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ARTICLE VIII.

DECLINE OF RATIONALISM IN THE GERMAN
UNIVERSITIES.¹

BY JOSEPH COOK, A.M., OF BOSTON.

I. GOD IN GERMAN HISTORY.

STRAUSS is in his grave; Baur's doubts are solved in the unseen; Schleiermacher and Neander are asleep on the hill slope south of Berlin; Fichte and Hegel lie at rest beneath the lindens in a cemetery in the same city; Kant has a peaceful tomb at Königsberg; Richter, at Baireuth, among his native Fichtelgebirge; De Wette at Basle, at the edge of the Alps; Goethe, Schiller, and Herder, no disquiet wakes at Weimar; Tholuck and Julius Müller, each laden with more than threescore years and ten, draw near the end of their victorious journey; Austria has been humbled, Sedan fought, German unity accomplished.

The formation of the new German empire marks broadly the close of a great period in German history, extending from Frederick the Great to Bismarck, from Voltaire to Strauss, from the French Revolution to Sedan.

Curiously enough, the measurable political peace, coming after terrific struggle to the whole nation, coincides with the measurable intellectual peace coming after terrific struggle to the most cultivated classes. There have been deluges of unrest; but conclusions are being reached as to political unity, and also as to Christianity. The greatest questions in the mental and in the political life of Germany are approaching repose in the same period, and that our own.

It is an exceedingly suggestive sign of the times that, in

¹ A Lecture delivered before the Students of Andover Theological Seminary and of the Yale Divinity School, and repeated in Boston, Concord, and several churches of Eastern Massachusetts.

proportion to population, Great Britain has but one student in a course of higher university education where Germany has five.¹ In this age it is from Germany that decisions in momentous intellectual questions proceed. Every day the world grows more international. There are now no foreign lands. It has been said that in England one is never quite outside of London, because the city inflames the whole island. So, in science, one is never quite outside of the German universities, for they inflame the whole field of culture.

Suppose that there were to be lifted from the waste of some ocean a new continent, peopled by a class of men equal to the Greeks in intellectual power, and their superiors in candor and learning. Let moral culture abound in the family life of the nation, but let church life be weak; let political causes choke the church; let wars storm over the territory; let public discussion be free only in philosophy, theology, and art; let system after system of metaphysical speculation arise, reign briefly, and be superseded; let the universities of the nation lead the world in modern science; let Christianity, probed to the innermost by restless spirits, with no outlet in politics for their activity, take its chances among this people; let it go through many a struggle; let it ask no assistance, and fight ever at a disadvantage; let it be partially triumphed over in appearance; let it rally; let it prevail; let it come forth crowned: we should say, if God were to lift such a continent, with such a history, from the Atlantic, that he had spoken to men. But such a people, with such a history, he has lifted, in the last century, in Germany, from the deeps of time.

II. THE MISCHIEF OF FRAGMENTARINESS.

What have been the causes of the power of rationalism in Germany in the last hundred years?

What are the proofs of the decline of rationalism in the German universities?

¹ Arnold, Professor Matthew, *Higher Schools and Universities in Germany*, pp. 148, 149. London. 1874. Compare Hart, *German Universities*, p. 322. 1875.

Who are the dead, the wounded, and the living, after the battle of a century?

Chief among the difficulties with which faith in Germany has contended has been one-sidedness in the presentations of Christianity. Science without earnestness, or earnestness without science — these were the two halves of German theological thought a century ago. Most mischievous, almost fatal, was the fragmentariness of a cold, speculative orthodoxy, on the one side, and of a warm, unspeculative pietism on the other.¹ If Spener and Wolff could have been rolled into one man; if Francke and Semler could have lived in one head, perhaps English deism and Voltaire and his sceptical crew at Frederick's court had never stung, or, if they had stung, had never fly-blown, the fair, white, honest breast of Germany to fevers and eruptions.

Average German natures are not as well balanced as the English, although broader and more subtile intellectually, and deeper in nearly every phase of the inner life, except only those royal English traits, self-esteem and the love of power.

There are three types of German heads: that of Goethe, or the regular; that of Schiller, or the irregular; that of Bismarck, or the thick, high, and round. A head of the Schiller type in theology knows little of the pietistic side; a head of the Goethe type, little of the philosophic; only a head of the Bismarck type combines the two. The regular type is often, like Goethe, powerful in the intuitive and imaginative, and not so in the distinctively philosophical faculties.² The irregular type may have great imaginative and philosophical, but lacks intuitive, power. A German philosopher with the irregular head of a Schiller³ is sure to be one-sided, and yet may be as endlessly

¹ Compare Farrar's *Critical History of Free Thought*. Lecture vi. Hagenbach's *German Rationalism, its Rise, Progress, and Decline*. vii.-xi. T. and T. Clark. 1865.

²

“Ein Kerl, der speculirt,
Ist wie ein Vieh, auf dürrer Heide
Von einem bösen Geist herumgeführt,
Und rings umher ist grüne Weide.” — *Goethe*.

³ “His form at no time could boast of faultless symmetry. He was tall and strongly bowed, but unmuscular and lean. . . . His face was pale, the cheeks

acute and imaginatively brilliant as he is unbalanced. Heads of the Bismarck type naturally devote themselves to statesmanship or to positive science; and it will be found that a line of such brains, like Von Moltke in war, Trendelenburg, Nitzsch, Dorner, Tholuck, and Julius Müller in theology, Kiepert in geography, Lepsius in archaeology, and Curtius in history, have exhibited the balanced thought of the nation.

No one has read German history, if he has not illustrated the narrative by the portraits of the leaders of thought.¹ Eccentric systems, in Germany as elsewhere, have come from small or irregular brains, as in the cases of Strauss, Schenkel, and Schopenhauer.

III. DISUSE OF THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN CONVERTED AND UNCONVERTED.

Fruitful, exceedingly, among the causes of the power of rationalism in Germany has been the absence, not from its religious doctrines but from its church forms, of that distinction between the converted and the unconverted so familiar in Scotland, England, and the United States.

"I regret nothing so much," said Professor Tholuck to me once, with the emphasis of tears in his deep, spiritual eyes, "as that the line of demarcation between the church and the world, which Jonathan Edwards and Whitefield drew so deeply on the mind of New England, is almost un-

and temples rather hollow, the chin somewhat deep and slightly projecting, the nose irregularly aquiline." — Carlyle, *Collected Works*, *Life of Schiller*, p. 223.

¹ "In all my poor historical investigations, it has been, and always is, one of the most primary wants to procure a bodily likeness of the personage inquired after; a good *portrait*, if such exists; failing that, even an indifferent if sincere one. . . . Every student and reader of history, who studies earnestly to conceive for himself what manner of fact and *man* this or the other vague historical name can have been, will, as the first and directest indication of all, search eagerly for a portrait; for all the reasonable portraits there are; and never rest till he have made out, if possible, what the man's natural face was like. Often I have found a portrait superior in real instruction to half a dozen written biographies, as biographies are written; or rather, let me say I have found that the portrait was as a small lighted candle by which the biographies could for the first time be read, and some human interpretation be made of them." — Carlyle, *Collected Works*, Vol. xi. pp. 241, 242.

known, not to the theological doctrines, but to the ecclesiastical forms of Germany. With us confirmation is compulsory. Children of unbelieving, as well as of believing, families must at an early age be baptized, and profess faith in Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Without a certificate of confirmation in some church, employment cannot be legally obtained.¹ After confirmation, the religious standing is assumed to be Christian; after that, we are all church members. Thus it happens that in our state churches the converted and the unconverted are mixed pell-mell together."

Is Bismarck a Christian? I asked once of an accomplished German teacher. "Why not? Is he a Jew? Is he a Mohammedan?" was the reply. To ask in Germany if a man is a Christian, in the English, Scotch, or American sense of that question, you must use expletives: Is the man a real, a shining, an exemplary Christian? for the unexplained word which in our colloquial use means that a man is converted, in Germany means only that he has been confirmed.

Pastoral care of the mass of the population is, of course, very inefficient under this vastly maladroit organization of the German state church; public and private devotional meetings languish; church discipline is often no more than a name.²

"We have no Sabbath-schools in Heidelberg," said a distinguished and Christian professor of the Heidelberg University to me once; "and, with exceptions not worth mentioning, there are none in Germany."³ We do not need them; for the instruction you give in America in Sabbath-schools, we give in the secular schools. In our common

¹ In a few of the cities of North Germany infamous licences were granted to women for an infamous employment, but only after the applicants for licenses had exhibited to the licensing officer their certificates of confirmation!

² Compare Schaff, Professor Philip, Germany, its Universities, Theology, and Religion, chap. xi. See also his instructive contrasts between German and American church life, in *Der Bürgerkrieg und das christliche Leben in Nord Amerika*. Berlin. 1866.

³ "The rightly so-called *American* Sunday-schools, . . . since Mr. Woodruff visited us in 1863, have augmented to about one thousand, and the number of children therein instructed by more than four thousand young men and women to about eighty thousand." — Krummacher, Rev. Hermann, *Christian Life in Germany*. Report of Evangelical Alliance, p. 82. New York. 1873.

week-day school-instruction an hour is specially set apart for teaching the children the biblical histories and the catechism.¹

“But what you explain as a solemn public profession of faith on entrance into membership with a church, does not exist in Germany. The distinction which you say prevails in New England, and America generally, between persons who have made such a profession of faith and of a renewed character, and those who have not, — the former being called church-members, and distinctively Christians, while the latter are not, — is a distinction not in use with us. We are all confirmed in youth, and after confirmation are all members of the church, and all known as Christians.

“What you describe as a gathering among church-members for devotional purposes, or a prayer-meeting, does not exist with us, except among the very severely orthodox. Here in Heidelberg, among the higher orthodox there are small meetings called conventicles, held from house to house, in private rooms, but not in the church. Our theological students do not have prayer-meetings.

“What you explain as pastoral visitation is not practised with us, unless in a few country churches. You will find

¹ I copy from my notes written at Heidelberg some account of a favorable specimen of the religious teaching in German schools. “Friday, Nov. 22. This morning from eight to nine, I witnessed the religious instruction which is given to one of the upper classes in the Lyceum of Heidelberg. Twenty-six boys of about fourteen years of age were : 1. Questioned on the second chapter of Genesis ; 2. Furnished by their teacher with further explanations of the history ; 3. Made to take down in writing from dictation certain heads summarizing the instruction. Strauss himself could hardly have tripped up the explanations given by the teacher, whom I took for a young minister. The history was called ‘a symbolical representation of the ideal and actual state of man ; of the circumstances arising in the human dispositions under temptation ; of the action of conscience before, during, and after sin.’ The conversation of the woman with the serpent illustrated ; first, doubt as to the authority of the moral law ; secondly, the force of passion in presence of its objects ; lastly, remorse and shame. Symbolical representation of the action of conscience was what the history was explained to be. On the whole I was pleased with the exercise ; although the substitution of such instruction for Sabbath-schools leaves the churches very inert. There is in the Lyceum, this teacher told me, a Catholic, and also a Jewish religious exercise. The Protestant, such as I saw, occupies two hours a week. ‘Wir haben keine Sonntag Schulen,’ said this teacher, when I spoke of schools of that kind in America.”

something in books as to our theory of pastoral care ; but it is by no means the general custom of our preachers to visit their people for the purpose of conversation on personal religion. Were a pastor to open conversation on the personal religion of a man, in the man's house, the reply would probably be : 'There is the door ; you can go out, or I must.'

"If a student in the university were to lead a disorderly life here at Heidelberg, and yet were a member of Peter's Kirche where the most of the Professors worship, the church, as such, would do nothing to call him to account. You ask what the pastor would do in such a case : he preaches on Sunday, and nothing farther is within the limits to which he is expected to confine himself.¹ Family life in Germany would do what it could to bring to a sense of his duty any immoral person ; but the church preaches, and does not visit or exercise discipline in such cases as you say often result in the exclusion of a person from church membership in New England. In very extreme cases, indeed, the university expels privately a disorderly student."

At Halle, at Berlin, at Leipzig, at Dresden, at Göttingen and at Heidelberg, I looked in vain for Sabbath-schools and prayer-meetings.

Halle has led the religious life of Germany for a hundred and fifty years ; and yet, said Professor Tholuck to me : "There are no devotional meetings in our churches worth attending. It may be said that, according to the Scottish and New England idea, the state churches of Germany have no prayer-meetings. Once a week, in the churches of Halle, there is a biblical exercise. The pastor always leads ; and the only remarks that are made, he makes. Sometimes, in this exercise, a Christian member of the audience offers a prayer ; but this is all. Our theological students may know more Hebrew, Greek, and philosophy than yours ; but most unfortunately, as they have had no training to such gatherings in the state churches, they do not come together in devotional

¹ Compare Tholuck, *Das academische Leben des 17^{ten} Jahrhunderts*.

meetings as yours do. *Bene orasse, est bene studuisse*, you understand better than we. I have been subjected to no distress in my lecture-room greater than that caused by the fact that our churches leave unsupplied, in the minds of the students, that devotional seriousness and elevation which are the only fit preparation for scientific study of religious truth. I beseech you not to judge of the condition of religion in Germany by the condition of our state churches."¹

Most assuredly must an American maintain, however, that the health of religion in a nation depends on a *mens sana in corpore sano*; the universities are the mind, but the church training of the people is the body; and when the latter, as in Germany, is seamed through and through with weakness and disease, how can the former remain sound? The eye for religion is not cultivated by the training which in Germany usually precedes theological study. The moral atmosphere of the German universities exhales from broad marshes of confessedly stagnant state church life; and it is in the condition of the vapors which these neglected, steaming, batrachian flats cast up, that the wonders some German university telescopes have seen in the sky find an important explanation. Face to face with the nearly omnipresent lack of what New England and Scotland call spiritual cultivation, I, for one, did not, when in Germany, and meditating long on the banks of the Rhine, the Saale, the Neckar, the Ilm, the Spree, the Elbe and the Danube, feel impressed with a tenth part of the in-

¹ "Die veränderte Ansicht vom Verhältnisse der Kirche zum Staat hatte eine Veränderung der Stellung des Geistlichen zur Folge. Je mehr die Thomasiusche Ansicht vom Geistlichen als Staatsdiener sich verbreitet, desto mehr schwindet der religiöse Nimbus, mit welchem der geistliche Stand bisher umkleidet gewesen: er tritt in der Reihe die Staatsdiener." — Tholuck, Geschichte des Rationalismus, Erste Abtheilung, p. 167. "In the year 1808 all consistories, both upper and lower, were swept away; and until some considerable time after our war of deliverance, our evangelical church existed without even the breath of one single church institution or authority. The Government transacted all the former business of the consistories. . . . I see no help for German Christendom, save in the formation of churches. Yes, churches! That is my watchword — my loud, crying appeal to the Church of Germany, which needs churches. They are the sole condition of life for the church." — King Frederic William IV. Two Treatises. 1845.

tellectual respect for German scepticism which it is not uncommon to find in the minds of untravelled men in America.

A noble, but religiously neglected people, naturally honest and earnest, the German masses, as in the days of Tacitus, make a kind of religion of family life. Hegel was proud of the fact that *Gemüthlichkeit*, the name for what he considered the most characteristic trait of the Germans, is a word without any equivalent in French or English; ¹ kindness of nature, tenderness, *soulfulness* are, perhaps, the best English expressions for it; and this quality, conjoined with the renowned German sincerity, gives the nation a capacity for religious culture excelled by that of no other on the globe, and fit to make it the mission of Germany, as Hegel thought it was, to bear through the ages the Christian principle. But the capacity is as yet unoccupied.

Studying often and searchingly the faces of the common people in the market places of Europe, I used to think that to produce a salutary effect by speaking to them on religion, I should need a day with the Germans, and succeed on the merits of the case; an age with the English of the lower orders, and succeed only when my cause had become respectable among the upper classes; a millennium with the French, and succeed then only to expect a revolution of opinion every three days.

IV. CONTAGION FROM FRANCE.

Moral, intellectual, and social contagion from France must be mentioned with painful emphasis among the causes of the power of rationalism in Germany.

Voltaire and Frederick the Great at Sans Souci: you know the story made so brilliant by Carlyle.² From the time of Louis XIV. to that of Napoleon, the numberless petty courts of Germany took their ideas of morality and taste from

¹ Hegel, *Philosophy of History*, Part ix. sect. 1. chap. 1.

² "There is nothing in imaginative literature superior in its own way to the Episode of Voltaire in the *Fritziad*. It is delicious in humor, masterly in minute characterization. . . . It is in such things that Mr. Carlyle is beyond all rivalry, and that we must go back to Shakspeare for a comparison."—Lowell, *Professor James Russell, My Study Windows, Carlyle*, p. 135.

Paris and Versailles, almost as slavishly as Frederick the Great took his literary fashions from Voltaire. Think, too, of the humiliations of Germany under Napoleon, when his personal rule extended from the Tiber to the Elbe, and when Leipzig and Berlin had passed into kingdoms dependent on France. Until Lessing's day, French taste ruled German literature; there was no German literature. Even Goethe thought his country unwise in resisting Napoleon; and the war of liberation, by the colossal blows of Leipzig and Waterloo, only fractured a yoke which it is to be hoped that Sedan has broken completely in twain.

In Halle, in 1872, I found in a large circulating library, in the best bookstore of the city, patronized by respectable people, and within a bow-shot of the university, a complete set of eighteen or twenty volumes of the works of an infamous French writer, whose productions, if exposed for sale in London, Edinburgh, or Boston, would be seized by the police, or would ruin the reputation of vender and purchaser, — a great exception, no doubt, in Halle,¹ — but the books were worn black by use.

I had not been in Paris a week before I was permanently cured of all intellectual respect for French scepticism. Tacitus says the ancient Germans whipped the adulteress through the streets and buried the adulterer alive in the mud.²

¹ The wise and patriotic Frederick Perthes wrote, in 1826: "When I was a child enlightenment occupied the place of religion, and freemasonry that of the church. Men of culture knew the Bible only by hearsay. . . . During the first ten years of my establishment at Hamburg, I sold not a single Bible except to a few bookbinders in the neighboring country towns; and I remember very well a good sort of man who came into my shop for a Bible, and took great pains to assure me that it was for a person about to be confirmed, fearing, evidently, lest I should suppose it was for himself. . . . Since the French Revolution, the rod of divine chastisement has not been wielded in vain on our lacerated country. The sensual, godless frivolity of the last century wanders about only as a dusky, obsolete ghost." — Perthes, Frederick, *Memoirs*, Vol. ii. pp. 243, 246.

² "Inesse quin etiam sanctum aliquid et providum putant; nec aut consilia earum asperrantur aut responsa negligunt. . . . Quamquam severa illic matrimonia, nec ullam morum partem magis laudaveris. Nam prope soli barbarorum singulis uxoribus contenti sunt. . . . Paucissima in tam numerosa gente adulteria; quorum poena praesens, et maritis permessa: accisis crinibus, nudatam, coram propinquis expellit domo maritus ac per omnem vicum verbere

But Julius Caesar speaks of polygamous practices among the Gauls, and describes them as showy, cruel, and volatile.¹ Thomas Carlyle calls Paris the city of all the devils.² "Poor Paris," I heard him say once in his study at Chelsea, "they have done nothing there but lie for eight hundred years." Bismarck, speaking with facetious seriousness, says, that if you take from the average native Parisian — not the Frenchman, who is a different character — his tailor, the hair-dresser, and the cook, what is left is Red Indian. These men ought to know France; but, if their representations fit this century less well than the last, in the city which is the play-ground and sewer of Europe, it is yet certain that average Paris is politically and morally the city of little boys. For ethical and ethnological reasons, it is of no consequence what is thought of theology by Paris. There are several chambers lacking in the typical Parisian brain. In Germany can be found everything good but elegance; in France, nothing good but elegance. Eternity is not visible from Paris.

V. SUFFERING OF GERMANY IN EUROPEAN WARS.

Demoralization of the people by protracted and almost incessant European wars, deserves a high rank among the causes of the power of rationalism in Germany, even in the last century.

"Scratch a Russian," said Napoleon, "and you will find beneath the surface a Tartar." Scratch peasant-life in Central Europe once, and you find the wars of the first Napoleon; twice, and you find the Thirty Years' War; thrice, and you find the Middle Ages.

After the sack of Magdeburg, Tilly cast six thousand bodies of the citizens into the Elbe, and the river was choked by the mass. Soldiers in the Thirty Years' War were largely foreigners and mercenaries and paid, from necessity and on

agit. *Publicatæ enim pudicitiae nulla venia. Non forma, non ætate, non opibus maritum invenierit.*—Tacitus, *Germaniæ* 8, 18, 19. Cf. Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, vi. 21.

¹ Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, iii. 19; vi. 16–19.

² Carlyle, *The French Revolution*, *passim*.

principle, in beauty and booty. Cossacks, Walloons, Croats, Italians, Irishmen, and Turks fought with Scots, Dutchmen, Danes, Swedes, Laplanders, and Finns. Germany for a generation was a howling hunting ground for the rabble of all nations. One hundred years, to a day, after the Augsburg Confession was promulgated, that is, on June 24, 1630, John Winthrop was sailing into Boston Harbor and Gustavus Adolphus was landing fifteen thousand men in Pomerania. For a hundred years after that date, the plundering bands of Wallenstein did not disappear. From fear of starvation, a Swedish general, in the second half of the war, refused to lead an army through the once fat plains of the Oder and the Elbe, from the Baltic to the Saxon Switzerland. When Louis XIV. stole Strasburg, in 1681, the dead German empire was too feeble to resent the robbery. The Turks, at the instigation of the French king, swarmed far up the Danube, and laid down forty-eight thousand lives in a nearly successful siege of Vienna. The Thirty Years' War gave to death half of the population of Germany. It left her divided into more than three hundred petty states, each with the right to declare war and make peace; and into fourteen hundred yet pettier political fragments, each with the same right, and each depending upon a peeled peasantry for the means of feeding the ostentation and leprosies of courts filled with nobles often unable to read or write, and combining with soundly orthodox belief incredible coarseness, dullness, and savagery. Shivering the once orderly and majestic German constellation into asteroids, it left in existence no central sun. It allowed merely asteroid princes to acquire such power that for two centuries national unity was impracticable. It subjected all Germany to the inroads of French armies. It brought into fashion French manners. Switzerland and the Netherlands, at one time a part of the empire, were given up at the Peace of Westphalia. In Switzerland Germany lost its best fortress, and in the Netherlands its best port; in the former, its surest defence against attack by the Romance nations; in the latter, its surest means of influence

on the sea and in remote regions of the world. Great before, for two centuries after the close of the Thirty Years' War, Germany founded no colony on any shore and showed no flag on any ocean.¹

When the French, in 1689, blew up the towers of Heidelberg; swung a fire-brand up and down both shores of the Rhine; filled the Palatinate with the hungry, the naked, and the frozen; scattered to the winds, at Spires, the splintered coffins and violated dust of the German emperors; and at Treves, Jülich, and Cologne compelled the peasants to plow down their standing corn, Louis XIVth's plan was to protect himself from Germany by making the Palatinate, and the middle region of the Rhine, a desert.

With Frederick the Great came war on war; with Napoleon, war on war. Caesar's robe was not so full of dagger-rents as is German soil of battle-fields. In German-speaking lands lie Magdeburg, Lützen, Nordlingen, Prague, Rossbach, Hohenlinden, Austerlitz, Eylau, Aspern, Erlingen, Wagram, Jena, Leipzig, Waterloo, Langensalza, Sadowa, and Königgrätz:

"Poor dumb mouths, . . .

Mark how the blood of Caesar followed them."

VI. POLICE CHRISTIANITY AS THE ALLY OF ABSOLUTISM.

Support given by state churches to absolutism in politics, and the consequent alienation of the masses of the population and of the more progressive of the educated class, ought to be named early in any enumeration of the causes of rationalism in Germany.

Too often in Europe the cause of infidelity is that the Bible has been forced down the throats of the people with a bayonet, or food taken from starving lips by aristocracies whose throttling and thievish action a state church has blessed. "I daily thank God," said Chevalier Bunsen, on his dying bed, "that I have lived to see Italy free. Now twenty-six

¹ Compare Bancroft, *History of the United States*, Vol. x. p. 83. Menzel, Wolfgang, *Geschichte der Deutschen*, 5 Aufl. 1856. (Eng. trans., in Bohn's Library). Menzel, Karl Adolf, *Neuere Geschichte der Deutschen*, 2 Aufl., 6 Bde. 1856.

millions will be able to believe that God governs the world.”¹ Red republicanism as yet makes white republicanism impossible in Europe. Still in the trance of perpetuated horror of the French Revolution, church and state in Germany in 1848 united in resisting the demands of the people for political reforms. Until very lately, any too marked agitation for German unity itself has been choked with a strong hand, and the churches applauded the act. Christlieb says, ‘that for two centuries the law of German history has been that infidelity grows strong under oppressive, and weak under just, civil regulations.’² Evil exceedingly is that day in a nation when religious and political interests flow in opposite directions; these opposing currents make the whirlpool that impales faith on the tusks of the sea. The German population of the ruder sort look on the preacher as merely a governmental agent, and scoff at his teaching as “Police Christianity.” It must never be forgotten that the Romish is in Germany one of the state churches, and by compact organization and religious loyalty to the subtle creed that the church governs the world, the pope the church, and the Jesuits the pope, has almost power enough to disintegrate the new empire. As Bismarck and Gladstone³ are at this moment proclaiming, patriotism and Jesuit ultramontanism, now as of old, mingle no better than water and fire.

VII. LIMITATIONS AND STIMULATIONS OF THE UNIVERSITIES.

Limitation of free discussion, in the universities and elsewhere, to philosophy, theology and topics not connected with the civil life of the nation, has a prominent place among the inciting causes of German rationalism.

Political discussion is not free inside or outside of the

¹ Bunsen, *Memoirs of*, Vol. ii. p. 562.

² “Nothing like the old bureaucratic system to produce and foster rationalism. . . . Since the reawakening of political life, the popular favor towards materialistic theories seems to have sensibly diminished.” — Christlieb, Professor Theodore, of the University of Bonn, *Modern Doubt and Christian Belief*, p. 18 (Eng. trans.). 1874.

³ Gladstone, Hon. W. E., Pamphlets on “The Vatican Decrees,” and “Vaticanism.” 1875.

universities in Prussia. Politics absorb an exceedingly small portion of the talent of educated men. Compared with the swirling, devouring whirlpool of political discussion in England or America, German civil life is an unruffled sea.¹ Great waves, unknown here, roll there in science, philosophy and theology. Look into the bookstores at the Leipzig fairs, or into the university lecture lists to get reports of this commotion among the educated class, and not into the newspapers. Under a vigorously paternal government, newspapers have little power, and so attract little talent. Accordingly there are no newspapers in Germany; at least, none at all comparable for ability or influence with the leading sheets of the English or American press. The universities in Germany absorb that huge amount of intellectual activity which America and England diffuse through an awakened and multitudinously throbbing public life. General enthusiasm in politics does not exist in Prussia, still less in the smaller states of the empire.

It is only upon scientific, philosophical, and literary topics that discussion in the universities is fully free. In the absence of great political and social themes, the stream of intellectual activity, which never runs shallow in Germany, shut off from one of its natural channels, turns its whole force upon philosophy, science, and theology. If the result has in many respects been excellent, in many also it has been unfortunate; for the very current that has made the channel deep, has borne with it a drift-wood of utterly secular, turbulent, and intriguing spirits, whose natural outlet would have been politics, and who had no calling, except from necessity, to discuss any other theme.

The brilliancy of a German professor's success depends

¹ "A disinterested love of truth can hardly co-exist with a strong political spirit. In all countries where the habits of thought have been mainly formed by political life, we may discover a disposition to make expediency the test of truth. . . . It is probable that the capacity of pursuing abstract truth for its own sake, which has given German thinkers so great an ascendancy in Europe, is in no slight degree to be attributed to the political languor of their nation."—Lecky, *Rationalism in Europe*, Vol. ii. p. 145.

much on the size of his audience ; and he is under no inconsiderable temptation to secure hearers by novelty of doctrine.

The professor is chosen for his merit as a specialist ; he attracts hearers by his fame as a specialist ; his rank is estimated according to the extent of the additions he has made to knowledge as a specialist ; his ambition for scholarly renown leads him to seek perpetually to find or invent some new thing as a specialist.

Competition for hearers is intensely keen at times under the operation of the peculiar system of the university lectures, supported largely by the fees paid by students who voluntarily subscribe to hear certain courses.

There is rivalry between the professors of the three different orders — regular, extraordinary, and candidate. The *Privat Docent* of a German university is really a candidate professor, and one of his offices is to keep the regular professors strenuously wakeful by competition.

This rivalry is intensified by the custom in Germany of assembling in circles of instructors at the universities always a majority of the brilliant men of learning of the whole country. In England one may count among those in the last fifty years distinguished for learning, at least a score who had no connection with universities ; but in Germany one can find in that period hardly any such. Macaulay, Carlyle, Mill, Grote, like our own Prescott and Irving, never were professors in a college. But in Germany, if any learned person has anything to say, he is usually provided by the government with a chance to say it in lectures to students at some university centre.

Undoubtedly the German universities, on all topics within their range, have at present more power than the German nobility to set the fashions of public thought.

No one can enter the civil service or a learned profession in Germany, except through the gate of a state examination, at the close of a university course of study. The secret of the national power of the German universities is in this close connection with the state. "The university," says Bismarck,

“exists for imperial purposes.” The American and the English universities do not rest on state preparatory schools, or end in the state service. The German university rests on the state gymnasiums and ends in the civil service and learned professions.¹

America governs by majorities, England by an aristocracy, Germany by universities.

All life in Prussia has an organization so utterly different from that in New England, that although in Edinburgh, Glasgow, Oxford, or London, an American feels himself yet hardly out of America, he will not have that feeling in Germany, not even in the highest places of learning. Modern German society is a spiritual landscape, with stagnant flats and reedy marshes extensive as those of the Baltic provinces themselves; but also with wide tracts thrown up, like South Germany, into Thuringian hills and Saxon Switzerlands, or even into Alpine peaks, on which day strikes first and lingers longest. Examined more closely, however, the novelties which surprise an American are seen to be arranged in a most definite order. Prussian society consists of these seven parts: the king, the civil service, the army, the universities, the nobility, the tradesmen, the peasants. I assign the universities a rank as a class, and that rank next higher than the nobility; for such is now, according to the best German critics, their relative position.² Acting in the eye of the nation, and on this elevated stage of public respect, German professors are stimulated as no other university teachers in the world are, both to excellence and to rivalry.

¹ “The French university has no liberty, and the English universities have no science; the German universities have both.” — Arnold, *Professor Matthew, Higher Schools and Universities in Germany*, p. 166. London. 1874. Compare also, Hart, *German Universities*. New York. 1875.

² “After the Reformation nearly all eminent men in Germany — poets, philosophers, and historians — belonged to the Protestant party, and resided chiefly at the universities. The universities were what the monasteries had been under Charlemagne, the Castles under Frederick Barbarossa — the centres of gravitation for the intellectual and political life of the country. . . . The intellectual sceptre of Germany was wielded by a new nobility . . . that had its castles in the universities.” — Müller, *Professor Max, German Classics*, Preface, xxvi.

I find in these circumstances the explanation of the fact that the German universities are the best now in existence, and also of the circumstance that among the multitude of their productions they have given to the public some most wild and perishable systems of thought.¹

VIII. RISE AND FALL OF PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEMS.

Complete or partial overthrow of many celebrated schools in philosophy on which theology had unwisely been made to depend, is a recent cause of the power of rationalism in Germany, especially of the later materialistic phases of unbelief, which sneer at metaphysics as an impossible science. Never since Plato and Aristotle has so much metaphysical ability been displayed as by Kant, Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel; but in Germany Fichte and Schelling are obsolete; Hegel, obsolescent; Kant, only, has foundations upon which this century dares to build.

A Herbart, a Beneke, a Rothe, a Trendelenburg, a Schopenhauer have come and gone; but, for twenty-five years no commanding system of philosophy has arisen in a land which in philosophical gifts possesses the primacy of the world. A return to Aristotle and Kant has distinguished the later German metaphysics. To-day, in the hands of a Kuno Fischer, the history of philosophy is made to attract almost as much attention as philosophy itself;² and in those of a Hermann Lotze,³ metaphysics and physics are jointed together as the opposing ribs of a new vessel, which perhaps is destined to endure the shock of wind and wave where fleets ribbed with metaphysics only, went down, even with Schellings, Fichtes, and Hegels at the helm. But neither Lotze nor Fischer pre-

¹ "Professorial knight-errantry still waits for its Cervantes. Nowhere have the objects of learning been so completely sacrificed to the means of learning; nowhere has that Dulcinea, — knowledge for its own sake, — with her dark veil and her barren heart, numbered so many admirers; nowhere have so many windmills been fought, and so many real enemies left unhurt, as in Germany, particularly during the last two centuries." — Müller, Professor Max, *German Classics*, Preface, xxvii.

² *Geschichte der neueren Philosophie*, 6 Bände.

³ *Mikrokosmos*, 2 Bände. Leipzig, 1872.

tends to undertake, what was the joy of older admirals, the circumnavigation of the yet uncircumnavigated globe of philosophy. These giants, among costly wrecks, pace to and fro sadly on the ocean shore. They do not set sail; and yet they perform for thought an incalculable service, by keeping the world in view of the limitless horizons. Meanwhile, out of sight of the sea, in the marshy interior of a grovelling materialism, a Moleschott and a Carl Vogt can assert that there is no ocean; and even the pigmy Büchner, from lack of height of outlook, through twenty editions of a shallow book, can proclaim the impossibility of both metaphysics and religion.

IX. DOCTRINAL UNREST OF THE AGE.

The doctrinal unrest of the age in most, from the acquisition of new facts in many, departments of thought, is a chief force in all modern history, and has been exceedingly efficient among the causes of German rationalism. Nearly every other branch of human inquiry besides theology has been supplied with a new method and new materials within a century; and it was neither to be expected nor desired that scholars would not seek a new method for the latter science; and it was to be expected, though not desired, that when they could not find copious new materials for it, they would invent them. Really new materials, however, have been brought to theology in the last century from the department of exegetical research. An age of new truths and facts is necessarily a period of unrest as to old ones. Although ultimately it may be found that the old and the new agree, acquisition of fresh materials for belief and the crystallization of those materials around ancient beliefs are processes which do not succeed each other without an intervening space of investigation and uncertainty. It is upon precisely these intervening spaces in history that scepticism has seized as battle-fields, only to lose them one by one, in a long line of defeats reaching now through eighteen centuries. But there never was a more important intervening space of this sort than the last age in Germany, except the first age of Christianity in Asia and Europe.

X. STATE AID TO RATIONALISTIC SECTS.

State aid to rationalistic churches I class among the causes that have given rationalism power to make a noise in Germany. If a majority in a church at Heidelberg, for instance, vote for a rationalistic preacher, they can have him, and yet retain state aid. In America, under the voluntary system, rationalistic organizations soon disband, for they have not earnestness enough to pay their own expenses. But, in Germany, loaves and fishes keep them together under the endlessly vicious practical arrangements of the state churches.

There are three methods of arranging the relations of church and state: separation, or the American plan; exclusive establishment of one confession, or the English plan; concurrent establishment of several confessions, or the German plan. Catholics, Lutherans, and Calvinists had equal civil rights secured to them by the Peace of Westphalia. Even in Prussia, Romanists to-day have larger gifts from the public treasury than Protestants. Confessional equality, a great watchword, having in it the agonies and blisses of German religious life for centuries, is a cry never hypocritically uttered by the lips of Prussia.

But, although dissenters from the three recognized confessions have had no formal help from the state, it has been the theory of each establishment that the whole population must be baptized. Until very lately, every family, believing or unbelieving, was obliged to cause its children to profess faith and pass the rite of confirmation, or incur for the children the gravest civil disabilities. Thus, in practice, all dissenters have been really within, and not without the church. In many of the smaller principalities, individual churches have become predominantly rationalistic, and yet have retained their income from the state.¹

¹ "Half, at least, of the destructive power of European infidelity in past generations has been due to the presence of the party within, instead of without, the church." — President Warren, of the Boston University. Evangelical Alliance Report, p. 253. New York. 1873.

XI. CATHOLICISM IN SOUTH GERMANY.

Catholicism, covering all South Germany and stimulated to act the part of mere reactionary Romanism by influences from beyond the Alps and the Rhine, I rank as a powerful cause of German rationalism, for it has prevented half the German people from seeing what a church can accomplish; made the lives of vast peasant populations a prolonged childhood; disgusted scholars by its absurdities of doctrine; resisted the progress of the nation toward Protestant unity; and seeks now to destroy an empire whose power is the best guarantee of both peace and progress in Europe.

Pope Boniface wrote to Philip the Fair of France: 'Boniface to Philip, greeting: Know thou, that thou art subject to us both in spiritual and temporal things.' The king replied: 'Philip to Boniface, little or no greeting: Know thou, O supreme fool, that in temporal things we are not subject to any one.' Such would now be the answer of America or England or Scotland to similar pretensions; such is to-day the answer of Germany. If necessary, this answer would be given by Great Britain or the United States through the cannon's mouth; if necessary, it will so be given by the German Empire. Ultramontanism against nationality is the simple issue between the pope and Bismarck. First a Catholic and then a citizen, or first a citizen and then a Catholic, is the ancient question Berlin debates with Rome. In the long struggle between the civil and ecclesiastical power, England stood three hundred years ago where Germany stands to-day. By the celebrated bill passed in 1581 'to restrain her majesty's subjects in their due obedience,' parliament asserted in principle all that now causes outcry against the sternness of Prussia toward Romanists of the disloyal type. Summarizing with fairness the history of Ultramontanism for five hundred years, Bismarck said once to the Prussian parliament that "the goal which, like the Frenchman's dream of an unbroken Rhine boundary, floats

before the papal party — the programme which, in the time of the mediæval emperors, was near its realization — is the subjection of the civil power to the ecclesiastical.”¹ William I. writes to Pius IX. that Catholic citizens of Germany, at the instigation of Ultramontanism, conspire against the unity and peace of the Empire. Pius IX. replies: “Every one who has been baptized belongs to the pope in some way or other.”²

Henry IV., in smock and barefoot, stood three days in the snow before the palace of pope Hildebrand at Canossa, imploring absolution. In 1872 Bismarck said of the German Empire: “We are not going to Canossa, spiritually or physically.” But it was by barely a majority of one that great, rich, Romish Bavaria was brought to the aid of the rest of Germany in the war of self-defence against Napoleon III. France echoed the scorn of Philip the Fair in his famous answer of contempt to the pope; she is to-day governed by Ultramontanism. Canossa is not the goal of the centuries; but the feet of one hundred and ninety millions of the human race yet tread its snows.

XII. SUMMARY OF CAUSES.

These, then, in my judgment, are the ten chief causes of the power of scepticism in Germany in the last century:

1. Fragmentary presentations of Christianity in the spirit of earnestness without science, or of science without earnestness.

2. Maladroit organization of the German state church; first, in the use of compulsory confessions of faith at the confirmation legally required of the whole population, whether believing or unbelieving; and secondly, in the absence of the familiar American and English distinction between the converted and the unconverted, and in a consequently stagnant church life.

3. Moral, intellectual, and social contagion from France.

4. The demoralization arising in Germany from its having been the principal theatre of European wars.

¹ Bismarck, Speech in the Prussian House of Lords, March 10, 1873.

² Letter of Pius IX. to the Emperor William, Aug. 7, 1873.

5. Support by the church of a popularly odious absolutism in politics.
6. German university life in its peculiar limitations and stimulations of free discussion.
7. The overthrow of several celebrated German systems of philosophy.
8. The doctrinal unrest of the age in most, from the acquisition of new facts in many, departments of thought.
9. State aid to rationalistic organizations.
10. Roman Catholicism in South Germany.

I am aware how difficult it is to present in proper perspective a complicated array of causes and effects extending through an hundred years; and that, for patriotic and political reasons, even candid German writers do not always arrive at a frank admission of the power of some of these causes. But whoever has read between the lines in European history, and listened to the whispered as well as to the spoken and printed thought of Germany, will recognize in this analysis her own unpublished judgment of herself. On such authority, it is well to be able to assure the superficial sceptic, that, in the most learned land on the globe, rationalism had several other sources of influence besides its own intellectual merits.¹ In view of these enumerated causes, it is not surprising, nor to a scholar's faith is it intellectually annoying, that scepticism has had power in Germany, and that it yet retains power among the slightly educated.

XIII. EMPTY RATIONALISTIC AND CROWDED EVANGELICAL LECTURE ROOMS.

In the German universities the incontrovertible fact is that the rationalistic lecture-rooms are now empty, and the evangelical crowded; while fifty or eighty years ago the rationalistic were crowded, and the evangelical empty.

Lord Bacon says that the best materials for prophecy are

¹ As was to be expected, one of the places in Boston where information on the decline of rationalism in the German universities appears to be needed, is the Radical Club, yet misled by Hegel, on whom Transcendentalism built so arrogantly and incautiously forty years ago.

the unforced tendencies of educated young men. Take up any German year-book, look at the statistics of the universities, ascertain which way the drift of educated youth is now setting in the most learned circles in the world, and you have before you no unimportant sign of the times.

But, in looking for this, you come upon another sign no less important, namely, that the leading universities of Germany are now, and eighty years ago were not, under predominant evangelical influence.

Berlin, beyond doubt the university of first importance, and hallowed by the great names of Schleiermacher, Neander, and Trendelenburg, is theologically led by Dorner, Semisch, Steinmeyer, and Twesten — staunch defenders of evangelical faith.

Leipzig, with Kahnis and Luthardt and Delitzsch — and lately with Tischendorf — among her professors, contests with Berlin for the first place, and in the opinion of many deserves that rank, and is the renowned traditional seat of an orthodoxy which at some points New England and Scotland — agreeing in the main with the present attitude of Berlin — might consider excessive.

Halle, whose theology permeates Germany, both from the university and from Francke's famous Waisenhaus, has in it Tholuck, and Köstlin, and Kähler, and Guericke, and Jacobi, and Schlottmann, and Julius Müller, known throughout the world as antagonists, and as successful antagonists, of the subtlest forms of scepticism. It is not uncommon to hear Julius Müller spoken of as the ablest theologian of Germany.

Tübingen itself, where Strauss put forth one of his earlier works, and Baur founded a theological party, has had in it for years no Tübingen school, but, through the professorships of Beck, Palmer, and Landerer, is permeated by vigorous evangelical influences.

Heidelberg, under the theological leadership of Schenkel, Hitzig, Gass, and Holtzmann, is to-day the only prominent university of Germany given to views that can be called rationalistic.

Now, which of these institutions is most patronized by

German theological students? Halle and Berlin may be compared, in a general way, as to their theology, with Andover and New Haven; Leipzig, with Princeton; and Heidelberg, with the Unitarian portion of Cambridge.

I found Dorner's, Müller's, and Tholuck's lecture-rooms crowded, and Schenkel's empty. In 1872-3 there were but twenty-four German theological students at Heidelberg; and I have heard Schenkel often, and never saw more than nine, eight, or seven students in his lecture-room. Against twenty-four German theological students at Heidelberg, there are one hundred and thirty-two at Leipzig, two hundred and fifty-seven at Halle, two hundred and thirty-nine at Berlin. But, counting both the native and the foreign theological students in these institutions, the whole number at rationalistic Heidelberg is thirty-four; at evangelical Halle, two hundred and eighty-two; at evangelical Berlin two hundred and eighty; at hyper-evangelical Leipzig, four hundred and twelve.¹

It must be remembered that German students often change universities, as occasionally American students change theological schools, passing one period in one and another in another, according to the attractions of different professors. It is immaterial to the German student where he hears lectures, provided he is prepared to pass with credit the severe final examinations. When a professor is called from one university to another, a large number of his hearers often follow him. Thus it is a fair test of the direction of the drift of educated youth in Germany, to point to the fact that they give their patronage to evangelical, rather than to rationalistic, professors, and this in the overwhelming proportion of ten to one.

XIV. TESTIMONY OF THOLUCK, DORNER, CHRISTLIEB, SCHWARZ, AND KAHNIS.

"By far, by far," is Professor Tholuck's constant answer, when asked by foreign students if orthodoxy is not stronger in Prussia than fifty or eighty years ago.

¹ Meyer, *Deutsches Jahrbuch*. Erster Jahrgang, p. 1002.

In 1826, at Halle, all the students except five, who were the only ones that believed in the Deity of our Lord, and all the professors of the university united in a petition to the government against Tholuck's appointment to a professorship there, and the opposition rested solely on the ground of his evangelical belief.¹ The students at Tübingen, not far from the same date, ceremoniously burned the Bible. "When I came to Halle," said Professor Tholuck to me once, as he walked up and down that famous, long, vine-clad arbor in his garden where his personal interviews with German and foreign students have exerted an influence felt in two hemispheres, "I could go twenty miles across the country and not once find what, to use an English word, is called an experimental Christian. I was very unpopular. I was subjected to annoyance, even in my lecture-room, on account of my evangelical belief." "His adversaries are bold and cunning. A baptism of fire awaits him at Halle," wrote Frederick Perthes of the young Professor, in 1826.²

Contrast these murky threats of Tholuck's morning with the clear sky of his westering sun. In December, 1870, he had completed so much of a half century of work at the University of Halle that three days were given by his friends to the celebration of the event. There were social gatherings and suppers and speeches at the hotels. All the halls and staircases of Tholuck's residence were crowded with guests. The Emperor William sent to him the star of the red eagle. Court preacher Hoffmann brought to him the salutations of the ecclesiastical council as to a veritable church father of the nineteenth century. The various universities of Germany were represented by their ablest professors. Pastors of different cities sent delegations. A letter to Tholuck was received signed by theologians at that hour in the army before Paris. An immense torch-light procession of students filled a night with Luther's hymn :

"Ein feste Burg ist unser Gott."

¹ Tholuck, Letter to the New York Meeting of the Evangelical Alliance. Report, 1873.

² Perthes, Memoirs, Vol. ii. p. 268.

"No one can deny," Professor Tholuck would say to me repeatedly, "that since the death of Frederick the Great, or the French Revolution, or the opening of the century, or even since fifty or forty years ago, there has been a great reaction in Germany against infidelity and rationalism.

"You are right in pointing to the impotence of the edict issued in favor of orthodoxy by Frederick William II. on the death of Frederick the Great, as proof that it has not been the favorable attitude of the state towards orthodoxy that has caused the reaction. Frederick the Great had no influence to promote scepticism in the lower and middle, but he did mischief among the upper classes.

"Frederick William III. and Frederick William IV. were favorable to orthodoxy; and William I., our emperor, is thoroughly so. Much depends on the attitude of the court at Berlin in respect to the churches. In Weimar, however, a preacher without belief in the Deity of Christ, and with denial of miracles, may be connected with the state church. In respect to orthodoxy, Weimar is one of the most lax of all the provinces of Germany. It would probably not be true to say that in the small territory of Weimar, infidelity is less powerful than fifty years ago, although that is most certainly the case in Prussia.

"Hagenbach has written a History of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of German Rationalism, and his book I put first into the hands of foreign students coming to Germany and asking information from me. I am myself writing a work on the same subject.

"As to men of science and professors in the philosophical faculties with us, they are often uninformed concerning theology; but materialism makes much less noise in Germany than in England. If a man is a materialist, we Germans think he is not educated."

On account of their having little freedom to discuss political, German professors are intensely jealous of their liberty to discuss literary, scientific, philosophical, and theological topics. Whoever has breathed the quickening oxygen of the

atmosphere of a German university will understand very well that it is by no means the changed attitude of the state toward orthodoxy that has brought about the reaction against rationalism. Scepticism had its greatest power under Frederick William II. and Frederick William III., who opposed, as much as Frederick the Great had favored, rationalism. In Germany it is almost a proverb that the soul of a university is made up of *Lehr Freiheit* and *Lern Freiheit*.

"No," said Professor Dorner in his study at Berlin, when I mentioned Professor Tholuck's opinion of Weimar; "rationalism even in Weimar and Thuringia was quite as strong fifty years ago as it now is."

"That is nothing" (*Das ist nichts*), he remarked emphatically, and added no more, speaking of the rationalism of Renan.

"The writers who discuss materialism," he said, "are in Germany more anti-dogmatic than ethical. As to the rationalists themselves, we have more who agree with Channing than with Parker.

"The mass of our preachers are genuine believers, but among the populace one can sometimes find infidelity. The mass of our divines are convinced; but they are too contentious. In Prussia, unbelief is much weaker than fifty years ago, or in the time of Frederick the Great. Then rationalism was the loyal theology. Most certainly, most certainly, rationalism in Germany, taken as a whole, is plainly and by far weaker than fifty years ago."

"The proposal," says Professor Christlieb, "to implore the divine blessing and assistance on the deliberations of the Frankfort parliament in 1848 was received with shouts of derisive laughter." "For the last thirty years," he writes, "in spite of all hostilities, a truly Christian science has begun victoriously to lead the way, by new and deeper exegetical researches; by historical investigation; by pointing out the remarkable harmony existing between many new archeological, ethnological, and scientific discoveries. In the pulpits of by far the greater number of the German churches, and

in the theological faculties of most of the universities, it has so completely driven unbelief out of the field, that the latter has been compelled to retire, in a great measure, into the divinity schools of adjacent countries — Switzerland, France, Holland, Hungary. When compared with these and other countries, Germany shows that unbelief has a greater tendency to insinuate itself into, and to make its permanent abode among, half-educated, rather than thoroughly educated, communities.”¹

“So much is to be confessed,” says Court preacher Schwarz of Gotha, author of the acutest² of the histories of recent theology: “Schleiermacher’s work has been incomparably more enduring, and quietly and inwardly transforming, than Hegel’s. Schleiermacher’s influences yet advance, while those of Hegel are exhausted and dead.”³

“It is spring,” says Professor Kahnis of Leipzig, in 1874. “The period since the wars of liberation represents the conflict of the newly quickened heat of the German mind with the masses of snow and ice of the *Aufklärung*. Until to-day the conflict endures; but ever mightier grows the sun, ever weaker the winter.”⁴

This testimony of German professors to the fact of the decline of scepticism in the German universities I might make voluminous; but it is enough to show the accord of confidential and colloquial with printed testimony, and the agreement of five such authorities as Tholuck, Dorner, Christlieb, Schwarz, and Kahnis.

XV. SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.

Both the Prussian Constitution and the fundamental

¹ Christlieb, Professor Theodore, *Modern Doubt and Christian Belief*, pp. 18, 63.

² Farrar, A. G., *Critical History of Free Thought*, Bampton Lectures, Preface, xxv.

³ Schwarz, Dr. Carl. *Oberhofprediger und Oberconsistorialrath zu Gotha, Zur Geschichte der neuesten Theologie*, Vierte Auflage, 25. Leipzig. 1869.

⁴ Kahnis, Professor K. F. A., *Der innere Gang des deutschen Protestantismus*, Dritte Ausgabe. Zweiter Theil, 162. Leipzig. 1874. These four are the best recent works on German Rationalism.

statutes of the German Empire alike declare that the evangelical church shall be free to manage its own internal affairs. Schleiermacher himself, in 1808, drew up for the king a sketch of a church constitution which foreshadowed much that is now becoming law. The cabinet order of Frederick William III. gathered, in 1817, the Lutheran and Reformed churches into an evangelical union. The contest with Romanism has now obliged Prussia to give to that union as much independence of the state as Romanists enjoy. The eight provinces of the old Prussian kingdom, that is to say, nearly all the Protestants of North Germany, are being drawn together under one church constitution, of which the principle is essentially Presbyterian. The effects are likely to prove inauspicious to rationalism, which has steadily resisted the abolition of the bureaucratic management of the ecclesiastical and religious life of the nation.

Church and state in Germany are slowly separating; the bureaucratic tutelage and bondage of the church are becoming things of the past; a determined purpose is exhibited, on the part of both government and scholars, to call out a regulated religious activity among the masses of the people. As the German peasantry and middle class have never been taught to give money freely for religious organizations managed by themselves; as the rationalism outgrown in the universities has only too much power with the populace, especially in the large towns; as Sabbath-schools and prayer-meetings, and all the machinery of the voluntary system in church affairs, are in Germany conspicuous by their absence, the separation of church and state in the Empire will not occur without many most painful temporary disadvantages.¹

¹ "In many sections of Germany, especially the northern regions, where Lutheranism prevails, the congregations are almost as passive, dependent, and incapable of self-government as in the Roman Catholic church, and Luther's complaint of the want of material for elders and deacons must be repeated in this nineteenth century after Protestantism has been in operation for more than three hundred years. The people are only expected to be ruled, and hence they have no chance to learn individual and congregational self-government, which must be gradually acquired, like every other art." — Schaff, *Professor Philip, Germany, its Universities, Theology, and Religion*, pp. 112, 113.

The poorer clergy will starve for a time ; and there will be wide tracts of baptized torpor and unbaptized indifference and paganism in the religious life of the lower classes. Ultimately, however, when the dangers of allowing religious marshes to go undrained have become sufficiently evident and alarming, and the impotence of rationalism to drain malarious soil has received adequate illustration, German sagacity and honesty will cause the stagnant fens of German church life to wake with currents, which, it is to be hoped, will one day make of its green, sedgy, and pestilential pools a clear, flashing, and brimming river.

XVI. GERMAN PRIMACY IN EUROPE.

Immense commercial, political, and moral advantages accrue to Germany from her unity, sought in agony for two hundred years. Schiller did not hesitate to say that Europe was sufficiently compensated for the horrors of the Thirty Years' War by an increased sense of the interdependence and need of union among its nations.¹ At Sadowa, in 1866, at the close of the battle which gave to Central Europe Prussian and Protestant, instead of Austrian and Romish, leadership, and ended a struggle which Frederick the Great began, the sun came forth from under heavy clouds in the low west, and the united armies of North and South Germany, struck by the omen, gathered around their commander, and sang:

“ Now all thank God ! ”

In that late hour the Reformation first became politically an assured success in the land of its birth. Sadowa is Germany's best hope of internal, Sedan her best hope of external, freedom from war.

But whenever Germany, beaten down almost constantly under the hoofs of military strife, has had time to catch

¹ “ Aber Europa ging ununterdrückt und frei aus diesem fürchterlichen Krieg, in welchem es sich zum erstenmal als eine zusammenhängende Staatengesellschaft erkannt hatte ; und diese Theilnehmung der Staaten an einander, welche sich in diesem Krieg eigentlich erst bildete, wäre allein schon Gewinn genug, den Weltbürger mit seinem Schrecken zu versöhnen. ” — Schiller, Geschichte des dreissigjährigen Kriegs, Sämmtliche Werke, v. 2.

breath, she has shown a recuperative power that has astonished all Europe. In the thirty years after the battle of Waterloo, her soil was not once touched by war, or by the tread of foreign troops. Her historians assign to that period her first real recovery from the effects of the Thirty Years' War. In 1818, bold, wise, indefatigable Prussia abolished all duties upon goods in transit through its own territories. For commercial purposes Germany became a unit in 1828. Even under the imperfect league of the Zoll Verein her navy was the third in extent in the world. Agriculture grew prosperous. Capitals of princes were not the only cities distinguished for wealth and culture. At the mere dawn of that national unity and peace, of which the full sunrise was at Sedan, commerce in Germany awoke from the dead. The rapid growth of Cologne, Breslau, Magdeburg, Nuremberg, and Berlin amazed Vienna and wounded Paris. The overshadowing and swiftly increasing prosperity of Germany and her approaches to political unity drew upon her the attack of Napoleon III. Sedan opened to Victor Emmanuel, Rome ; to the angels Peace and Union, entrance on German soil ; to Napoleon, his grave ; to contagion from France, an antidote. At last Germany has military and political, as well as intellectual, primacy in Europe. Versailles leads her fashions no more. Voltaire is not asked to be her tutor.

On those very grounds of Sans-Souci, where Frederick the Great and Voltaire had called out to the culture of Europe, "Ecrasez l'infame!" King William and his queen lately entertained an Evangelical Alliance gathered from the Indus, the Nile, the Danube, the Rhine, the Thames, and the Mississippi.

XVII. BAUR, STRAUSS, AND RENAN.

But who does not know the history of the defeat of sceptical school after sceptical school on the rationalistic side of the field of exegetical research? The naturalistic theory was swallowed by the mythical theory, and the mythical by the tendency theory, and the tendency by the

legendary theory, and each of the four by time. Strauss laughs at Paulus, Baur at Strauss, Renan at Baur, the hour-glass at all. "Under his guidance," says Strauss of Paulus, "we tumble into the mire; and assuredly dross, not gold, is the issue to which his method of interpretation generally leads."¹ "Up to the present day," says Baur of Strauss, "the mythical theory has been rejected by every man of education."² "Insufficient," says Renan of Baur, "is what he leaves existing of the Gospels to account for the faith of the apostles."³ He makes the Pauline and Petrine factions account for the religion, and the religion account for the Pauline and Petrine factions. "Criticism has run all to leaves," said Strauss, in his bitter disappointment at the failure of his final volume.⁴

Appropriately was there carried on Richter's coffin to his grave a manuscript of his last work — a discussion in proof of the immortality of the soul; appropriately might there have been carried on Strauss's coffin to his grave his last work, restating his mythical theory, if only that theory had not, as every scholar knows, died and been buried before its author.⁵

¹ Strauss, *New Life of Jesus*, (Eng. trans.), p. 18.

² Baur, *Krit. Untersuch. über die canonischen Evangel.*, 121, 40-71.

³ Renan, *Etude d'Hist. Rel.*, 168.

⁴ "Baur acknowledged the four leading Epistles of Paul to be genuine, and to have been written before A.D. 60. Now this admission is fatal to the sister theory of Strauss; for these Epistles prove that Jesus was not an ordinary man, around whose idolized memory his disciples, in the course of a century or so, wreathed mythical fictions, not knowing what they did; but that the culminating facts of his life, the leading traits of his character as given in our so-called mythical Gospels, were familiar to the Christian world within twenty-five years after his death." — Thayer, *Professor J. Henry, Boston Lectures*, p. 372. 1871.

⁵ Zeller, the admiring biographer of Strauss, says: "As a point of weakness in his last volume, 'The Old and New Faith,' he designated in one of his letters the beginning of the fourth section on morals. 'Here,' he writes, 'immediately after the appearance of the work, a couple of solid beams have still to be inserted, and if you could supply me with a few oak or even pine stems, you would deserve my sincere thanks.' The public discussions of the work were almost without exception disapproving. . . . Average theological liberalism pressed forward eagerly to renounce all compromising association with Strauss after he published this last statement of his mythical theory. He was deeply grieved,

XVIII. SUMMARY OF PROOFS.

Among the proofs, then, that scepticism in Germany is declining in power with those whose special study is theology, are the facts :

1. That in the German universities the rationalistic lecture-rooms are now empty, and the evangelical crowded ; while fifty or eighty years ago the rationalistic were crowded, and the evangelical empty.

2. That histories of the rise, progress, and decline of German rationalism have been appearing for the last fifteen years in the most learned portions of the literature of Germany.

3. That such teachers as Tholuck, Julius Müller, Dorner, Twesten, Ullmann, Lange, Rothe, and Tischendorf, most of whom began their professorships with great unpopularity in their universities, on account of their opposition to rationalistic views, are now particularly honored on that very account.

4. That every prominent German university, except Heidelberg, is now under predominant evangelical influences, and that Heidelberg is nearly empty of theological students.

5. That the attitude of the general government at Berlin has destroyed the force of many of the political causes of disaffection with the state church.

6. That the victory at Sedan and the achievement of German unity diminish the chances of demoralization from European wars, and by contagion from France.

7. That in the field of exegetical research, while rationalism has caused the discovery of many new facts, and the

and it required some days before he could regain his calm composure."—Zeller, Professor Eduard, of the Heidelberg University, Strauss in his Life and Writings (Eng. trans.), pp. 135, 141, 143. London, 1874. "The idea of men writing mythic histories between the time of Livy and Tacitus, and St. Paul mistaking such for realities!"—Bunsen, Arnold's Life, Letter cxlix. Strauss "bezeichnet nicht sowohl eine Epoche als eine Krise, nicht sowohl einen Anfangs-als einen Schlusspunkt. . . . Die Einseitigkeit des Strauss'schen Geistes, welche bei allem Glanz seiner Detail Kritik in den neuesten Werke besonders auffallend hervortritt, ist ein doppeltes Vacat, ein Mangel an geschichtlichem Blick und religiösem Sinn."—Schwarz, Geschichte der neuesten Theologie, 3, 557.

adoption of a new method, the naturalistic theory by Paulus, the mythical theory by Strauss, the tendency theory by Baur, and the legendary by Renan have been so antagonistic to each other as to be successively outgrown both by Christian and by rationalistic scholarship.

XIX. RESULTS OF SCIENTIFIC CRITICISM.

Beyond controversy are many great results of the theological discussions in Germany for the last hundred years; nor have the attacks of rationalism been an unmixed evil.

A doctrine of the intuitions, basis of all ethical and metaphysical research, has been established by Kant.

A doctrine of conscience, growing up from the Kantian theory of the intuitions, is acquiring a height of outlook, from which the far-sighted already descry the scientific inference of the necessity of an atonement.

A doctrine of sin, built on the doctrine of conscience, has been made by Julius Müller to unlock all theology.

A doctrine of the personality of God has been founded upon the Kantian analysis of the intuitions, and has already supplied the chief deficiencies of Kant's own system, besides undermining the pantheism of Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel.

(A system of criticism has grown up in relation to everything historical in Christianity; and exegetical research has been placed upon a thoroughly scientific basis.)

A vindication of the historical evidence of the supernatural has followed from an application of the new system of criticism.

A series of discoveries has been made, illuminating at important points the records of the origin of Christianity, and carrying back the date of the chief documents a full half of a century, narrowing by so much the previously too narrow space used by the sceptical theory to account for the growth of myths and legends, and so shutting the colossal shears of chronology upon the latest deftly-woven web of historical doubt.¹

¹ "Twenty years ago it used to be thought that the earliest proof of the reception of New Testament writings as of similar authority to the Old was to be

A Life of Christ is now the most natural form in which belief, resting upon a system of criticism common to sacred and secular history, expresses and defends its credence.

XX. CHRISTIAN TREND OF THE CENTURIES.

Whoever ascertains the trend of the historic constellations through long periods, obtains a glimpse of the hem of the garment of Almighty God. What Providence does, it from the first intends. A sifting of Christianity has taken place in this last age by a prolonged contest of unbelief with faith, each armed with the best Damascus blades the world furnishes either to-day; and the result has been a defeat of doubt on all central points. It is, therefore, now certain that it was divinely intended that there should be a sifting of Christianity in this last age, and that a defeat of doubt should be the result. Prolonged historic tendencies are God allowing portions of his plan for the government of the world to become humanly comprehensible.

When the completion of a cycle of events reveals what the plan of the cycle was from the first, it behooves men, co-ordinating latest with earliest cycles, to ascertain the trend of the movements in the sky; and to gaze, more solemnly than upon the stars themselves, upon that Form loftier than the stars, which passes by in the darkness behind them, its out-
found about the year 180; but recent discoveries furnish indubitable evidence that even the Gospels had acquired such a reception more than half a century earlier. . . . These discoveries, by carrying back for half a century the indubitable traces of the Gospels, prove such theories as those of Baur, Strauss, and Renan, to be pure theories, . . . not only unsupported by the facts of history, but in opposition to the facts of history. . . . As a sect in biblical criticism, the Tübingen school has perished. Its history, even, has been written, and that in more than one tongue." — Thayer, Professor J. Henry, *Criticism Confirmatory of the Gospels*. Boston Lectures, pp. 363, 364, 371. 1871. "Schenkel, Renan, Keim, Weizsäcker, and others equally removed from the traditional views, unite in insisting that the fourth Gospel could not have appeared later than a few years after the beginning of the second century. They found this opinion on irrefutable grounds. But if this be so, the key-stone falls from the arch. The course of development which the Tübingen critics describe, extending for a century from the death of Paul, and requiring this time for its accomplishment, is swept away. There is no room for it." — Fisher, Professor George P., *Essays on the Supernatural Origin of Christianity*, xxxviii. (new ed.). 1870.

lines not wholly visible, but the direction not unknown in which it is moving the constellations.

I commend this German theological battle-field to the timid and the hopeful who go out to walk and meditate in the world's eventide.) Goethe could say that the only real, and the deepest, theme of the world's and of man's history, to which all other subjects are subordinate, is the conflict between faith and unbelief.¹ We are the ancients, as Bacon said. But the inscription written by history, which is God's finger and no accident, before the sad eyes of the bruised and staggering ages, on the trophy erected after the severest intellectual battle of this oldest and newest of the centuries, is: *Via Crucis, Via Lucis!*

(I do not respect any proposition merely because it is ancient, or in the mouths of majorities. But I do respect propositions that have seen honest and protracted battle, but not defeat. The test of the soundness of scholarship is that it should contend with scholarship, not once or twice, but century after century, and come out crowned.) But the intellectual supremacy of Christianity in the nineteenth century is not a novelty. There are other battle-fields worth visiting by those who walk and meditate, on which Christian trophies stand, more important, as marks of the world's agonies and advances, than any that ever Greek erected for victory at Salamis or Marathon. I lean on church history. I go to its battle-fields and lie down on them. They are places of spiritual rest. Gazing on their horizon, I see no narrow prospect, but a breadth of nineteen hundred victorious years. Looking into the sky, as I lie there, I hear sometimes the anthem: As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. I obtain glimpses of a heaven opened; and behold a white horse, and he that sits on him is called the Word of God, King of kings, and Lord of lords. He is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood; but his eyes are as a flame of fire, and on his head are many crowns.

¹ Goethe, Werke, Abhandlungen zum westöstlichen Divan.