his rejection of all miraculous narratives. The three synoptical gospels (Matthew, Mark and Luke), according to him, owe their origin to the influence of the writings of Philo and other Jews; and many ideas in them are derived directly from the Talmud, the Fourth Book of Esdras, the Book of Enoch, and other apocryphal writings. (The thing counterfeited owes its existence to the counterfeit.) He is at much pains to prove the antiquity of these apocryphal and Talmudic writings, to make them, if possible, seem older than the gospels, but with very indifferent success. Even granting him the antiquity he claims, the resemblances on which he relies for the support of his theory are marvellously unlike, as if one should derive the wigs of the English bishops and judges from the head-dress of the Feejee islanders.

To cite a few examples: According to the Jerusalem Talmud, one day when Rabbi Eliezer and Rabbi Jonathan were riding together, the former began to discourse, when the latter hastily dismounted from his ass, and said: "It is not reasonable that I should bear the honor of my Creator, and thereby ride on an ass." They both sat down under a tree, and there fell fire from heaven and surrounded them, (as a reward of their humility). From this and other similar passages, Gfrörer concludes that in the time of Christ the Jews held fire to be a necessary accompaniment of revelations from God. Hence arose the tradition that John Baptist had declared that Jesus should baptize with fire! In the same Talmud it is related that Deuteronomy came to God and said: "O Lord, thou hast written down thy law in me;" and then complained that Solomon, when he took to himself many wives, took away the *jod* out of the word נשים in Deut. 19: 19. Then God answered Deuteronomy and said: "Solomon and a thousand like him shall perish; but not a vowel shall perish from thee." Hence arose the tradition that Jesus had said, that not one jot or one tittle of the law should fail. The Targum of Jonathan, in Zech. 14: 21, translates the word כנעני by *merchant;* hence the tradition that Christ drove the money-changers out of the temple! These derivations certainly exceed Knickerbocker's etymology of the word *mango* from the man Jeremiah King; for in this case the steps are quite obvious, thus: *Jeremiah King, Jerry King, Jerkin, Cucumber, Mango.*

The doctrine of the Trinity, Gfrörer thinks is of Rabbinic origin. The text, Zech. 14: 4, the predicted disruption of the Mount of Olives, is explained of the Messiah and his sister the Holy Ghost, who are both ninety-six miles high and twenty-four miles wide. Hence comes the whole Christian doctrine of the Trinity! O, Gfrörer, *thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad.*

Ebrard, in the first edition of his work, with great significancy certainly, if not with scrupulous delicacy, illustrates the probability of Gfrörer's hypothesis of the origin of the gospels, by the following figure: A company of leprous beggars wash themselves in a river, and from this river a beautiful young man is seen to emerge; the inference is certain that this young man was made of the beggars' scabs! How much more certain the inference when it is proved that the young man emerged from the river before the beggars had washed in it!!

(4) *Hypothesis of Bruno Bauer.*

Bruno Bauer is a younger man than Strauss, and he may well be

regarded as the *extreme extremity* of the extreme left wing of Hegelianism. In him self-deification and the annihilation of all objective truth have reached their culminating point. No subtility or refinement or locomotive force of Hegelianism can ever go beyond Bruno Bauer. His thoughts are so misty, and his expressions so bombastic and overstrained, that it is exceedingly difficult to get his meaning, and still more difficult to give a translation of it in another language; for like very tenuous gasses, it all seems to evaporate as soon as it meets the air. It is, however, sufficiently plain that Bruno has a very high opinion of himself, a very low opinion of all theologians, and of God no opinion at all. At the very outset he annihilates all historical truth. There was indeed a Jesus, and there was a community in the Jewish nation which formed the nucleus of the Christian church; and this is nearly the whole of the historical basis which he is disposed to acknowledge. There were no Messianic prophecies or expectations among the Jews, there was no baptism of Jesus, there were no discourses, no miracles, no anything to give an objective foundation to the historical narratives in the gospels. These narratives are not records of facts which once actually occurred; but they are the spontaneous efflorescence of the innermost religious consciousness of the age. The writers did not even profess to themselves to record facts, nor did they pretend to make other people think they were recording facts. How it is that men could write long narratives without thinking they were facts and without intending to write fiction, Bauer himself explains in a way of his own. We will translate his language as well as we are able, and leave the reader to guess his meaning. Says Bauer: "The religious spirit is that disruption of the self-consciousness, in which the essential definiteness of the same steps over against the consciousness as a power separate from it. Before this power the self-consciousness must naturally lose itself; for it has therein cast out its own contents out of itself, and so far as it can still sustain itself as a Me for itself, it feels itself before that power as nothing, so as it must regard the same as the nothing of its own self. Nevertheless the Me as self-consciousness cannot entirely lose itself — in its subjective, secular thought filled with moral ends and its willing, it still maintains its freedom; and into this freedom also the religious consciousness and the historical development of the same are involuntarily drawn. Both the religious consciousness and the free self-consciousness thus come into contact, to interpenetration, without which the first could be neither individually living nor capable of a historical growth. But so as this livingness and growth, after their

first contact, become the subject of religious reflection, they are again torn from the self-consciousness, they step before the consciousness as the deed of another; and now also, necessarily, the interposition which had placed them in the self-consciousness as its own movement, becomes a machinery whose bands are guided in another world." (*Kritik der evang. Geschichte der Synoptiker*, I. 25 f.) Such is his explanation of this wonderful phenomenon, and doubtless it is very profound and satisfactory.

These principles being settled, the origin of the first three gospels, according to Bruno, was as follows: Somebody wrote the book which bears the name of Mark, and others very strangely mistook it for a veritable biography of Jesus. Another afterwards took this book in hand, and without thinking it was not historical, changed and modified it according to his own ideas, and thus we have the Gospel of Luke. Now comes a third, and compares these two writings together, seeks to reconcile the contradictions he finds, compiles and combines, reading first a verse in one and then a verse in the other. In this writer's reflection, subjectivity predominates; yet he, as well as his predecessors, is all unaware, that what he writes is simply the product of his own imagination, and not real, objective history. Here we have the Gospel of Matthew.

This Bruno is very confident, and feels great contempt for theologians. He says: "See how they (the theologians) stand there; how the theological hate glows from their eyes. Ha! would you grasp the thunder? Miserable mortals! well that it was not given to you!" "Now, after the above *exploitations*, ask them whether they really think their Jesuitism can hold on; whether they believe that their deception and lying will endure forever? When the time comes that their falsehood must be a conscious and determined lie, then their judgment is no longer far off."

This will do for Bruno Bauer; surely no one will undertake to refute him. We *leave him alone with his glory.*

It is scarcely necessary to give any specimens of Schwegler, F. C. Baur, and other critics of the Tübingen school. Though differing somewhat from the Hegelians already noticed, practically they belong to the same category. There is the same self-conceit and self-deification, the same reckless disregard of facts, the same extravagant baselessness and groundlessness of speculation. In one species of folly, they even exceed Gfrörer; for while they admit the writings of the apostolic fathers, Papias, Ignatius, Irenæus, etc., to be ancient and genuine, they affirm that the writings of the New Testament ascribed to

John, Paul, Peter, etc., are spurious, and the product of a later age. They have been abundantly refuted by Thiersch, Ebrard, Dorner, and other writers; and though they are the most recent representatives of the sceptical spirit in Germany, and some of them (as for example, Baur) accomplished scholars and powerful writers, they are already growing obsolete, and fast hastening to a deserved oblivion.

Truth alone is immutable and permanent; error has numberless forms, and in all of them it is transient, short-lived.

After all these assaults and speculations, the honest old Bible stands just where it did before, speaks the same language, exerts the same influence, and emits the same heavenly radiance. This *sure word of prophecy* will remain, and we *do well to take heed to it, as to a light that shineth in a dark place, till the day dawn, and the day star arise in our hearts.*

The enormous self-confidence and self-estimation of this whole class of gospel assailers, most forcibly reminds us of the words of holy writ: *Seest thou a man wise in his own conceit? there is more hope of a fool than of him. God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble.*

IV. The Real Importance to be attached to these Assaults.

These assaults on the gospels consist of two parts, namely, 1, Objections to the historical truth of the gospels, derived from the narrative itself; and 2, Hypotheses to account for the existence and influence of the gospels, supposing them to be historically untrue. It is these hypotheses only which we have thus far considered. The objections are matters of detail, and must be considered in detail, and there is no room for them in a paper of this kind. A few will be selected as specimens of the whole, and answers given to them which will show how all the rest may be answered.

In considering these objections, we must always bear it in mind that the gospels are not, and do not profess to be, complete histories. They are simply detached memoirs, or select anecdotes, intended solely to illustrate the character and teachings of Christ, to show what kind of a teacher he was, and to give an idea of the substance and manner of his teaching. This, the writers themselves affirm in so many words. Says John, at the close of his narrative: *There are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.*

And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book. But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing ye might have life through his name. John 21: 25, 20: 30, 31.

Out of the countless multitude of events in our Saviour's life, and from his numberless teachings, the different evangelists select different transactions and different discourses for this purpose, all equally appropriate, as would also have been thousands of others which are left unrecorded. The evangelists sometimes repeat each other, but very often they do not; and none of them undertakes, or pretends, to give a complete narrative of all that Jesus did and said, but on the contrary, they carefully and expressly disclaim any such undertaking or intention.

The most plausible of the objections to which we allude, are derived from supposed contradictions in the gospel narrative; but such contradictions are *assumed* and *supposed;* they have never yet been *proved.*

For example, in Luke 7: 1–10, we are informed, that when Jesus was in Capernaum, a centurion there sent friends to him, requesting him to heal a sick servant of his, who was very dear to him.

In John 4: 46–53, we are told, that when Jesus was in Cana, a nobleman of Capernaum, whose son was sick, went himself to Jesus, and asked him to heal his son.

In both cases the sick person was restored without being seen by Jesus.

Because there are points of similarity in the two narratives, the objectors assume that they are intended as narratives of the same event; and then they point out the discrepancies between them, to show that the gospel history is unworthy of credit. The fallaciousness of this mode of reasoning, especially when considered in connection with the nature of the gospel narrative as already pointed out, is very easily demonstrated. We will suppose two discourses by two different authors, intended to illustrate American character by incidents of American history. One of these authors gives in illustration, the battle of Baltimore; the other, the battle of New Orleans. In these two battles there were remarkable coincidences, as well as remarkable diversities. They both took place during the same war; in both, an assault was made by a British army on an American city; in both, the British commander was killed, and his troops repulsed. But, in the one case there were cotton-bale intrenchments; in the other, there were none. In the one battle, Gen.

Jackson gained great celebrity; in the other, he was not present. One battle occurred on the southern border of the United States; the other, on the eastern. Some fifteen hundred or two thousand years hence, a Hegelian critic gets hold of these two discourses — and for the sake of destroying the credit of both, affirms that they both refer to the same battle; and gives the purpose and object of the writers, namely, the illustration of American character from American history, and states all the resemblances, to prove that they do both intend the same event; and then states all the discrepancies to show that they are not reliable historians. He will not hear to the suggestion that they may be giving accounts of different battles — the coincidences are too numerous and striking to admit of that idea; nor will he allow that one of the two narratives, after all, may be true, for the style and tone of the two are so exactly alike, that if one is false, the other must certainly be false also.

This is a fair illustration of a multitude of the most plausible and strongest of the objections of Strauss and his colaborers; and sometimes they are even tenfold more fallacious and absurd than this.

For example, Luke 17: 11–19, at the gate of the city of Nain, Jesus raises from the dead a young man, the only son of a widowed mother.

Mark 5: 35–43, in the house of Jairus, a ruler of the synagogue, Jesus raises from the dead a daughter of this Jairus, a little girl twelve years old.

Now, says Gfrörer, there are such resemblances in these narratives, that they must be identical, yet so diverse are they, that they destroy the historical credit of the writers. The difference of place, the difference of sex in both parent and child, the diversity of all the attending circumstances, prove, not that they were two different transactions, but that the writers are not truthful; for the resemblances are so strong, that the proof of identity is irresistible, whatever improbabilities may intervene. What are these resemblances which make the conclusion of identity so irresistible?

Why, these and these only — (1) they were both young people, (2) they each had a living parent, (3) they both died, and (4) they were both raised from the dead. By the same kind of argument we might prove irresistibly, and in spite of all inherent improbabilities, the identity of Gen. Jackson and Mr. Van Buren's grandmother, that they were one and the same person — for (1) they were both old people, (2) they were both very fond of Mr. Van Buren, (3) they both died, and (4) they neither of them ever rose from the dead — and the difference of sex, and name, and place of abode, and all things

of that kind, are merely the discrepancies of unreliable historians. (See Ebrard, first edition.)

Such is the character of the objections which these critics make — such is the kind of contradictions which they point out — and when we examine their *hypotheses*, we find them quite as baseless as their *objections*, and even more so. Their *positive* side is no more tenable than their *negative*. Their *constructive* efforts are even more decided failures than their *destructive*.

Their hypotheses have absolutely nothing to stand upon. They are made wholly out of air and fog, and the moment the sun shines on them they are gone. We can at any time and on any historical subject whatever, make a thousand suppositions, all false, yet all as plausible as any of these. That fine piece of burlesque by Archbishop Whately, entitled "Historical Doubts respecting Napoleon Bonaparte," in which he shows how exceedingly improbable it is that any such person as Napoleon ever existed, is tenfold more plausible and sustained by arguments a thousandfold stronger than many of these Hegelian hypotheses of the gospel history.

In all their hypotheses they entirely mistake the times and the men wherein the gospel history originated. Their theories are such as could have arisen only in the minds of studious, speculative men, greatly in want of something to do, and driven to the necessity of inventing something to say that shall be new, striking and attractive, in order to draw attention to themselves and their sayings; and they seem to imagine that the early promoters of Christianity were very much the same kind of men and in very nearly the same circumstances as themselves. Their theories all smell very strongly of the shop. In their judgment of the evangelists, apostles and martyrs of the early church, they are quite as much out of the way, as an exquisite of the west end of London would be, if he were to undertake, from his own feelings, purposes and daily employments, to form an estimate of the feelings, purposes and daily employments of a backwoodsman in the Western States of America. Were they to ask me the question: "Why are we not qualified to write critiques of the gospel history?" — I would reply to them, as Henry More did to Southey, when he inquired: "Why am not I qualified to write a biography of John Wesley?" "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep."

To think of the Apostle John writing his gospel as Weisse supposes — or the early teachers of Christianity inventing myths as Strauss imagines — what can be conceived more utterly inappropriate

to the times and the men — more entirely beyond the limits of all inherent probability? Indeed, these German unbelievers do not intend to be probable, nor have they any serious purpose of discovering and advocating truth. They delight in a sort of intellectual gladiatorship, and nothing with them is too serious to be made a plaything of. They sport with God and eternity, with heaven and hell, with their own souls and the souls of their fellow-men; the while thinking only of the fine and fruitful subjects they are getting for lectures and books — but when their speculations are imported into this land of serious purpose and earnest endeavor and practical results, they become immediately matters of life and death, of eternal life and eternal death, to thousands. That which is a fashionable, though far from an innocent, amusement in Germany, is a deadly, death-dealing work in America.

But what are these *myths*, of which these assailants of the Gospel say so much? They suppose them to be fanciful or fabulous narratives, having but a remote resemblance to events of actual occurrence, and intended mainly to embody certain general ideas, which the inventors wished in this way to preserve for the world. According to Strauss, the myths of the gospel illustrate mainly the dominion of mind over nature. The very idea of such myths so near the time and the place of the alleged occurrence of the events, presents to the sober mind nothing but the aspect of a blank impossibility. According to Strauss's own showing, not a single generation had passed away, before the myths began to spring up like mushrooms on the very soil of Palestine itself. As well might we now have a mythical history of the last war with Great Britain, or myths of the presidential election in 1840 — and these poetical romances, these moral apologues, these elaborate fictions designed to illustrate great moral truths, invented and put in circulation by the hard old soldiers and the tough old politicians who took a leading part in the actual events, (whatever they might be) — and implicitly believed as actual matters of fact by the simple hearted people who did the fighting and the voting! Surely the legends and religious fables of the patristic and mediaeval period do not equal in baselessness and extravagance the inventions and hypotheses of these philosophic gospel-assailers in the middle of the nineteenth century; and besides, the former have at least the advantage of being imbued with the spirit of veneration and the love of God, of which the latter have not a particle.

True, there were apocryphal gospels, containing romances and myths — but these, for the most part, were remote both in time and

place from the actual scenes of the gospel history, and written after men had begun to withdraw into deserts and caves and convents, to spend their lives in solitude and mortification, hoping thereby to gain the favor of God; instead of *going about doing good*, as Christ did, and as he taught all the early preachers of Christianity to do.

These apocryphal gospels will next engage our attention.

[To be concluded.]

ARTICLE IV.

TRANSLATIONS FROM ANSELM.

By J. S. Maginnis, D. D., Professor in the University of Rochester, N. Y.

Proslogion of Anselm.

[The author of the following Article was one of the founders of the scholastic Philosophy, and was regarded as the Metaphysician *par excellence* of the eleventh century. Piety and good sense everywhere characterize his writings. Such were his reputation and influence that he was denominated the Second Augustine.[1] His philosophical labors constituted an epoch in the history of the human mind. In theology, he did more than any other author from the days of the apostles up to his own times, to vindicate the object of the death of Christ as a *vicarious sacrifice for sin*. He was the first who effectively broke the spell of that absurd theory which had prevailed for so many centuries, both with the Greek and the Latin Fathers, and had been advocated even by such men as Ambrose and Augustine, and which represented the death of Christ as a ransom paid to Satan to redeem men from his power. His views on this subject are expressed in his tract, *Cur Deus Homo*; i. e. as he himself explains the title, *Qua ratione vel necessitate Deus homo factus sit.*

The Proslogion, a translation of which is here presented to the reader, is one of the most celebrated of his productions on account of the ontological argument it contains in proof of the existence of a

[1] Rixner Geschichte der Philosophie, Band II. S. 18.