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# COMMENTARY

ON THE

# GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

With a Critical Introduction.

BY

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TRANSLATED FROM THE LAST EDITION

BY M. D. CUSIN.

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EDINBURGH:

T. & T. CLARK, 38 GEORGE STREET.

1899.



## DEDICATION OF THE COMMENTARY.

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TO

M. CHARLES PRINCE,

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY, PROFESSOR OF PHILOLOGY IN THE  
COLLEGE OF NEUCHÂTEL.

MY DEAR FRIEND,—

MANY a time have we read and pondered together the holy pages whose exposition I now offer to the church. At each of those readings we have felt ourselves brought into more intimate acquaintance with Him whose life and sayings are traced by the historian. The work of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus: "*He shall glorify me,*" has been realized in our experience: Christ has been transfigured before our eyes.

After such joint study, in which your thought and mine have been so often fused into one, it would be impossible for me to distinguish in this work between *mine* and *thine*. And if I could do so, what purpose would it serve? On the way to Emmaus there is no speaking save of what is *His*; and, as in the case of the two travellers, the exclamation is: "*Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way, and while He opened to us the Scriptures!*" Allow me at least, as I cannot quote you on every page, to associate your name with mine, when offering to the public this product of my pen, which is in so many respects the fruit of your lips.

which lead directly to the opposite conclusion. One feels that it must have cost him a violent effort of will to surmount all the scientific reasons most fitted to justify the contrary conviction. And it is not hard to satisfy ourselves that the ground of this decision, so opposed to the premisses, is no other than the rationalistic negation of the miraculous. Witness these words of the venerable writer: "Through the breastplate of gold formed by the doctrine of the Logos one hears (in the Jesus of the Fourth Gospel) the beating of a true human heart which is moved by joy and grief, and in this description we recognise the apostle in all the fulness of his memory." At what a distance are we from the judgments of Baur and Keim!

The two most considerable works bearing on our subject, which have appeared in Germany most recently, are the *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, by M. Bernhard Weiss (sixth edition in Meyer's collection, 1880), and the *Life of Jesus*, by the same author (1882). The historical truth of all John's narrative is fully recognised and demonstrated. No doubt, as to the discourses, M. Weiss makes partial concessions to criticism which I cannot regard as sufficiently justified; readers will judge of these for themselves. But the difference between him and M. Reuss is nevertheless a difference *in toto*, the few imported elements admitted by M. Weiss not compromising in the least in his view the authenticity of the book.

We may indeed be prepared to find that this return movement is not unanimous. The Tübingen school has not ceased to work in the direction which was impressed on it by its master's genius. We shall only mention here the work in which this tendency has so to speak reached its paroxysm. It is by M. A. Thoma: *The Genesis of the Gospel of John* (1882). On one point this author breaks with the tradition of the school; he recognises the intimate connections which our Gospel has with Judaism and the Old Testament. But, on the other hand, to what a phantasmagoria of allegorizing does this writer give up his imagination! The discoveries made by Baur and Reuss in this way are marvellously surpassed. It is not a history of Jesus, but that of Christianity itself which the author of our Gospel, an Alexandrine Christian of the second century, meant to write. From

the state of infancy, characterized by the Synoptics, the new religion had advanced to the brilliant period of youth. Already all kinds of elements had sprung up in the Church and were struggling within her. The personages who play a part in our Gospel are nothing else than the freely created personifications of those different tendencies. Caiaphas is false prophecy; the brethren of Jesus represent carnal Israel struggling against the Church. As to Pilate, he is Roman despotism; the Greek proselytes of chap. xii. personify the Gentile world thirsting for truth. The different Christian parties are also represented, in particular by the family of Bethany; the party of works by Martha, that of faith by Mary, Christian Essenism by Lazarus. The most dexterous piece in this play of wit, is the explanation of the person of James, the brother of Jesus. He is Judaism in its form of hostility to Christianity. His name is deliberately suppressed throughout the whole book, but that of Judas is substituted; yet allusion is made to its signification, the *supplanter*, in the passage xiii. 18, where Jesus quotes the words of Ps. xli.: "He that eateth bread with me hath *lifted up his heel* against me." An idea may be formed of the author's critical method, if we mention, for example, that the passage John i. 13: "*Who are born, not of blood, nor . . . but of God,*" was composed by the Alexandrine author with the help of the three following passages: Rom. viii. 29 ("the first-born among many brethren"); Heb. ii. 13 ("with the children whom God hath given me"); 1 Cor. xv. 48 ("as is the heavenly . . . so are the heavenly . . ."). Such are specimens of what is in our day called in that quarter the discovery of the genesis of the Fourth Gospel.

Happily those excesses, which we may call the saturnalia of criticism, appear also on their side to contribute to bring back thinking minds to sobriety and good sense. We have satisfaction in gathering testimonies like the following:—

M. Franke, a young scholar teaching at Halle, has recently published a work under the title: *The Old Testament in John*, full of sagacity and sound erudition, in which he demonstrates what I have also sought to prove, namely, that the thought of the author of the Fourth Gospel strikes root throughout all its fibres in the soil of the Old Testament. In closing his

preface he expresses himself as follows: "A continuous study of John's writings has led me with ever-growing force to the conviction that their interpretation can only be successfully undertaken if we hold decidedly their composition by John the apostle."

Another young scholar, M. Schneeder mann, professor at Basle, in his work: *Judaism and Christian Preaching in the Gospels* (1884), writes the following lines: "When, in the round of my academic courses, I came to the exposition of the Fourth Gospel, I was uncertain about its origin, but resolved to declare without reserve that I must remain undecided, and why. . . . To my own surprise, the result of my study was the discovery, explained in what precedes, that the cause of the Fourth Gospel and of the Gospel history is not in so bad a case as some would have us believe. . . . The impression to which I have been brought is, that there is nothing opposed to our seeing in the author of the Fourth Gospel a richly endowed Jewish thinker of strong religious fervour, nor to our recognising in this author, so conscious of his standing as eye-witness, the Apostle John."

These voices rising from the midst of the young generation, and the accordant experiences which they express, are of good augury; they announce a new phase of criticism. Hence the feeling of hope with the expression of which I began. As the result of this violent crisis there is verified anew the old device of the anvil, which has become that of John's Gospel:

"Tant plus à me battre on s'amuse,  
Tant plus de marteaux on y use."

"The more in beating me men take their joy,  
The more the hammers they must needs destroy."

I hope I have neglected nothing which could contribute to maintain this commentary abreast of the scientific labour which is expended in our day with so much solicitude on the Fourth Gospel. I have especially derived great advantage from the commentaries of MM. Weiss and Keil which have appeared since the former edition.

The Lord give power and victory to His Word within the Church and in the world!

F. GODET.

NRUCHAËL, 21st March 1885.

## AUTHOR'S PREFACE TO THE INTRODUCTION.

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IN the first edition of this work, the critical study of the fourth Gospel was divided into two distinct dissertations: the one, placed as an introduction at the beginning of the book, treated of the historical testimonies; the other formed the conclusion of the commentary, and in it were discussed the questions of internal criticism which presupposed the detailed study of the sacred composition. The present state of the *Johannine question*, as it is now called, leads me to relinquish that plan, even although it does not cease to be, in my judgment, the true and rational course of procedure. The critical study of the Gospel of John has within the last thirty years assumed such proportions, and become of such decisive importance for theology and for the church, that it has grown to be, in itself alone, a subject for a treatise. The introduction and the conclusion of the first edition have therefore been blended into one whole in this volume, and at the same time entirely worked over anew. The volumes of exegesis which will follow, God willing, without delay, will be considerably abridged, since a large portion of what formed their contents, in the first edition, has passed into the present volume.

We do not doubt that those persons who have read the first edition, and who are willing to take note of this volume, will discover in it a marked progress, both in regard to an acquaintance with contemporary critical works, and with the intrinsic value of the argument.

did not lead us to take up the defence of this unparalleled writing, we should be constrained to do so from a conviction of its authenticity, which every new study of it renders to our minds more irresistible.

We offer these pages to the Lord of the church, even while we feel them to be so little worthy of Him, and of the subject considered. We call to mind what He condescended to say of the offering of Mary: "She hath done what she could."

NEUCHÂTEL, 3d December 1876.

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## PRELIMINARIES.

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EVERY book is a mystery, of which only the author has the key. The preface may, no doubt, lift a corner of the veil; but there are books without a preface, and the writer may not tell the whole truth. To literary criticism, as it is understood in our day,<sup>1</sup> belongs the task of solving the problem set before the world by every writing worthy of attention. For a book is not fully intelligible except in so far as the obscurity of its origin is dissipated.

The science generally called *Sacred Criticism*, or *Introduction to the Old and New Testaments*, was instituted by the church to discharge this task with regard to the books which contain the object of her faith and the standards of her development. By shedding full light on the origin of each of those writings, and thus bringing its main thought into relief, it seeks to throw over their whole contents the ray of light which illumines their slightest details.

According to Schleiermacher, the ideal of sacred criticism consists in putting the reader of to-day in the place and circumstances of the original reader,<sup>2</sup> by procuring for him, through the artificial aid of science, the preliminary knowledge which the latter possessed naturally. Precious as such a result may be, it seems to me that criticism should propose to itself a still more elevated aim. Its true mission is to transport the reader into the very mind of the author, at the time when he was conceiving and elaborating his work, and to make him a witness of the composition of the book, very much like the spectator who stands by at the casting of a bell, and who, after contemplating the metal in a state of

<sup>1</sup> By Sainte-Beuve, for example.

<sup>2</sup> *Einleitung ins N. T.*, published by Wolde, p. 7.

fusion in the furnace, sees the torrent of fire flow into the mould where it is to receive its permanent form. This ideal includes Schleiermacher's. For most certainly one of the essential elements present to the author's mind while he is preparing his work, is the idea which he forms of his readers, of their state and wants. To identify ourselves with him, is therefore at the same time to identify ourselves with them.

To attain this end, or at least to approach it as nearly as possible, criticism makes use of two kinds of means: 1. Those which it borrows from history, and especially the literary history of the time which witnessed the publication of the sacred writings, or which followed it; 2. Those which it derives from the book itself.

Among the former we rank, above all, the positive accounts which have been transmitted to us by Jewish or Christian antiquity regarding the composition of this or that biblical writing; then the quotations or reminiscences of any passages of those books which are found in subsequent writers, and which demonstrate their existence and influence at a certain date; finally, the historical facts to which these writings have stood in the relation of cause or effect. Such are the *external* data.

To the second class belong all the evidences, contained in the book itself, regarding the person of its author, the circumstances in which he worked, and the motive which impelled him to write. Such are the *internal* data.

To combine these two orders of data, so as to derive from them, if possible, a harmonious result, such is the business of criticism.

This is the task which we undertake in regard to one of the most important books of the New Testament, and of the whole Bible. Luther is reported to have said that if a tyrant succeeded in destroying the Holy Scriptures, and a single copy of the Epistle to the Romans and of the Gospel of John were to escape him, Christianity would be saved. He spoke truly; for the fourth Gospel presents the object of Christian faith in its most perfect splendour, and the Epistle to the Romans describes the way of faith leading to this object with incomparable clearness. What more is needed to preserve

Christ to the world, and ever anew to give birth to the church ?

The order of our study will be as follows. After casting a general glance at the formation of our Gospel literature, we shall describe the course of the discussions which have taken place in regard to the composition of the fourth Gospel. These will be the subjects of two preliminary chapters.

Then we shall enter upon the study itself, which will embrace the following subjects:—

1. The life of the apostle to whom the fourth Gospel is generally ascribed.

2. The analysis and distinctive characteristics of this writing.

3. The circumstances of its composition: its date; the place of its origin; its author; the end which the author had in view in its composition.

After studying each of these points separately as far as possible, we shall combine the particular results thus obtained in one general view, which, unless we have missed our path, will offer the solution of the problem. Jesus has promised to His church the Spirit of truth to guide it into all truth. It is under the conduct of this guide that we place ourselves.

## CHAPTER I

### GLANCE AT THE FORMATION OF THE GOSPEL LITERATURE.

Our first three Gospels have certainly a common origin, not only inasmuch as all three relate one and the same history, but also from the fact that a certain elaboration of this history was already in existence at the time of their composition, and has given a common impress to the three narratives. Indeed, the striking agreement which is easily remarked between them, both in their general plan, and in certain series of identical accounts, and, finally, in numerous clauses, which are found exactly the same in two or in all three of these accounts, this agreement, general and particular, leaves no room for doubt that before being thus penned, the history of Jesus had already been cast in a mould in which it had received the more or less fixed form in which we find it

in our three narratives. Many think that this original Gospel type consisted of a written document, either one of our three Gospels, of which the two others were only a free reproduction, or one or even two writings, now lost, from which all our three evangelists drew. This hypothesis of written sources has been, and still is, presented in the most different forms. In none do we think it admissible. For it always leads us to hold that the subsequent writer at one time wilfully altered his model by introducing changes of real gravity; at another, proceeded in the way of most literal copying, and that while often applying these two opposite methods in one and the same verse; once again, finally, that he subjected the text of which he was making use to a multitude of modifications ridiculous because of their insignificance. Let a synopsis<sup>1</sup> be consulted, and the fact will be obvious at a glance. Is it psychologically conceivable that serious and believing writers, convinced of the supreme importance of the matter they were treating, adopted such procedure in handling it, and especially that they applied them to the reproduction of the very teachings of the Lord Jesus?—Widespread as this mode of explaining the relation between our three Gospels still is, we are convinced that criticism will end by abandoning it as a moral impossibility.

The simple and natural solution of the problem seems to us to be indicated by the book of the Acts in the passage where it speaks of the *teaching of the apostles*<sup>2</sup> as one of the foundations on which the church of Jerusalem was built (ii. 42). In this primitive apostolic teaching, the accounts of the life and death of Jesus certainly occupied the first place. These narratives, daily repeated by the apostles, and by the evangelists taught in their school, must have quickly taken a more or less fixed and definite form, not only as to the tenor of each account, but also the connecting of several accounts in a single group ordinarily forming the matter of one lesson. What we here affirm is not a pure hypothesis. St. Luke tells us, in the preface to his Gospel (the oldest document we possess on this subject), of the first written accounts of the facts of the Gospels, as composed “even as they delivered

<sup>1</sup> An edition presenting the three texts in three parallel columns.

<sup>2</sup> Διδασχὴ τῶν ἀποστόλων.

them unto us who were witnesses of them from the beginning, and who became ministers of the Word." These *witnesses* and *first servants* can have been no other than the apostles. Their accounts therefore, transmitted to the church by oral teaching, had passed as given into the writings of those who were the first to edit them. The pronoun *us* used by Luke shows that he ranked himself among the writers who were taught by the oral testimony of the apostles.

Primitive apostolic tradition, such then is the type, at once firm and yet within certain limits malleable, which has left its ineffaceable impress on our first three Gospels. Thus are satisfactorily explained, on the one hand, those general and particular resemblances which make the three writings, as it were, one and the same narrative; on the other, the differences which we remark between them, from the most considerable to the most insignificant.

These three works are therefore three independently wrought editions of the primitive tradition formulated within the Palestinian churches, and soon repeated in all countries of the world. They are three branches proceeding from the same trunk, but which sprouted under different conditions and in different directions; and thus is explained the physiognomy peculiar to each of the three books.

In the first, the Gospel of St. Matthew, we find the evangel of the Twelve at Jerusalem preserved in the form nearest to the primitive type. This fact will appear perfectly simple if it is allowed that this writing was intended for the Jewish people, and therefore precisely for the circle of readers with a view to which oral preaching had been originally put in form. The ruling idea in the Palestinian preaching must have been the Messianic dignity of Jesus. This is also the thought which forms the unity of the first Gospel. It is inscribed at the head of the book as its programme.<sup>1</sup> The formula: *That it might be fulfilled*, which recurs like a refrain throughout the whole narrative, reminds us of this parent idea at every step; and finally, it reaches meridian clearness in the conclusion, which leads us to contemplate the full realization of the Lord's Messianic destiny.<sup>2</sup> With what view was this

<sup>1</sup> Matt. i. 1: "Genealogy of Jesus Christ (Messianic)."

<sup>2</sup> Matt. xxviii. 18: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

redaction of the primitive apostolic testimony published? Evidently the author desired to address a last appeal to that people whose unbelief was carrying them to ruin. This book was therefore composed when the final catastrophe was preparing. A saying of Jesus (Matt. xxiv. 15), in which He enjoins His followers to take refuge on the other side of the Jordan as soon as war should break out, is quoted by the author with a significant *nota bene*,<sup>1</sup> which confirms the date we have just indicated.

Twenty years previously, the preaching of the gospel had already crossed the limits of Palestine and penetrated to the Gentile world. Numerous churches, almost all composed of a small nucleus of Jews and of a multitude of Gentiles grouped round them, had sprung up at the preaching of the Apostle Paul and his fellow-labourers. This immense work could not ultimately dispense with the solid foundation which the Twelve and the evangelists in Palestine and Syria had begun by laying: the consecutive narration of the acts, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Such was the imperious want which gave birth to our third Gospel, compiled by one of the most eminent companions of the apostle of the Gentiles, St. Luke. In the eyes of the Gentiles the Messianic dignity of Jesus and the argument taken from the prophecies had not the same importance as among the Jews: all that is omitted in the third Gospel. To them it was necessary, above all, to present Jesus as the Saviour of the human race. With this view Luke, after furnishing himself with the most exact information, exhibits in his delineation of the Lord's earthly ministry everything which had characterized the salvation He brought as a *free* and *universal* salvation. Hence the so profound harmony between this Gospel and the writings of St. Paul. What the former traces historically, the latter expounds theoretically. But notwithstanding those differences between it and the writing of Matthew, the Gospel of Luke always rests, as the author himself intimates in his preface, on the apostolical tradition formulated at the beginning by the Twelve. Only he has sought to complete it and to arrange it more

<sup>1</sup> "When ye shall see the abomination of desolation . . . stand in the holy place—LET HIM THAT READETH UNDERSTAND IT—then let them that are in Judea flee unto the mountains."

elaborately<sup>1</sup> with a view to cultivated Gentiles, such as Theophilus, who required a more consecutive and profound style of instruction.

Was there a third form possible? Yes; this traditional type, preserved in its austere and forcible originality by the first evangelist with a view to the Jewish people, enriched and completed by the third with a view to the churches of heathendom, might be published anew in its primitive form, as in the first Gospel, but now with a view to Gentile readers, as in the third, and such indeed is the Gospel of Mark. This writing does not possess any of the precious completions which had been added to the Palestinian Evangel by the Gospel of Luke; in this respect it resembles the first Gospel. But, on the other hand, it omits the numerous references to the prophecies and the most of the great discourses of Jesus addressed to the people and their rulers, which give to the Gospel of Matthew its so decidedly Jewish physiognomy; moreover, it adds detailed explanations regarding Jewish manners, which are not found in Matthew, and which are evidently for the behoof of Gentile readers. Thus, then, resembling Luke in its destination and Matthew in its contents, it forms as it were the link of union between the two preceding forms. This intermediate position is demonstrated by the first word of the writing: "Gospel of Jesus, the *Christ* (Messiah), the *Son of God*." The title *Christ* reminds us of the special relation of Jesus to the Jewish people; the title *Son of God*, which indicates the mysterious relation between God and this unique Man, raises this being to such a height that His appearance and work must necessarily have for their object the entire human race. To this first word of the book the last corresponds, which shows us Jesus continuing from heaven throughout the whole world that function of heavenly messenger, or divine evangelist, which He had begun to exercise on the earth. Let us also remark a distinctive feature of this narrative: in every picture, so to speak, strokes occur which belong to it peculiarly, and which betray an eye-witness. They are still substantially the traditional accounts,

<sup>1</sup> i. 3: "It seemed good to me, having accurately traced the course of all things, to write them unto thee in order that thou mightest know the certainty of the instructions which thou hast received."

but evidently transmitted by a witness who had himself taken part in the scenes related, and who, while repeating them *vivâ voce*, very naturally interspersed them with points of detail dictated by the liveliness of his own recollections.

Such to the attentive reader are our first three Gospels, called *synoptic*, because the three narratives may, without very much trouble, be placed, with a view to comparison, in three parallel columns. The date of their composition must have been very nearly the same (between the years 60 and 70). In reality, the first is as it were the last apostolic summons addressed to Israel before their destruction; the third is intended to furnish St. Paul's preaching in the Gentile world with its historical basis; and the second is the reproduction of the preachings of a witness carrying into the Gentile world the primitive Palestinian Evangel. If the composition of these three writings really took place almost at the same period and in different countries, this fact agrees with the opinion expressed above, that they were composed each one independently of the other two.

Did the church in these three monuments of the primitive popular evangelization possess all that was needed to meet the wants of believers who had not known the Lord? Must there not have been a great number of elements in the ministry of Jesus for which the apostles had not been able to find room in their missionary preaching? Had they not been led by the elementary, and in a sort catechetical, nature of the teaching of those first times, to exclude many of the sayings of Jesus which passed beyond such a level and rose to a height to which only the most advanced minds could follow them? This is in itself very probable. We have already seen that a host of picturesque details, wanting in Matthew, are found in Mark, imparting a more vivid colouring to the ancient popular tradition. The important additions of Luke prove yet more eloquently how much the riches of the ministry of Jesus exceeded the measure of the primitive oral tradition. How natural that an immediate witness of the ministry of Jesus should have felt himself called to rise for once beyond all these traditional accounts to draw directly from the source of his own memories, and while omitting all the scenes, already sufficiently known, which had passed into the ordinary narra-



tive, throw out at one effort a picture of those times in the ministry of his Master which were the most marked and impressive for his own heart! In this, it will be understood, there was no deliberate choice, no artificial distribution. This division of the Gospel materials was the natural result of the historical circumstances in which the founding of the church took place.

This course of things is so simple that it forms in a manner its own justification. It is possible to dispute the apostolic origin of the fourth Gospel, but no one can deny that the situation indicated is probable, and the part assigned to the author of such a writing, natural. It remains to be seen whether in this case the probable is *real*, and the natural *true*. This is precisely the question which we have to elucidate.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE DISCUSSIONS RELATIVE TO THE AUTHENTICITY OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

In the rapid review which is to follow, we might bring together in a single series, determined by chronological order, all the writings upon the subject before us, whatever be the tendency to which they belong. But it seems preferable to us, with a view to clearness, to distribute the authors whom we have to enumerate into three distinct series: 1st, The advocates of the entire spuriousness of our Gospel; 2d, The defenders of its absolute authenticity; 3d, The supporters of some intermediate views.<sup>1</sup>

I. Down to the end of the seventeenth century, the question had not even been raised. It was known that in the primitive church, a small sect, mentioned by Irenæus and Epiphanius, attributed the fourth Gospel to Cerinthus, an adversary of the Apostle John at Ephesus. But the science

<sup>1</sup> It is evident that this division cannot be strictly maintained, the different views have so many shades.—In revising and completing this list, we have in this new edition taken advantage of the excellent work of Caspar René Gregory (Leipzig 1875), published as a supplement to Luthardt's Commentary.

of theologians, as well as the feeling of the Church, ratified the conviction of the first Christian communities, and of their leaders, who unanimously saw in it the work of this apostle.

Some attacks of little importance, proceeding from the party of the English Deists, who flourished two centuries ago, commenced the struggle. But it did not burst forth seriously till a century later. In 1792, the English theologian Evanson raised for the first time some noteworthy objections against the general belief.<sup>1</sup> He took his stand especially on the differences between our Gospel and the Apocalypse. He attributed the composition of the former of these books to some Platonic philosopher of the second century.

The discussion was not long in being transplanted into Germany. Four years after Evanson, Eckermann<sup>2</sup> controverted the authenticity, while allowing that certain Johannine redactions must have formed the first basis of our Gospel. These notes had been amalgamated with the historical traditions gathered by the author from the mouth of John.—Eckermann retracted in 1807.<sup>3</sup>

Several German theologians carried on the attack thus opened. They urged the contradictions between the fourth and the first three Gospels, the exaggerated character of the miracles, the metaphysical tone of its discourses, the manifest relations between the theology of its author and that of Philo, the scarcity of literary traces establishing the existence of this writing in the second century.<sup>4</sup> From 1801, the cause of the authenticity seemed to be already compromised to such a degree that a German Superintendent, Vogel, allowed himself to cite the Apostle John and his interpreters to the bar of the last judgment.<sup>5</sup> This, however, was still only the first phase of the discussion, the time of those skirmishes which precede great pitched battles.

It was again a German Superintendent who opened the second period of the controversy. Bretschneider, in a work which became famous, published in 1820, collected all the

<sup>1</sup> *The Dissonance of the Four generally received Evangelists, etc.*

<sup>2</sup> *Theologische Beiträge*, vol. v., 1796.

<sup>3</sup> *Erklärung aller dunkeln Stellen des N. T.*

<sup>4</sup> Horst (1803), Cludius (1805), Ballenstädt (1812), etc.

<sup>5</sup> *Der Evangelist Johannes und seine Ausleger vor dem jüngsten Gericht.*

objections which had been previously raised, and to these added new ones.<sup>1</sup> He especially developed with much force the objection drawn from the contradictions between our Gospel and the three preceding, both as regards the form of the discourses and as regards the substance of the Christological teaching. The fourth Gospel must have been the work of a presbyter of Gentile, probably Alexandrine, origin, who lived during the first half of the second century. The learned and skilful work of Bretschneider called forth numerous replies, of which we shall speak further on, and at the close of which this theologian declared, in 1824, that the answers which had been made to his book were "more than sufficient,"<sup>2</sup> and, in 1828, that he had attained the end he had proposed to himself, viz., that of calling forth a more rigorous demonstration of the authenticity of the fourth Gospel.<sup>3</sup>

But the seeds sown by such a writing could not be eradicated by these somewhat equivocal retractions, which had a purely personal value. In 1824 and onwards, the cause of spuriousness was anew pled by Rettig.<sup>4</sup> The author of the Gospel is a disciple of John. The apostle himself certainly did not lack modesty to such an extent as to designate himself "the disciple whom Jesus loved." De Wette, in his *Introduction*, published for the first time in 1826, without positively taking a side against the authenticity, confessed the impossibility of demonstrating it in an unanswerable manner. In the same year, Reuterdahl, following in the footsteps of Vogel, assailed as a fiction the tradition of the sojourn of John in Asia Minor.<sup>5</sup>

The publication of the *Life of Jesus* by Strauss, in 1835, from the first exercised a much more decisive influence upon the criticism of the history of Jesus than upon that of the *documents* in which this history has been transmitted to us. Strauss evidently had not devoted himself to a special study of the origin of the latter. He set out, as regards the Synoptics, from the two theories of Gieseler and of Griesbach,

<sup>1</sup> *Probabilia de evangelii et epistolarum Johannis apostoli indole et origine.*

<sup>2</sup> In Tzschirner's *Magazin für christliche Prediger.*

<sup>3</sup> *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, pp. viii. and 268.

<sup>4</sup> *Ephemerides exegetico-theologicae*, i. p. 62 ff.

<sup>5</sup> In his work, *De Fontibus historiae Eusebianae.*

according to which our Gospels are a redaction of the apostolic tradition, which, after having circulated for a long time in a purely oral form, was at last slowly fixed in our Synoptics (Gieseler), at first in the redactions of Matthew and of Luke; then in that of Mark, which is only a compilation of the two others (Griesbach). As for John, he admits as valid the arguments adduced by Bretschneider; insufficient attestation in the primitive church; contents in contradiction to those of the first three Gospels, etc. And if in his third edition, in 1838, he admitted that the authenticity was not so untenable in his eyes, he was not long in retracting this concession in the following edition (1840). In reality, the slightest tergiversation upon this point unsettled the whole of his hypothesis of mythical legends. The axiom which forms its basis, the ideal is not exhausted in one individual, would be demonstrated to be false if the fourth Gospel contained, however slightly, the narrative of an eye-witness. Nevertheless, the immense commotion produced in the learned world by the work of Strauss soon reacted on the criticism of the Gospels.

Christian Hermann Weisse drew special attention to the close connection between the criticism of the history of Jesus and that of the writings in which it is preserved.<sup>1</sup> He combated the authenticity of our Gospel, but not without recognising in it a real apostolic basis. The Apostle John, with the view of fixing the image of his Master, which, in proportion as the reality receded from his view, became more and more vague in his mind, and in order to render to himself a clear account of the impression which he had preserved of the person of Jesus, had drawn up certain "studies," which, when enlarged, became the discourses of the fourth Gospel. To these portions, more or less authentic, there was adapted at a later time an altogether fictitious historical framework. It is easy to comprehend how, from this point of view, Weisse could defend the authenticity of the first Epistle of John.

At this period there appeared in the criticism of our Gospel a revolution similar to that which was taking place at the same time in the manner of regarding the first three Gospels.

<sup>1</sup> *Die Evangelische Geschichte kritisch und philosophisch bearbeitet*, 1838. *Die Evangelien-Frage*, 1856.

Wilke was then endeavouring to prove that the differences which distinguish the synoptic narratives from one another were not, as had always been believed, simple and involuntary accidents; but that it was necessary to recognise in them modifications, deliberately introduced by each author into the narrative of his predecessor or predecessors.<sup>1</sup> Bruno Bauer extended this method of explanation to the fourth Gospel.<sup>2</sup> He maintained that the Johannine narrative was not at all, as the treatment of it by Strauss supposed, the deposit of a simple legendary tradition, but that this narrative was the product of an individual conception, the reflective work of a Christian thinker and poet perfectly aware of what he was doing. The history of Jesus was thus reduced, to quote the witty expression of Ebrard, to a single line: "At that time it came to pass . . . that nothing came to pass."

In this same year Lützelberger attacked, in a more thoroughgoing manner than Reuterdahl, the tradition of John's sojourn in Asia Minor.<sup>3</sup> The author of our Gospel, according to him, was a Samaritan, whose parents emigrated to Mesopotamia, between 130 and 135, at the time of the new Jewish revolt against the Romans, and he composed the Gospel at Edessa. The "disciple whom Jesus loved" was not John, but Andrew. In a celebrated article, Fischer sought to prove by the use of the term of *Ἰουδαῖοι*, in our Gospel, that its author could not be of Jewish origin.<sup>4</sup>

We here reach the third and last period of this prolonged controversy. It dates from 1844, and has for its point of departure the famous work published at that time by Ferdinand Christian Baur.<sup>5</sup> The first phase had lasted twenty odd years, from Evanson to Bretschneider (1792-1820); the second, in like manner, twenty odd years, from Bretschneider to Baur; the third has now lasted more than thirty years.

<sup>1</sup> *Der Urevangelist*, 1838.

<sup>2</sup> *Kritik der evangel. Geschichte des Johannes*, 1840.

<sup>3</sup> *Die kirchliche Tradition über den Apostel Johannes und seine Schriften in ihrer Grundlosigkeit nachgewiesen*, 1840.

<sup>4</sup> *Tübinger Zeitschrift für Theol.* ii. 1840.

<sup>5</sup> In Zeller's *Theologische Jahrbücher*, Numbers 1, 3, and 4, reproduced and completed in the later writings of the same author: *Kritische Untersuchungen über die canonischen Evangelien*, 1847; and *Das Christenthum u. die christliche Kirche der drei ersten Jahrhunderte*, 1853.

It is now the mortal struggle. The dissertation which gave the signal for it is certainly one of the most ingenious and brilliant compositions which theological science has ever produced. The purely negative results of the criticism of Strauss demanded for their complement a positive construction; on the other side, the arbitrary and subjective character of Bruno Bauer's criticism did not meet the wants of an age eager for positive facts. The discussion had thus come, as it were, to a dead lock. Baur felt that his task was to rescue it from this position, and that the only efficacious means for the purpose was to discover in the career of the church of the second century a clearly defined historical situation, which might present itself as the soil on which was raised the imposing edifice of the fourth Gospel. He thought he had found the situation which he sought in the last third of the second century. Then certainly *Gnosis* flourished, at which the narrative of our Gospel glances all through. At that time thinkers were preoccupied with the idea of the *Logos*, which is precisely the theme of our work. The need was then making itself more and more felt of uniting in one great and single catholic church the two rival parties which till then had divided the church, and which a series of transactions had already gradually drawn closer. The fourth Gospel was fitted to be their treaty of peace. An energetic spiritual reaction was rising against the Episcopate, viz. Montanism. Our Gospel lent aid to this tendency, by borrowing from Montanism whatever truth it contained. Then, finally, there burst out the famous dispute between the churches of Asia Minor and those of the West on the subject of the Paschal rite. Now our Gospel modified the chronology of the Passion precisely so as to decide the minds of men in favour of the Western rite. This, then, was the situation fully discovered for the composition of our Gospel. At the same time, Baur, following in the footsteps of Bruno Bauer, demonstrates with wonderful ability the reflective and systematic unity of the work; he explains its logical course and its practical applications, and thus destroys at a single blow both the hypothesis of unreflective myths, on which rested the work of Strauss, and every attempt at selecting between certain authentic and other non-authentic parts in our Gospel. Accordingly Baur fixes as the date of com-

position about the year 170, or at the earliest 160; for then it is that all the circumstances indicated meet together. Only he has not attempted to designate "the great unknown," to whose pen we owe this masterpiece of high mystical philosophy and skilful ecclesiastical policy which has exercised so decisive an influence over the destinies of Christianity.

All the forces of the school conspired to support the work of the master in its different parts. From 1841 onwards, Schwegler had paved the way for it in his work on Montanism.<sup>1</sup> In his treatise on the period which followed that of the apostles, the same author assigned to each of the writings of the New Testament its place in the development of the struggle between apostolic Judæo-Christianity and Paulinism, and represented the fourth Gospel as the crowning result of that long elaboration.<sup>2</sup> Zeller completed the master's work by the study of the ecclesiastical testimonies, a study which had for its aim to sweep away from history every trace of the existence of the fourth Gospel before the epoch indicated by Baur.<sup>3</sup> Köstlin, in a famous work on *pseudonymous literature* in the primitive church, endeavoured to prove that the pseud-epigraphical style, to which Baur attributed the composition of four-fifths of the New Testament, was in conformity with literary precedents and the ideas of the epoch.<sup>4</sup> Volkmar laboured to ward off the blows with which the system of the master was incessantly threatened by the quotations, less and less indisputable, of the fourth Gospel in the writings of the second century, those of Marcion and of Justin, for instance, and the *Clementine Homilies*.<sup>5</sup> Hilgenfeld finally treated, in a more profound manner than Baur had done, the dispute about the Passover, and its relation to the authenticity of our Gospel.<sup>6</sup>

Thus learnedly supported by this Pleiad of distinguished critics, devoted, though not without marked variations, to the

<sup>1</sup> *Der Montanismus und die christliche Kirche des 2ten Jahrhunderts.*

<sup>2</sup> *Das nachapostolische Zeitalter*, 1846.

<sup>3</sup> *Die äusseren Zeugnisse über das Dasein und den Ursprung des vierten Evangeliums*, in the *Theol. Jahrbücher*, 1845 and 1847.

<sup>4</sup> *Ueber die pseudonymische Litteratur in der ältesten Kirche*, in the *Theol. Jahrbücher*, 1851.

<sup>5</sup> Compare, in particular, *Ursprung unsrer Evangelien*, 1866.

<sup>6</sup> *Der Passahstreit der alten Kirche*, 1860.

common cause, the opinion of Baur might appear for a time to have gained a complete and final triumph.

Nevertheless, within the school itself there was already manifested a divergence which, in many respects, did violence to the so skilfully constructed hypothesis of the master. Hilgenfeld abandoned the date fixed by Baur, and in consequence part of the advantages of the situation chosen by him; he removed the composition of John's Gospel from thirty to forty years backwards. According to him, this writing was connected especially with the appearance of the *Valentinian* heresy about 140. The author of the Gospel proposed to himself to introduce this Gnostic teaching into the church in a modified form. And since so early as about 150, "the existence of our Gospel could scarcely be any longer called in question," he carried back the date of it to the year 130 or 140.<sup>1</sup>

In 1860, J. R. Tobler, establishing side by side with the ideal character of the narrative a host of geographical notices or truly historical narratives, thought of ascribing our Gospel to Apollos (the author, according to him, of the Epistle to the Hebrews), who compiled it towards the end of the first century, from information obtained from John.<sup>2</sup>

In 1862, Michel Nicolas advanced the following hypothesis: A Christian of Ephesus described the ministry of Jesus in our Gospel from the accounts of the Apostle John; and this is the personage who, in the two small Epistles, designates himself as the *elder* (*the presbyter*), and whom history knows under the name of *Presbyter John*.<sup>3</sup> D'Eichthal adopted Hilgenfeld's idea of a relationship between our Gospel and Gnosis.<sup>4</sup> The work which Stap published the same year, in his collection of critical studies, is only a reproduction without originality of all the ideas of the Tübingen school.<sup>5</sup>

In 1864 appeared two important works. Weizsäcker, in

<sup>1</sup> *Das Evangelium u. die Briefe Johannis nach ihrem Lehrbegriffe dargestellt*, 1849; *die Evangelien*, 1854; *das Urchristenthum*, 1855.

<sup>2</sup> *Ueber den Ursprung des vierten Ewang.*, in the *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftl. Theol.* 1860.

<sup>3</sup> *Etudes critiques sur la Bible: Nouveau Testament.*

<sup>4</sup> *Les Evangiles*, 1863, t. i. p. 25 ff. et al.

<sup>5</sup> *Etudes historiques et critiques sur les origines du christianisme*, 1863.



his treatise on the Gospels,<sup>1</sup> sought to bring out from our Gospel itself the proof of a distinction between the editor of this writing and the Apostle John, who served as his authority. The former meant only to reproduce freely the impressions he had received when hearing the eye-witness apostle describe the life of our Lord.

The second work takes a more radical position ; it is that of Scholten.<sup>2</sup> The author of the fourth Gospel is a Christian of Gentile origin, initiated into Gnosticism, and who seeks to make this tendency profitable to the church. He seeks also to restrain within just limits Marcionite Antinomianism and Montanist exaltation. As to the Paschal dispute, the evangelist does not decide for the Western rite, as Baur thinks ; he rather seeks to assert Pauline spiritualism, which abolishes all feast-days in the church. According to these indications, the author wrote about 150. He succeeded in presenting to the world, under the figure of the mysterious personage designated as "the disciple whom Jesus loved," the ideal believer, that truly spiritual Christianity which was capable of becoming the universal religion. M. Réville has expounded and developed the viewpoint of Scholten in the *Revue des Deux-Mondes*.<sup>3</sup>

Here let us again refer to the work of Volkmar (p. 15),<sup>4</sup> directed against the person of Tischendorf as much as against his book, *When were our Gospels Composed ?* Deplorable as its tone is, this work expounds with erudition and precision the viewpoint of Baur's school. The author fixes the date of our Gospel between 150 and 160.

In 1867, appeared the *History of Jesus*, by Keim.<sup>5</sup> He energetically opposes, in the introduction, the authenticity of our Gospel. He takes his stand especially on the philosophical character of the writing, then upon the contradictions between the narrative, the nature of things, and the data furnished by the writings of St. Paul, and the synoptic narratives. But, on the other hand, he establishes the traces of its existence as far back as the earliest times of the second

<sup>1</sup> *Untersuchungen über die evangel. Geschichte.*

<sup>2</sup> *Das Evang. nach Johannes*, 1864, translated into German by H. Lang, 1867.

<sup>3</sup> *La question des évangiles*, Mai 1866.

<sup>4</sup> *Der Ursprung unserer Evangelien*, 1866.

<sup>5</sup> *Gesch. Jesu von Nazara.*

century. "The testimonies," he says, "go back even to the year 120; so that the composition dates from the beginning of the second century, in the reign of Trajan, between 100 and 117."<sup>1</sup>

The author was a Christian of Jewish origin, belonging to the *Diaspora* of Asia Minor, thoroughly in sympathy with the Gentiles, and well acquainted with all that concerned Palestine. In a more recent writing, a popular reproduction of his great work, Keim has gone back from that early date, assigning as his reason for the change of opinion, arguments which, we may say, have no great weight; he now, with Hilgenfeld, fixes its composition about the year 130.<sup>2</sup> Of what importance here is a decade of years? It would follow from the one as well as from the other of these latter dates, that twenty or thirty years after the death of John at Ephesus, the fourth Gospel was attributed to him by the very presbyters of the country where he had spent the end of his life, and where he had died. How can we explain the success of a forgery in such circumstances? Keim felt this difficulty, and endeavoured to remove it. To this end he found no other means than to take up the idea suggested by Reuterdahl and Lützelberger, and to represent the alleged sojourn of John in Asia Minor as a mere fable. By this step he went beyond even the Tübingen school. For Baur and Hilgenfeld did not dispute the truth of that tradition. Their criticism even rests essentially on the reality of that fact; first, because the Apocalypse, the Johannine composition of which serves them as a lever for overturning that of the Gospel, demands the sojourn of John in Asia; and next, because the argument which both derive from the Paschal dispute falls to the ground so soon as the sojourn of the Apostle John in that country is no longer admitted. At the present day, on the contrary, since the criticism which is hostile to our Gospel feels itself embarrassed by this sojourn, it throws it overboard without ceremony. According to Keim, that tradition is only the result of a half intentional misunderstanding of Irenæus, who applied to John the apostle what Polycarp had related before

<sup>1</sup> Vol. i. p. 146.

<sup>2</sup> *Gesch. Jesu, nach den Ergebnissen heutiger Wissenschaft, für weitere Kreise*, 3d ed. 1873.

him of another person of the same name. Scholten arrives at the same result in a different way.<sup>1</sup> This tradition is to be explained, according to him, through a confusion of the author of the Apocalypse, who was not the apostle, but who had borrowed his name, with the apostle himself; and thus was imagined the sojourn of John in Asia, where the Apocalypse seems to have been composed. However this may be, and however the traditional misunderstanding is to be explained, the discovery of this error "takes away, according to Keim, the last support of the idea of the composition of the Gospel by the son of Zebedee."<sup>2</sup> It is plain that two of the bases of Baur's criticism—the authenticity of the Apocalypse, and the sojourn of John in Asia—are at this hour undermined by those very men who continued his work, because such a negation appears to them the only means of making an end of the authenticity of our Gospel.

In 1868, the English author Davidson ranked himself amongst the opponents of the authenticity.<sup>3</sup> Holtzmann, like Keim, sees in our Gospel an ideal composition, but nevertheless one not entirely fictitious. The book dates from the epoch of the Epistle of Barnabas (the first third of the second century); it can be established that the church received it favourably from the year 150.<sup>4</sup> Krenkel, in 1871, defended the sojourn of the apostle in Asia; he attributed to him the composition of the Apocalypse, but not that of the Gospel.<sup>5</sup>

The anonymous English work, *Supernatural Religion*, which within a few years has reached a very large number of editions, combats the authenticity with the usual arguments.<sup>6</sup>

The year 1875 witnessed the appearance of two works of considerable importance; two Introductions to the New Testament, that of Hilgenfeld,<sup>7</sup> and the third edition of Bleek's *Introduction*, published with original notes by Mangold.<sup>8</sup> Hilgenfeld sums up in his work the entire critical labours of the past and of the present day. In regard to

<sup>1</sup> *Der Apostel Johannes in Klein Asien*, translated by Spiegel, 1872.

<sup>2</sup> P. 167.

<sup>3</sup> *Introduction to the Study of the New Test.*, vol. ii.

<sup>4</sup> Schenkel's *Bibellexicon*, vol. ii., art. "Evang. nach Joh." 1869.

<sup>5</sup> *Der Apostel Johannes*, 1871.

<sup>6</sup> *Supernatural Religion*, 1874.

<sup>7</sup> *Historisch-Kritische Einleitung in das N. T.*

<sup>8</sup> *Einleitung in das N. T.*, von F. R. Bleek, 3d ed. by W. Mangold.

John, he continues in some respects to defend the cause to which he consecrated the first-fruits of his pen: the spuriousness of the fourth Gospel, composed, according to him, under the influence of the Gnosticism of Valentinus. Mangold accompanies the paragraphs in which Bleek defends the apostolic origin of our Gospel, with very instructive critical notes, in which he seeks for the most part to refute this critic. The external evidences would seem to him sufficient to establish the authenticity. But the internal difficulties have not according to him at least hitherto, been successfully surmounted.

In 1876, a jurist, d'Uechritz, published a book,<sup>1</sup> in which he ascribes our Gospel to a disciple of Jesus belonging to Jerusalem, probably the Presbyter John, who took the mask of the disciple whom Jesus loved, and composed the work under his name. This critic regards as unfounded the opinion so widespread, that the delineation of Jesus given in the Synoptics is less elevated than the idea which is given of Him in St. John.

Four writers remain to be mentioned here, three French and one German, who in our former edition figured in the list of defenders of the absolute or partial authenticity, and who have passed over to the opposite camp, Renan, Reuss, Sabatier, and Hase.

Renan from the first manifested a marked antipathy to the discourses ascribed to Jesus by the fourth Gospel. But he always brought out prominently the remarkable signs of authenticity attaching to the narrative parts of this work. And so he showed himself disposed, in the first editions of his *Vie de Jésus*, to acknowledge as the basis of the historical parts, not only traditions proceeding from the Apostle John, but even "precise notes drawn up by him." In the truly admirable dissertation which closes the thirteenth edition, and in which he discusses the question thoroughly, analyzing the Gospel from this point of view, narrative after narrative, he shows the conflicting appearances to be almost exactly balanced, and concludes by asserting positively only this alternative: either the author is John, or he wished to pass

<sup>1</sup> *Studien eines Laien über den Ursprung, die Beschaffenheit und die Bedeutung des Evang. nach Johannes.*

himself off as John. Finally, in his last book, entitled *L'Eglise chrétienne*,<sup>1</sup> he reaches the result which might have been foreseen. The author was perhaps a Christian to whom were confided the apostle's traditions, or at least those of two other disciples of Jesus, John the presbyter and Aristion, who lived at Ephesus towards the end of the first century. One might even, according to Renan, go the length of supposing that this writer is no other than Cerinthus, the adversary of John at Ephesus, at the same period.

Reuss and Sabatier have just finished their evolution likewise in the same direction. In all his former works,<sup>2</sup> Reuss had maintained two theses hardly compatible: the almost entirely artificial and fictitious character of the discourses of Jesus in our Gospel, and its apostolic origin. It was not difficult to foresee two things: (1) that the one of these theses would end in excluding the other; (2) that it would be the former which would carry the day over the latter. This is what has just happened. In his *Théologie Johannique*<sup>3</sup> Reuss pronounces his final judgment on this subject: The fourth Gospel is not the Apostle John's. But Reuss shrinks from conceding that it is the writing of a forger. And it is not necessary to admit this, for the author expressly distinguishes himself from the Apostle John in more than one passage, and confines himself to tracing back to him the origin of the narratives contained in his book. We thus meet again point by point the opinion mentioned above, of Weizsäcker.

Sabatier, in his excellent essay on the sources of the life of Jesus,<sup>4</sup> had also supported the authenticity of our Gospel. But having once adopted the views of Reuss as regards the appreciation of the discourses of Jesus, he was fatally bound to follow him to the end. He has just declared himself definitely against the authenticity in his article on the Apostle John, in the *Encyclopédie des sciences Religieuses*:<sup>5</sup> an author

<sup>1</sup> 1879.

<sup>2</sup> *Ideen zur Einleitung in das Ev. Joh.* (Denkschr. der theol. Gesellsch. zu Strassb.) 1840; *Geschichte der N. T. Schriften*, 1842; *Histoire de la théologie chrétienne au siècle apostolique*, 1852.

<sup>3</sup> *La Bible: Nouveau Testament*, 6th part, 1879.

<sup>4</sup> *Essai sur les sources de la vie de Jésus*, 1866.

<sup>5</sup> Tome vii. 1879, pp. 181-193.

whose constant concern is to exalt the Apostle John cannot be John himself. It is one of his disciples who, thinking he might identify himself with him, has edited the Gospel history in the form which it had taken in Asia Minor; he thus gives to the church the *apocalypse of the Spirit*, the counterpart of the Apocalypse properly so called, written by the apostle.

From 1829 onwards, in the different editions of his manual on the Life of Jesus,<sup>1</sup> Hase had maintained the Johannine origin of the fourth Gospel. In 1866, he published a discourse in which he represented it as the last product of the apostle's mind arrived at its full maturity.<sup>2</sup> But this critic has fallen under the same fatal law as the three preceding writers. In his *History of Jesus*,<sup>3</sup> published in 1876, he abandons the authenticity, though not without painful scruples. "Let us cast a glance," says he in closing the discussion, "at the eight reasons alleged against the Johannine origin: they have not approved themselves as decisive;<sup>4</sup> yet it has not been possible completely to refute them all. . . . I thus see science forced to a position fitted to reconcile the conflicting arguments. A tradition different from that of the other Gospels, and already containing the notion of the Logos, had grown up in Asia under the influence of John's writings. It had remained in a purely oral state so long as John lived." After his death (ten years after, or perhaps more) this tradition was committed to writing by a gifted disciple of the apostle. He wrote as if the latter himself were the writer. Thus it is that the evangelist can at once appeal to the testimony of his own eyes (i. 14), and to that of another different from himself. "Who was the writer? The Presbyter John? Possibly. But possibly also an author unknown. The first Epistle may have proceeded from the same author, writing in the person of John; but possibly also from John himself, and may have served as a model for the style of the Gospel." This hypothesis, according to the author, is a compromise

<sup>1</sup> *Das Leben Jesu*. Ein Lehrbuch für Academische Vorlesungen, 5th ed. 1865.

<sup>2</sup> *Das Evangelium des Johannes*. Eine Rede an die Gemeinde.

<sup>3</sup> *Geschichte Jesu*.

<sup>4</sup> "Sie haben sich nicht als entscheidend erwiesen."

between contradictory facts. "It is not without a heavy heart," he adds, "that I have parted from faith in the full authenticity of the Johannine writing." Finally, a little further on he says again: "The time has come in German theology when the man who dares even to acknowledge the fourth Gospel as a source possessing historical value, compromises his scientific honour.<sup>1</sup> It was not always so, even among those who were not wanting either in mental vigour or mental freedom. But that may yet change again:<sup>2</sup> the spirit of the times exercises a power even in science." What reflections are suggested by these mournful confessions of the veteran of Jena!

II. This persevering attack on the authenticity of the fourth Gospel resembles the siege of a fortress, and things have come to such a pass that already many think they see the standard of the besieger floating triumphantly over the ramparts. But the defenders have not been inactive, and the incessant transformations which the attacking works have undergone, as the preceding exposition proves, leave no room for doubt as to the relative success of their efforts. Let us rapidly enumerate the works devoted to the defence of the authenticity.

The oldest attack—that of the sectaries of the second century, called *Alogi*—did not remain unanswered; for it seems certain that the work of *Hippolytus* (beginning of the third century), the title of which appears in the catalogue of his works,<sup>3</sup> *In behalf of the Gospel of John and of the Apocalypse*,<sup>4</sup> was directed against them.

The attacks of the English Deists were repulsed in Germany and Holland by Le Clerc<sup>5</sup> and Lampe; by the latter, in his celebrated commentary on the Gospel of John.<sup>6</sup>

Two Englishmen, Priestley<sup>7</sup> and Simpson,<sup>8</sup> replied at once to

<sup>1</sup> Here the author quotes a sentence of Keim's.

<sup>2</sup> "Es kann aber auch anders kommen . . ." (p. 52).

<sup>3</sup> Catalogue engraved on the pedestal of his statue, discovered at Rome in 1561.

<sup>4</sup> Ἐπιτὸ τοῦ κατὰ Ἰωάννην εὐαγγελίου καὶ ἀποκάλυψως.

<sup>5</sup> *Annotationes ad Hammond, Nov. Test.* 1714.

<sup>6</sup> *Commentarius in Evang. Johannis*, 1727.

<sup>7</sup> *Letters to a Young Man*, 1798.

<sup>8</sup> *An Essay on the Authenticity of the N. T.* 1793.

Evanson. Storr and Süsskind resolved the objections raised shortly after in Germany;<sup>1</sup> and that with such success, that Eckermann and Schmidt declared that they retracted their doubts.

Following up this first phase of the conflict, Eichhorn (1810), Hug (1808), Bertholdt (1813), in their well-known Introductions to the New Testament, Wegscheider in a special work,<sup>2</sup> and others besides, unanimously declared themselves on the side of the authenticity; so that at the beginning of this century the storm seemed calmed down and the question decided in favour of the traditional opinion. The historian Gieseler, in his admirable little work on the origin of the Gospels (1818), decided in the same way, and gave expression to the opinion that John had composed his book for the instruction of those Gentiles who had already made some advance in the Christian religion."<sup>3</sup>

The work of Bretschneider, which all at once broke this apparent calm, called forth a multitude of replies, among which we shall cite only those of Olshausen,<sup>4</sup> Crome,<sup>5</sup> and Hauff.<sup>6</sup> The first editions of the commentaries of Lücke (1820) and of Tholuck (1827) also appeared at this same period.

In consequence of the first of these publications, Bretschneider declared, as we have already said, that his objections were solved; so that once again the calm seemed restored, and Schleiermacher, with all his school, could devote himself, without encountering any opposition worthy of note, to the predilection which he felt for our Gospel. From the very beginning of his scientific career, Schleiermacher, in his *Discourses on Religion*, proclaimed the Christ of John to be the true historic Christ, and maintained that the synoptic narrative must be subordinated to our Gospel. Critics so learned and independent as Schott and Credner in like manner supported at that time, in their Introductions, the

<sup>1</sup> In Flatt's Magazine, 1798, Number 4, and 1800, Number 6.

<sup>2</sup> *Versuch einer vollständigen Einleit. in das Evang. des Johannes*, 1806.

<sup>3</sup> *Historisch-krit. Versuch über die Entstehung und die frühesten Schicksale der schriftlichen Evangelien*.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Echtheit der vier canonischen Evangelien*, 1823.

<sup>5</sup> *Probabilia haud probabilia*, 1824.

<sup>6</sup> *Die Authentie und der hohe Werth des Evang. Johannis*, 1831.



side of the authenticity.<sup>1</sup> De Wette alone at that time let a somewhat discordant voice be heard.

The appearance of the *Life of Jesus* by Strauss, in 1835, was therefore like a thunderbolt bursting in a serene sky. This work called forth a whole legion of apologetic replies; above all, that of Tholuck on the credibility of the evangelical history,<sup>2</sup> and the *Life of Jesus* by Neander.<sup>3</sup> The concessions made to Strauss by the latter have often been erroneously interpreted. They had for their aim only to secure a minimum of indisputable facts, by giving up what might be the subject of attack. And it was this work, so moderate and impartial, and every word of which breathes the incorruptible love of truth, which seems for the moment to have made the greatest impression upon Strauss, and to have drawn from him, in reference to the Gospel of John, the species of retraction expressed in his third edition.<sup>4</sup>

Gfroerer,<sup>5</sup> although starting from an entirely different point of view from the two preceding writers, defended the authenticity of our Gospel against Strauss; Frommann,<sup>6</sup> on his side, refuted the hypothesis of Weisse. From 1837 to 1844, Norton published his great work on the proofs of the authenticity of the Gospels,<sup>7</sup> and Guericke, in 1843, his Introduction to the New Testament.<sup>8</sup>

In the following years there appeared the work of Ebrard on the Gospel history,<sup>9</sup> the truth of which he valiantly defended against Strauss and Bruno Bauer and the third edition of Lücke's commentary (1848). But the latter made such concessions in regard to the credibility of the discourses, and of the Christological teaching of John, that his opponents did not fail soon to turn his own work against the very thesis he had desired to defend.

We reach the last period—that of the struggle maintained with Baur and his school. Ebrard was the first to appear in

<sup>1</sup> That of Schott in 1830; that of Crœdner in 1836.

<sup>2</sup> *Die Glaubwürdigkeit der evangel. Geschichte*, 1837.

<sup>3</sup> *Das Leben Jesu Christi*, 1837.

<sup>4</sup> Edition of 1840.

<sup>5</sup> *Gesch. des Urchristenthums*, 1838.

<sup>6</sup> *Ueber die Echtheit und Integrität des Evang. Joh.* 1840.

<sup>7</sup> *The Evidences of the Genuineness of the Gospels.*

<sup>8</sup> *Historisch-Kritische Einleitung in das N. T.*

<sup>9</sup> *Wissenschaftliche Kritik der evangel. Geschichte*, 1st ed. 1842, 3d ed. 1868.

the breach.<sup>1</sup> At his side appeared a young savant, who, in a work filled with rare patristic erudition, and science at first-hand, sought to recall to the right path historical criticism, which, in the hands of Baur, seemed to him to be going astray. We mean Thiersch, whose work, modestly entitled an *Essay*, is even at this day, for beginners, one of the most useful guides in the domain of the history of the first two centuries.<sup>2</sup> Baur could not endure this call to order which was addressed to him—to him, a veteran in science—by so young a writer. Under a feeling of irritation, he wrote that violent pamphlet in which he accused his opponent of fanaticism, and which assumed almost the character of a denunciation.<sup>3</sup> The reply of Thiersch was as remarkable for its propriety and dignity of tone as for the excellence of the general observations which are there presented on the criticism of the sacred writings.<sup>4</sup> We may call in question the correctness of several of Thiersch's opinions, but it cannot be denied that his two works abound in ingenious and original points of view. A strange work appeared at this epoch. The author is usually quoted in German criticism under the name of "*The Anonymous Saxon*;" he is now known to have been a Saxon theologian named Hasert, who then belonged to the Thurgovian clergy. He defended the authenticity of our Gospels; but with the intention of demonstrating by that very authenticity how the apostles of Jesus, the authors of these books, or rather of these pamphlets, had only laboured to decry and blacken one another.<sup>5</sup>

The most able and learned reply to the works of Baur and of Zeller was that of Bleek in 1846.<sup>6</sup> Alongside of this writing the articles of Hauff deserve to be especially mentioned.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Das Evang. Joh. und die neueste Hypothese über seine Entstehung*, 1845.

<sup>2</sup> *Versuch zur Herstellung des historischen Standpuncts für die Kritik der neuest. Schriften*, 1845.

<sup>3</sup> *Der Kritiker und der Fanatiker in der Person des Herrn H. W. J. Thiersch*, 1846.

<sup>4</sup> *Einige Worte über die Echtheit der neuest. Schriften, zur Erwiderung, etc.*, 1847.

<sup>5</sup> *Die Evangelien, ihr Geist, ihre Verfasser, und ihr Verhältniss zu einander*, 1845.

<sup>6</sup> *Beiträge zur Evangelien-kritik*.

<sup>7</sup> *Einige Bemerkungen über die Composition des Johanna. Evangeliums, in the Studien und Kritiken*, 1846.

In the following years, Weitzel and Steitz discussed with great care and erudition the argument derived by Baur from the Paschal controversy at the end of the second century.<sup>1</sup> Following in the footsteps of Bindemann (1842), Semisch demonstrated the use of our four Gospels by Justin Martyr.<sup>2</sup>

The year 1852 witnessed the appearance of two very interesting works, that of the Dutch author Niermeyer, designed to prove, by a discriminating and thorough study of the writings attributed to John, that the Apocalypse and the Gospel could and must both have been composed by him, and that the differences of substance and of form which distinguish them are to be explained by the profound spiritual revolution which took place in the apostle in consequence of the fall of Jerusalem.<sup>3</sup> A similar idea was at the same time given out by Hase.<sup>4</sup> The second work is Luthardt's commentary on the fourth Gospel, the first part of which contains a series of the characteristics of the principal actors in the Gospel drama, drawn after St. John, intended to make palpable the living reality of all these persons. These portraits are full of delicate and correct observations.

Ewald, like Hase, defends the authenticity, but that while allowing scarcely any historical credibility to the discourses which the apostle ascribes to Jesus, and even to the miraculous deeds which he relates.<sup>5</sup> This is an inconsistency on which Baur has severely animadverted in his reply to Hase. Such defences of a gospel are almost equivalent to sentences of condemnation pronounced against it,—or, rather, they are self-destructive. We may say as much almost of the opinion of Bunsen,<sup>6</sup> who regards the Gospel of John as the only monument of gospel history which proceeds from an eye-

<sup>1</sup> Weitzel, *Die christliche Passahfeier der drei ersten Jahrhunderte*, 1848; Steitz in the *Studien und Kritiken*, 1856 and 1857.

<sup>2</sup> *Die apostolischen Denkwürdigkeiten des Märtyrers Justin*, 1848.

<sup>3</sup> *Over de echtheid der johanneische Schriften*, etc., 1852. See this work reviewed in the *Revue de Théologie*, June, July, and September 1856. See also Réville's articles, *Jean le prophète et Jean l'évangéliste, ou la crise de la foi chez un apôtre* (*Rev. de Théol.* 1854).

<sup>4</sup> *Die Tübinger Schule, Sendschreiben an Baur*, 1855; *Vom Evangelium des Johannes*, 1866.

<sup>5</sup> *Jahrbücher der biblischen Wissenschaft*, 1851, 1853, 1860, 1865; *Die Johann. Schriften*, 1861.

<sup>6</sup> In his *Bibelwerk*.

witness, who declares even that otherwise "there is no longer an historical Christ," and who yet consigns to the domain of fable a fact so decisive as that of the resurrection. Bleek, in his Introduction to the New Testament,<sup>1</sup> Meyer, Hengstenberg, Lange in their commentaries, have pronounced in favour of the authenticity, also Astié<sup>2</sup> (who adopts Niermeyer's point of view), as also the author of these lines.<sup>3</sup> The Johannine question in its relation to that of the synoptic Gospels has been treated in an instructive manner by De Pressensé.<sup>4</sup>

The study of the patristic testimonies has recently formed the subject of two works, the one of a popular character, the other more strictly scientific: the small work of Tischendorf on the date of the composition of our Gospels,<sup>5</sup> and the academic programme of Riggerbach in 1866, relating to the historical and literary testimonies in favour of John's Gospel.<sup>6</sup> The solidity and impartiality of this latter work have been recognised by the opponents of the author.

To these two writings we may add that of Hofstede de Groot, professor at Groningen, in which he treats of the question of the date of Basilides, and of the Johannine quotations, especially in the Gnostic writers.<sup>7</sup> The cause of the authenticity has likewise been maintained by the Abbé Déramey (1868).<sup>8</sup>

The tradition of John's sojourn in Asia Minor has been vigorously defended, against Keim, by Steitz<sup>9</sup> and Wabnitz.<sup>10</sup> Wittichen, adopting a viewpoint which is peculiar to himself, gives up the sojourn of the Apostle John in Asia; but that in order the better to support the authenticity of our Gospel, maintaining that it was composed by the apostle in

<sup>1</sup> The chapters of Bleek relating to the Gospel of John have been translated into French by Bruston, under the title, *Etude critique sur l'évangile de Jean* [Eng. trans. of Bleek's *Introd. to N. T.*, Edinburgh 1870].

<sup>2</sup> *Explanation of the Gospel according to St. John*, 1863.

<sup>3</sup> *Commentary on John's Gospel*, 1864; trans. into German by Wunderlich, 1869; the conclusion, since 1866, by Wirz, under the title, *Prüfung der Streitfragen über das 4te Evang.*, 2d ed. 1876.

<sup>4</sup> In the first book of his *Vie de Jésus* [Eng. trans., London 1866].

<sup>5</sup> *Wann wurden unsere Evangelien verfasst?* 1865, 4th ed. 1866.

<sup>6</sup> *Die Zeugnisse für das Evang. Johannis neu untersucht.*

<sup>7</sup> *Basilides am Ausgang des apostolischen Zeitalters*, German ed., 1868.

<sup>8</sup> *Defence of the Fourth Gospel.* <sup>9</sup> *Studien und Kritiken*, 1869.

<sup>10</sup> In the *Bulletin théologique*, 1868.

Syria, to combat Ebionites of Essenian tendencies. The writing would then date from the times which immediately followed the fall of Jerusalem. As to the John of Asia Minor, he was the presbyter, the author of the Apocalypse.<sup>1</sup> We have here the antipode of the Tübingen thesis.

In two works, the one by Zahn, the other by Riggenbach, the question of the existence of the Presbyter John as distinct from the apostle has been discussed. After a very careful study of the famous passage of Papias relative to this question, they conclude in the negative.<sup>2</sup> So also Leimbach in a special study,<sup>3</sup> and Professor Milligan of Aberdeen, in an article in the *Journal of Sacred Literature*, entitled "John the Presbyter" (Oct. 1867).

The historical credibility of the discourses of Jesus in the fourth Gospel has been defended against modern objections by Gess, in the first volume of the second edition of his work on the Lord's person;<sup>4</sup> and more especially by M. H. Meyer, in a very remarkable thesis for the degree of licentiate.<sup>5</sup> From the year 1872 dates the English work of Sanday;<sup>6</sup> and from 1873 that of the Superintendent Leuschner,<sup>7</sup>—a courageous little work, which specially attacks Keim and Scholten.

We close this review by mentioning six recent and remarkable works, all devoted to the defence of the authenticity. Three are products of German science. The first is Luthardt's critical study,<sup>8</sup> forming in a special volume the introduction to the second edition of the commentary on the fourth Gospel. The second is Beyschlag's brilliant work in the *Studien und Kritiken*,<sup>9</sup> which contains perhaps the ablest answers to the modern objections. Bernhard Weiss (in the sixth edition of

<sup>1</sup> *Der geschichtliche Charakter des Evang. Joh.* 1869.

<sup>2</sup> Zahn, "Papias von Hierapolis," in the *Studien und Kritiken*, 1866, 1d number; Riggenbach, "Johannes der Apostel und Presbyter," in the *Jahrbücher für deutsche Theologie*, 1862.

<sup>3</sup> *Das Papias Fragment*, 1875; reply to the work, *Das Papias Fragment des Eusebius*, by Weiffenbach, 1874.

<sup>4</sup> *Christi Person und Werk, Neue Bearbeitung*, 1er Theil: *Christi Zeugnis*, etc., 1870.

<sup>5</sup> *Are the Discourses of the Fourth Gospel the Historical Discourses of Jesus?* 1872.

<sup>6</sup> *The Authorship and Historical Character of the Fourth Gospel.*

<sup>7</sup> *Das Evang. Joh. und seine neuesten Widersacher.*

<sup>8</sup> *Der Johan. Ursprung des vierten Evang.* 1874.

<sup>9</sup> 1874 and 1875

Meyer's commentary) has treated the question of the origin of our Gospel at once profoundly and concisely.<sup>1</sup> He stoutly defends the authenticity, without, however, rigorously maintaining the historical character of the discourses.

The French work is that of Nyegaard.<sup>2</sup> It is a thesis devoted to the examination of the external evidences relating to the authenticity. This same subject is specially treated by the first of the two English works, that of Ezra Abbot, professor of the University of Harvard.<sup>3</sup> This work seems to me to exhaust the subject. A thorough acquaintance with modern discussions, profound study of the evidences of the second century, moderation and precision of judgment, nothing is wanting. The other English work is the commentary of Westcott, professor at Cambridge.<sup>4</sup> In the introduction all the critical questions are treated with erudition and tact.

III. Pressed by the force of the reasons for and against the authenticity, certain theologians have sought, by taking up various middle positions, to give full weight to both.

Some have tried to make a selection between portions truly Johannine and those which have been added later. Thus Weisse, to whom we have been forced to assign an important part in the history of the conflict against the authenticity (p. 12), would nevertheless be disposed to attribute to John himself the verses, ch. i. 1-5 and 9-14; certain passages in ch. iii.; finally, the discourses of ch. xiv.-xvii. (rejecting the dialogue portions and the narrative elements).

Schweizer has proposed another mode of selection.<sup>5</sup> According to him, the narrations which have Galilee for the theatre of action must be eliminated from the Johannine writing; they have been added at a later time to facilitate the harmony between the narrative of John and that of the Synoptics. Is not chapter xxi., for example, a manifest addition? Schenkel had formerly proposed to consider the

<sup>1</sup> *Kritisch-exeget. Handbuch über das Evang. des Johann.*, 6th ed. 1880.

<sup>2</sup> *Essai sur les critères externes de l'authenticité du quatrième évangile*, 1876.

<sup>3</sup> *The Authorship of the Fourth Gospel.—External Evidences*, Boston 1880.

<sup>4</sup> *The Holy Bible*, with commentary by a number of English bishops and clergymen, vol. ii. 1880.

<sup>5</sup> *Das Evang. Joh. nach seinem inneren Werth kritisch untersucht*, 1841. The author has since then withdrawn his hypothesis.

discourses as forming the primitive work, and the historical parts as added at a later date.<sup>1</sup> But since the unity of the composition of our Gospel has been triumphantly demonstrated, the division of it in this external way has been abandoned. We are not aware of any more recent attempts of this kind.

This long enumeration, in which we have included only the more remarkable works, proves of itself the gravity of the question.<sup>2</sup> A century will soon have elapsed during which all the forces of science have been put forth to take or defend this position. The Emperor Julian was therefore not mistaken when he signalized the supreme importance of John's work in the saying attributed to him,<sup>3</sup> "It was this John who, by declaring that the Word was made flesh, wrought all the mischief." Which for Christians signifies: wrought the triumph of the Gospel.

Let us sum up the preceding exposition :

We may do so by means of the following scale, which embraces all the points of view mentioned :—

1. Some deny to the Apostle John all, even moral and

<sup>1</sup> *Studien und Kritiken*, 1840 (review of Weisse's work). In his later works, he makes the Gospel an ideal composition, dating from 110-120.

<sup>2</sup> Let us mention, besides, various journalistic articles which are not without importance. Above all, three remarkable articles by Weizsäcker in the *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* : *Das Selbstzeugniß des Johann. Christus* (1857) ; *Beiträge zur Charakteristik des joh. Ev.* (1859) ; *die joh. Logoslehre* (1862). Next, four studies by Holtzmann in the *Zeitschrift für wissenschaft. Theol.* : *Barnabas und Johannes* (1871), where the author proves that the letter of Barnabas rests on Matthew, not on John ; *Hermas und Johannes* (1875), where he seeks to demonstrate, in opposition to Zahn, that it is not Hermas who depends on John, but John who is posterior to Hermas ; the *Pastor* is a scholar's essay which the fourth Gospel afterwards perfected (Harnack in 1876 refuted Holtzmann in the same journal, but without accepting Zahn's thesis) ; *Johannes, Ignatius, und Polycarp* (1877), where he reduces to nothing the testimonies borrowed from the two latter in favour of John's Gospel ; *Papias und Johannes* (1880), where he seeks to show that the order of the apostles' names in the famous list of the authorities of Papias does not rest, as Steitz proved, on the Gospel of John.—The two works of Van Goens : *L'apôtre Jean est-il l'auteur du 4e évangile?* and of Rambert, in reply to the preceding, in the *Revue de théologie et de philosophie*, Lausanne 1876 and 1877.—Weiffenbach's study on the testimony of Papias (p. 37), and Ludemann's reply ("Zur Erklärung des Papiasfragments") in the *Jahrb. für protest. Theol.* 1879. This last work closes with a general survey of the whole Johannine literature.—Finally, a critical article by Hilgenfeld on Luthardt's introduction to the fourth Gospel and on my own in the *Jahrb. für wissenschaft. Theol.* 1880.

<sup>3</sup> Cyril, *Contra Julianum*.

indirect participation in the composition of the writing which bears his name. Excepting some elements borrowed from the Synoptics, this writing contains only a fictitious history (Baur, Keim).

2. Others make our Gospel the free compilation of Johannine traditions, which had lingered in Asia Minor after the apostle's sojourn at Ephesus; the author believed he might innocently pass himself off as the Apostle John (Renan, Hase).

3. A third party do not allow that the author wished to pass for John; they think, on the contrary, that he has expressly distinguished himself from the apostle whose writings served him as authorities (Weizsäcker, Reuss).

4. The partisans of middle positions go a little further. They find in the Gospel a certain number of passages or notes due to the pen of John himself, and which were amplified later (Weisse, Schweizer).

5. Lastly come the defenders of the authenticity properly so called, who divide again on one point; some acknowledging in our present text interpolations more or less considerable (the mention of the angel of Bethesda, ch. v.; the narrative of the adulteress, ch. viii.), and the important addition of ch. xxi.; others holding the ordinary text as authentic in its entirety.

On which of the steps of this ladder should we plant ourselves to be in the truth? This is what we can learn only by a scrupulous study of the facts.



## BOOK FIRST.

### ST. JOHN THE APOSTLE.

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#### I.

##### JOHN IN HIS FATHER'S HOUSE.

ALL the documents set forth that John was a native of Galilee. He belonged to that northern population, with whose lively, industrious, independent, warlike character Josephus has made us acquainted. The repression exercised over the nation by the religious authorities sitting at Jerusalem, did not weigh so heavily on that distant country. More free from prejudice, more open to the immediate impression of the truth, the hearts of the Galileans presented to Jesus that receptive soil which His work demanded. All His apostles too, with the exception of Judas Iscariot, seem to have belonged to that province, and it was there that He succeeded in laying the foundations of His church.

John dwelt on those shores of the lake of Gennesaret which at the present day only present to view a vast solitude, but which were then covered with towns and villages, all containing, according to Josephus, many thousands of inhabitants. Had John, as is often said, his home at Bethsaida? Such is the conclusion drawn from Luke v. 10, where he is designated, along with his brother James, as the *partner* of Simon; and from John i. 44, where Bethsaida is called the *city of Andrew and Peter*. But John might nevertheless be an inhabitant of Capernaum, which could not have been very far distant from the hamlet of Bethsaida, since on coming out of the synagogue of that town Jesus immediately entered the house of Peter (Mark i. 29).

The family of John contained four persons known to us—his brother James, who seems to have been his senior, as he is generally named before him; their father, Zebedee, who was a fisherman (Mark i. 19, 20); and their mother, who must have borne the name of Salem; for in the two manifestly parallel passages, Matt. xxvii. 56 and Mark xv. 40, in which the women are named who were present at the crucifixion of Jesus, the name of Salome is in Mark the equivalent of the title *the mother of the sons of Zebedee* in Matthew. Wieseler has sought to prove that Salome was the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus,—whence it would follow that John was the cousin-german of the Lord.<sup>1</sup> We cannot regard this hypothesis as having a sufficient foundation, either exegetical or historical. The enumeration in John xix. 25, in which Wieseler finds four persons: 1st, the mother of Jesus; 2d, His mother's sister; 3d, Mary the wife of Clopas; and 4th, Mary Magdalene,—seems to us only to include three, the words *Mary the wife of Clopas* being quite naturally the explanatory apposition of the latter words, *His mother's sister* (see the exegesis). And how should our Gospels not present some trace of so close a relationship between Jesus and John? Wieseler asks, it is true, how two sisters could both have borne the name of Mary. But there is nothing to prevent the word *sister* from being here taken, as it often is, in the sense of *sister-in-law*. This signification is the more probable, since, according to a very ancient tradition (Hegesippus), Clopas was Joseph's brother, and consequently brother-in-law to Mary the mother of Jesus.

John's family was tolerably well to do. According to Mark i. 20, Zebedee has day-labourers. Salome is reckoned (Matt. xxvii. 56) among the number of the women who accompanied Jesus in His journeyings, and who (Luke viii. 3) *ministered* to Him and to the Twelve of *their substance*. According to our Gospel (xix. 27), John had a house of his own, into which he received the Lord's mother. Should we reckon, as has been done, among these signs of prosperity the connection of his family with the high priest, of which mention is made xviii. 16? This conclusion is the less established, since it cannot be proved that *the other disciple*

<sup>1</sup> *Studien und Kritiken*, 1840.

mentioned in the passage was one of the sons of Zebedee, either John or James. The prosperous position of the family was doubtless due to the then very lucrative industry of fishing, and to the considerable commerce which was connected with it.<sup>1</sup> Two traits of the life of Salome betray a lively religious sentiment: the eagerness with which she consecrated herself, as we have just seen, to the service of Jesus, and the request which she had on one occasion the boldness to present to the Lord on behalf of her two sons (Matt. xx. 20). Such a prayer reveals an enthusiastic heart, a piety, ardent but imbued with Messianic hopes of the most earthly nature. She had doubtless laboured to heighten the religious patriotism of her sons in the same direction. So, as soon as the forerunner appeared on the scene, John hastened to his baptism. He even attached himself to him as his disciple (John i.); and it was while he was in his company that Jesus met him on his return from the desert, whither he had gone after his baptism with the intention of commencing his work.<sup>2</sup>

## II.

### JOHN AS A FOLLOWER OF JESUS.

As John passed quietly from his father's hearth to the baptism of the forerunner, he seems in like manner to have passed without any violent crisis from the school of the latter to that of Jesus. In this gently progressive development there was no disturbance, no wrench. He had only to follow the inward drawing, the teaching of the Father, according to the profound expressions of which he himself makes use, to rise, step by step, to the very summit of the truth. It was the royal road described in that saying of our Lord to Nicodemus: "He that doeth truth cometh to the light, because his deeds are wrought in God" (John iii. 21). By this calm and continuous character of his development, John appears in the spiritual world the antipode of Paul. The narrative of his call as a believer has been preserved to us in the first

<sup>1</sup> See Lücke's *Commentary*, introduction, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> We refer for the justification of these statements to the exegesis of John i.

chapter of our Gospel. For everything leads us to believe that the disciple who accompanied Andrew in that decisive hour of the foundation of the new society was none other than John himself. From the banks of the Jordan, Jesus then returned with him and the few young Galileans whom He had attached to Himself from the following of John the Baptist, first to Cana, then to Nazareth, which He left soon afterwards in company with His mother and His brethren, to settle with them at Capernaum (John ii. 12, compare Matt. iv. 13). Jesus still belonging to His own family, had sent these young men back to the bosom of theirs. But when, a few days after the moment arrived for undertaking His work in Judea, in the theocratic capital, He called them to follow Him in a permanent manner, and broke for them as well as for Himself the ties of family. This new call took place on the shores of the lake of Gennesaret, near Capernaum. It is narrated in Matt. iv. 18 and parallel passages.

At a later period, the company of His disciples becoming more and more numerous, He selected twelve from among them, on whom He conferred the special title of *apostles* (Luke vi. 12 ff.; Mark iii. 13 ff.). In the first rank were the two brothers John and James, with their two friends, also brothers, Simon and Andrew. And soon, of the four, the two sons of Zebedee and Simon found themselves honoured by the more special intimacy of Jesus. Thus we see them alone admitted to the raising of Jairus' daughter, and to the two scenes of the transfiguration and of Gethsemane. John was likewise charged, along with Peter, with the secret mission of preparing the Passover (Luke xxii. 8). It was doubtless this kind of predilection, with which he as well as his brother were favoured, that emboldened Salome to ask for them the first places in the Messiah's kingdom.

Are we to admit in favour of John a still closer degree of select intimacy? Must we see in him that disciple of whom Jesus had made His friend, in the strictest sense of the word, and who, in the fourth Gospel, is several times designated as *the disciple whom Jesus loved* (xiii. 23, xix. 26, xx. 2, xxi. 7, 20 ff.)? This was the unanimous opinion of the church in the age which followed the time of the apostles. Irenæus says: "John, the disciple of the Lord who rested on His

bosom, also published the gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia."<sup>1</sup> Polycrates, the bishop of Ephesus, expressly says: "John, who rested on the bosom of the Lord . . . is buried at Ephesus."<sup>2</sup> John even bore the title, *the disciple who rests in the bosom of the Master* (μαθητῆς ἐπιστήθιος). Lützelberger is the first who has disputed the application to John of the passages quoted, and who has maintained that the disciple loved by Jesus was Andrew, Peter's brother. But why should that apostle, who is designated several times by his own name in the first part of the Gospel (i. 41, 45, vi. 8, xii. 22), be all at once designated in the second by that anonymous expression? Späth has supposed that the beloved disciple is the one who is called Nathanael (John i. 46 ff.); that this name, which signifies *the gift of God*, designates this disciple as the normal Christian,—the true gift of God to His Son.<sup>3</sup> But why, in that case, designate him sometimes under the name of Nathanael (i. 46, xxi. 2), sometimes by this mysterious circumlocution? Holtzmann likewise identifies the disciple whom Jesus loved with Nathanael, but sees in that personage only a fictitious being, the purely ideal type of Paulinism.<sup>4</sup> Scholten<sup>5</sup> also considers that anonymous disciple as a fictitious personage, who, in the opinion of the author, is the symbol of true Christianity in opposition to the Twelve, and to their imperfect conception of the gospel.

Is it worth while to refute such vagaries of the imagination? In ch. xix. the author certainly makes this disciple a real being, since it is to him that Jesus entrusts His mother, and who receives her into his own home; unless we are to interpret also in a symbolical sense the mother confided by Jesus, and to see in her nothing more than the church itself. This signification would, in point of arbitrariness, surpass the masterpieces of allegorical interpretation to which this passage has sometimes given rise among Catholic writers. In reading the fourth Gospel, we cannot doubt that the disciple whom Jesus loved was first of all one of the Twelve, then one of the

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hær.* iii. 1.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, v. 24 (iv 'Επίσημοι μαθηταί).

<sup>3</sup> Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 1868.

<sup>4</sup> Schenkel's *Bibellexicon*, vol. iv. art. "Nathanäel."

<sup>5</sup> In the brochure, *Der Apostel Johannes in Klein Asien*.

three who enjoyed the special intimacy of the Saviour. Of the three it cannot be Peter, for this apostle is several times named *along with* the loved disciple. No more can it be James, who died too early (about the year 44, Acts xii.) for the report ever to have been disseminated in the church that he should not die (John xxi.). Of the three, John is therefore the only one to whom the designation can apply. This is the result at which we likewise arrive in another way. In John xxi. 2, seven disciples are designated: "Simon Peter, Thomas called Didymus, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two other disciples." Among these seven was he whom Jesus loved, since he plays a part in the following scene (vv. 20 ff.). Now it cannot be either Peter, or Thomas, or Nathanael, all of whom are mentioned by name in the course of the Gospel and in this very passage, nor one of the last two disciples, whom the author does not name, no doubt because they did not belong to the number of the twelve. It remains, then, only to choose between the two sons of Zebedee; and between the two, as we have just seen, it is not possible to hesitate.

In the conduct of John during the ministry of his Master, two features strike us—a reserve, carried even to an extreme degree, and a vivacity amounting sometimes to violence. The fourth Gospel loves to relate to us the striking words of Peter; it speaks of the conversations of Andrew and of Philip with Jesus, of the manifestations of devotion or of incredulity on the part of Thomas. In the Synoptics, Peter speaks at every turn. But in both narratives John plays only a very secondary and shadowy part. Three sayings only are attributed to him in our Gospel, and they are all three remarkable for their brevity: "Master, where dwellest Thou?" (i. 38). "Lord, who is it?" (xiii. 25). "It is the Lord!" (xxi. 7). Moreover, of these three words, the first was probably uttered by Andrew, and the second issued from the mouth of John only at the instance of Peter. What, then, is the meaning of this fact, apparently so little in harmony with the peculiar relation of this disciple to Jesus? That John was one of those natures which live more within than without themselves. While Peter occupied the foreground of the scene, John kept himself in the background, observing, contemplating, drinking in love

and light, and contented with the part of mute, which so well suited his profound and receptive nature. We can understand the charm which such a character must have possessed for the Lord. He found in that relation, which remained their common secret, the complement which manly natures seek in family ties.

Alongside of this feature, which reveals a character naturally timid and self-contained, we meet with certain facts in which John betrays a vivacity of impression capable of rising even to passion; as when, with his brother, he proposes to Jesus to make fire come down from heaven upon the Samaritan village which refused to receive Him (Luke ix. 54); or when he becomes irritated at the sight of a man who, without joining himself to the disciples, takes the liberty of driving out devils in the name of Jesus, and forbids him to continue acting in such a manner (Luke ix. 49). We may compare with these two features that request for the first place in the Messiah's kingdom, by which we discover the existence of the impure alloy which still mingled with his faith.

How are we to explain two features of character apparently so opposite? There exist natures at once tender, ardent, and timid, which usually shut up their impressions within themselves, and this the more, the more profound their impressions are. But if once such persons cease to be masters of themselves, their long restrained emotions then burst forth in sudden explosions, which fill those around them with amazement. Was it not to this order of characters that John and his brother belonged? If it is so, could Jesus have better described them than by the surname *Boanerges, sons of thunder*<sup>1</sup> (Mark iii. 17)? I cannot think that, by this surname, Jesus intended, as the Fathers thought, to signalize the gift of eloquence which distinguished them. Neither can I allow that He desired by it to perpetuate the recollection of their anger in one of the cases indicated (Luke ix. 54). But as electricity gathers slowly in the cloud until it bursts forth suddenly in the lightning and thunderbolt, so in those two loving and passionate natures, Jesus observed how impressions silently accumulated within, till the moment when, in consequence of some external circumstance, they were violently

<sup>1</sup> Béné réges (בני רעש).

discharged; this is what He meant to describe. St. John is often represented as a nature gentle and tender even to softness. Do not his writings insist before and above all else upon love? Were not the last sermons of the old man: "Love one another"? True; but we must not forget other features of a different kind, both in the first and last periods of his life, which reveal something decisive, trenchant, absolute, even violent in his disposition.

In thus estimating the character of John, we think we are nearer the truth than Sabatier when he closes his judgment on the apostle in these terms: "It is worthy of remark that the name of John does not occur in the Synoptics except associated with blame." But must it be forgotten that in one case he accused himself (Luke ix. 49), that in another it was through excess of zeal for the honour of Jesus that he drew down a reprimand on himself (Luke ix. 54), and that in the third case the jealous indignation of his fellow-disciples arose from the same cause as the ambitious prayer of the two sons of Salome (Mark x. 41; comp. 42 ff.)? Must we forget, above all, the place which Jesus gave, according to the Synoptics themselves, to John as well as to Peter and James, in His most intimate familiarity? Comp. also the incident Luke xxii. 8. The object of presenting things thus is explained by what follows: "There is thus a singular contrast," continues the writer, "between this and the image of the beloved disciple who leans on Jesus' bosom, the ideal disciple who at once conceals and reveals himself in the fourth Gospel."<sup>1</sup> It was therefore a tooting stone! The biography was at the service of the criticism. If we take all the facts stated into consideration, we shall recognise in John one of those natures which have a passion for the ideal, who give themselves up at first sight, and without reservation, to the being who seems to them to realize it. But the devotion of such persons easily takes on something of exclusiveness and intolerance. They are indignant and irritated at everything which is not in entire sympathy with their enthusiasm. They are the more unable to understand division of heart because they cannot practise it themselves. The whole for the whole! Such is their motto. Where this entire giving is wanting, there is in their eyes nothing. Such

<sup>1</sup> *Encyclopédie des sciences religieuses*, vol. vii. p. 173.



affections do not exist without including an alloy of egoism. A divine work is needed, in order that the devotion, which forms their basis, may come forth purified at the last, and appear in all its sublimity. Such was John, worthy in his very defects of the intimate friendship of the best of men.

### III.

#### JOHN AT THE HEAD OF THE JUDÆO-CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

The part which John acted in the church after Pentecost was that for which such antecedents have prepared us. On that stage where there moved and acted Peter and James the brother of John the first martyr of the apostles, or even mere apostolic assistants like Stephen and Philip, lastly Paul and James the Lord's brother, John appears only on two occasions: when he went to the temple with Peter (Acts iii.), and when he accompanied that same apostle to Samaria to complete the work begun by Philip (Acts viii.). And in both cases Peter was the one who played the principal part; John seems only to have been his assistant. As we have seen, the disciple whom Jesus loved was not a man of action, he had not the initiative power of a conqueror; his mission, like his talent, was of a more inward nature. His hour was not to sound till a later time, when the church was founded. In the meanwhile, a mighty work, the continuation of that which Jesus had begun in him, was passing in his soul. In him was being accomplished that promise which he has himself preserved to us: "The Spirit shall glorify me in you." After yielding himself up, he found himself anew in his glorified Master, and he yielded himself with still greater devotion. But from the hour of the crucifixion he had a special task to discharge which his dying Master had bequeathed to him. To Peter, Jesus had entrusted the direction of the church; to John, the care of His mother.

Where did Mary dwell? It is not at all probable that she felt drawn to stay at Jerusalem. Her dearest memories recalled her to Galilee. It was there also, on the shores of the lake of Genesaret, that John undoubtedly possessed that *home*

where he received her, and lavished on her the attentions of filial piety. This circumstance serves likewise to explain why in those first times he took so small a share in missionary work. If he had lived at Jerusalem, Paul would doubtless have seen him, as well as Peter and James, at the time of his first visit to this city after his conversion (Gal. i. 18, 19).

Subsequent traditions, which nothing prevents us from regarding as well founded, place the death of Mary about the year 48. From that moment John no doubt took a more considerable part in the direction of the Christian enterprise. At the date of the assembly, commonly called the council of Jerusalem (Acts xv.), in 50 or 51, he is one of the apostles with whom Paul confers in the capital, and the latter classes him (Gal. ii.) among those who were regarded as pillars of the church.<sup>1</sup> Here arises an important and much deliberated question regarding John.

The Tübingen school attributes to these three, James, Peter, and John, who then represented, as contrasted with Paul and Barnabas, the Jewish Christian church, an opinion opposed to that of the latter on the subject of the maintenance of legal observances in the church. The only difference which it recognises between the apostles and the *false brethren, unawares brought in*, of whom Paul speaks (Gal. ii. 4),—and it is not to the advantage of the former,—is this: the false brethren, the pharisaical intruders, kept their ground firmly before Paul, and tried to make him yield; while the apostles, intimidated by his energy and by the brilliancy of his successes among the Gentiles, abandoned their conviction *de facto*, and agreed in spite of those brethren to share with him the labour of the missionary field. Thus would be reduced almost to nothing the import of that sign of co-operation which the apostles gave to Paul and Barnabas when they extended to them the right hand of fellowship at the time of their separation (ver. 9). It is easy to understand the interest which attaches to this question. If such had been the personal conviction of John, it is obvious that he could not be the author of the fourth Gospel, or that he could be so only on condition of having previously passed through the crisis of a complete transformation. Schürer, who is independent of the Tübingen stand-

<sup>1</sup> Gal. ii. 9: "James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars."

point, says himself:<sup>1</sup> "The John of Galatians ii, who disputes with Paul about the law, cannot have written our fourth Gospel."

But is it really true that the abrogation of the law, for converted Gentiles, is a concession which St. Paul must have wrung from the apostles in opposition to their inward conviction? Is it true in general, that in regard to the question of the law there was a radical difference between Paul and the Twelve? There has been an enormous amount of discussion on this question during the last thirty years, and I do not think that on the whole the balance has inclined in the direction of Baur's assertions. I shall here take up only one decisive passage, the one which this school most habitually puts forward, and which, in the eyes of Hilgenfeld, is as it were its impregnable fortress. It is vv. 3 and 4 of Gal. ii.: "But not even Titus, who was with me, being a Greek, was compelled to be circumcised: and that because of the (*διὰ δέ*) false brethren unawares brought in . . ." The following is Hilgenfeld's argument: Paul does not say: I did not yield to the false brethren; but: I did not yield, *because of them*. Whom then does he withstand? Evidently others than those false brethren. They can be no other than the apostles. It was the apostles, therefore, who demanded the circumcision of Titus. Consequently they claimed, and John with them, to impose circumcision on the Gentiles. The observation from which Hilgenfeld starts is correct; but the conclusion he draws from it is false. The apostles asked of Paul the circumcision of Titus, and he on his part would not yield to them *because of the false brethren*. Such undoubtedly is the fact; but what does it prove? That the false brethren demanded this circumcision in a wholly different spirit from the Twelve. They demanded it as an *ought*, while the apostles asked it of Paul merely as a free concession in favour of the Christians of Jerusalem who shrank from intercourse with one uncircumcised. Hence Paul could say: But for the false brethren, I might have given place to the Twelve in *that spirit of accommodation* (*τῆ ὑποταγῆς*, ver. 5) which every Christian should show towards his brethren in matters which are in themselves indifferent. And this is what he really did every time he put

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Liter.-Zeit.* 1876, No. 14.

himself *under the law* with those who were under the law (1 Cor. ix. 20); comp. the circumcision of Timothy. But in this case it was impossible for him to act thus *because of the false brethren*, who were ready to take advantage of this concession against the Gentiles as an *obligatory* precedent. The Twelve understood this, and did not insist. If it is so, the question is resolved. In point of right, the Twelve did not impose the law on the Gentiles. They kept it personally, with the Christians of Jewish origin, but not as a condition of salvation, for in that case they could not have exempted the Gentiles from it. They kept it until God, who had imposed on them this dispensation, should Himself put an end to it. Paul had outstripped them in knowledge on this point only; that in his eyes the cross itself was for the Jews the expected abrogation (Gal. ii. 19, 20). For those of the apostles who, like St. John, survived the destruction of the temple, this event must naturally have cleared away the last scruple in regard to themselves and their nation.

This view does not oblige us to suppose a conflict between Paul's Epistles and the narrative of the Acts. It is equally in harmony with our synoptic Gospels, which are filled with declarations of Jesus necessarily involving the abolition of the law. This sentence: "It is not that which entereth into a man which defiles the man, but that which cometh out of the *heart of the man*,"<sup>1</sup> contains in principle the abolition of the entire Levitical law. This other: the Son of man is *Lord even of the Sabbath*,<sup>2</sup> undermines the basis of the Sabbatical ordinance under its Mosaic form, and thereby the whole ceremonial institution of which the Sabbath was the centre. In comparing His new economy to a *new garment* which must be substituted all of a piece for the old,<sup>3</sup> Jesus expresses a point of view regarding the relation between the Gospel and the law beyond which the apostle of the Gentiles himself could not go. And it is the apostles who have transmitted all these sayings to the church; and we are to suppose they did it without in the least understanding their practical application! Independently, then, of Paul's Epistles and of the Acts, we are bound to affirm that what is (wrongly) called Paulinism must

<sup>1</sup> Matt. xv. 18-20; Mark vii. 18-20.

<sup>2</sup> Mark ii. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Matt. ix. 16 and parallels.

have existed as a more or less latent conviction in the mind of the apostles, from the time of the ministry of Jesus. The death of Christ, Pentecost, and Paul's labours could not fail to develop those germs.

Irenæus has very faithfully reproduced this state of things in these words: "They themselves (the apostles) persevered in the old observances, conducting themselves piously as respects the institutions of the law; but for us Gentiles, they granted us liberty, committing us to the Holy Spirit."<sup>1</sup>

#### IV.

##### JOHN IN ASIA MINOR.

From the time of the council of Jerusalem we lose all trace of John till the moment when tradition depicts him to us accomplishing his apostolic ministry among the churches of Asia Minor. It is not probable that he repaired to those distant countries before the overthrow of Jerusalem. He no doubt accompanied the Jewish-Christian church when it emigrated to Perea, at the time when the war broke out against the Romans. This departure took place about the year 67.<sup>2</sup> Only at a later date, when in consequence of the death of Paul, and perhaps after that of his assistants in Asia Minor, Titus and Timotheus, the churches of that country, which were of such importance, found themselves deprived of every apostolic guide, John removed thither. He was probably not the only apostle or apostolic personage who selected that place of abode. History speaks of the ministry of Philip, either the apostle or the deacon, at Hierapolis. There are likewise some indications of a sojourn at Ephesus by Andrew.<sup>3</sup> As Thiersch says, "The church's centre of gravity was *no longer* at Jerusalem; it was *not yet* at Rome; it was at Ephesus." Like the circle of the golden candlesticks,<sup>4</sup> the flourishing and numerous churches, established by Paul in Ionia and Phrygia, were the luminous point towards which were directed the eyes of all Christendom. "From the fall of Jerusalem," says Lücke, "down into the second century,

<sup>1</sup> *Adv. Hæc.* iii. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Ewald, *Gesch. des Volks Israel*, vol. vi. p. 642.

<sup>3</sup> So in the so-called Fragment of Muratori.

<sup>4</sup> Rev. i. 12, 20.

Asia Minor was the most living portion of the church." What excited an interest in these churches was not only the energy of their faith, but the intensity of the struggle which they had to maintain against heresy. "For I know this," St. Paul had said to the pastors of Ephesus and of Miletus, "that after my departure grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them" (Acts xx. 29, 30). This prophecy was fulfilled. It is not surprising, then, that John, one of the last survivors of the apostles, should have gone to supply in those countries the place of the apostle of the Gentiles, and to water, as Apollos had formerly done at Corinth, what Paul had planted.

The accounts of John's sojourn in Asia are numerous and positive. Nevertheless, Keim and Scholten, following the example of Vogel, of Reuterdahl, and above all of Lützelberger, have in these latter days disputed the truth of the tradition. The former thinks that the personage named John, whom Polycarp had known, was not the apostle, but the presbyter of the same name who must have lived at Ephesus towards the close of the first century, and that Irenæus erroneously, or perhaps willingly, imagined that that master of his master was the apostle. This is where the error begins, which has since then been so universally disseminated. Scholten believes rather that as the Apocalypse was falsely attributed to the Apostle John, and as the author of that book appeared to have lived in Asia (Rev. ii. and iii.), the conclusion has been drawn from these erroneous premises that the Apostle John must have dwelt in that country.

Let us begin by establishing the tradition, the value of which we shall afterwards estimate.

Irenæus says: "All the presbyters who met John, the disciple of the Lord in Asia, testify that he has transmitted to them these things; for he lived with them till the time of Trajan. And some among them saw not only John, but also other apostles."<sup>1</sup> The whole passage, but especially the last sentence, implies that it is *the apostle* who is referred to, and

<sup>1</sup> As far as the word Trajan we quote according to the Greek text cited by Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 23. §; the last words are according to the Latin translation, *Adv. Hær.* ii. 22. 5.

not some other John. This is brought out still more decidedly in the following words: "Afterwards John, the disciple of the Lord, *he who reclined on His breast*, published the gospel while he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia."<sup>1</sup> We read elsewhere: "The church of Ephesus, founded by Paul, and in which John lived down till the time of Trajan, is also a truthful witness of the tradition of the apostles."<sup>2</sup> And again: "Polycarp had not only been instructed by the apostles, and lived with several men who had seen Christ; but he had been instituted bishop in the church of Smyrna *by the apostles* who were in Asia; and we ourselves saw him in our early youth, for he lived a very long time, and became very aged, and departed this life after a glorious martyrdom—having constantly taught that which he had heard *from the apostles*."<sup>3</sup> We cannot doubt, then, that the following words, relating to the Apocalypse, apply to the apostle: "That number (666) is found in all accurate and ancient manuscripts, and it is attested by all those *who saw John face to face*."<sup>4</sup>

Thus Irenæus in his principal work. Besides, we possess two letters of his, in which he expresses himself to the same effect. One is addressed to Florinus, his former fellow-disciple with Polycarp, who had embraced the doctrines of the Gnostics. Irenæus says to him: "These are not the doctrines which the elders who preceded us, and who lived after the apostles, transmitted to thee; for I saw thee, while I was still a child, in Asia Minor with Polycarp. . . . And I could still show thee the place where he sat when he taught, and gave an account of *his relations with John and with the others who had seen the Lord*, and how he spoke of what he had heard from them concerning the Lord,—His miracles and His doctrine,—and how he transmitted, in perfect harmony with the Scriptures, all that he had received from eye-witnesses of the Word of life."<sup>5</sup> The other letter is addressed by Irenæus to Victor, bishop of Rome, on the occasion of the controversy waged on the subject of Easter.<sup>6</sup> "When the blessed Polycarp visited Rome in the time of Anicetus, slight differences having arisen on some points, peace was very soon concluded. And

<sup>1</sup> Irenæus, iii. 1. 1 (Eusebius, v. 8. 4).

<sup>2</sup> iii. 3. 4 (Eusebius, iv. 14).

<sup>3</sup> Eusebius, v. 24.

<sup>4</sup> iii. 3. 4 (Eusebius, iii. 23. 4)

<sup>5</sup> v. 30. 1 (Eusebius, v. 8).

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

they did not even give way to a discussion on the principal question. For Anicetus could not dissuade Polycarp *from observing* [the 14th Nisan as the day of the Passover], seeing that he had always observed it with John, the disciple of our Lord, and *the other apostles* with whom he had lived. And on his side, Polycarp could not persuade Anicetus *to observe* [that same day], the latter replying that he ought to maintain the custom which he had received from his predecessors. Matters being thus, they administered to each other the communion, and in the assembly Anicetus ceded to Polycarp as a mark of honour the administration of the Eucharist; and they parted in peace." Thus at Rome and in Gaul, not less than in Asia Minor, Polycarp was certainly regarded as the disciple of John *the apostle*; and the arguments of the Roman bishops twice came to nought in the second century, in 160 (or rather 155) and in 190, against that fact, which was regarded by all as above question.

We find in Asia Minor, about the year 180, another witness of the same tradition. Apollonius, an anti-Montanist writer, related at that time that John had brought to life a dead man at Ephesus.<sup>1</sup> And it is indubitably to the apostle that he attributed the act. For he here speaks of the author of the Apocalypse; and we know that at that date the churches of Asia did not question the composition of that book by the apostle.

But even anterior to Irenæus and Apollonius, Justin has some words regarding John which imply the idea of his sojourn in Asia. He says: "A man among us, *one of the apostles of the Christ*, has prophesied in the revelation which was given to him" (*ἐν ἀποκαλύψει γενομένη αὐτῷ*). The fact of the composition of the Apocalypse in Asia not being doubtful (although Scholten seems desirous of disputing it), it follows from these words of Justin that he did not doubt the apostle's having dwelt in Asia. This declaration is the more interesting, that it occurs in the report of a public discussion which Justin had to maintain at Ephesus with a learned Jew. The work<sup>2</sup> dates from 150–160.

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, v. 28: "He also makes use of testimonies taken from the Apocalypse of John, and relates that a dead man had been brought to life again at Ephesus by the same John."

<sup>2</sup> *Against the Jew Trypho.*



Finally, we possess an official document, emanating from the bishops of Asia about the close of the second century, which attests their unanimous conviction on the subject with which we are dealing. It is the letter which Polycrates, Bishop of Ephesus, addressed to Victor, under the same circumstances which called forth that of Irenæus quoted above (about 190). He, in whose family the office of bishop of that metropolis was as it were hereditary (since seven of his relations had occupied it before him), writes, with the assent of all the bishops of the province who are around him, the following words: "We celebrate the true day. . . . For some great lights are extinguished in Asia, and will rise again there on the return of the Lord. . . . Philip, one of the twelve apostles, . . . and John, who rested on the bosom of the Lord, who was high priest, and wore the plate of gold, and who was witness and teacher, and who is buried at Ephesus. . . . All those celebrated the Passover on the fourteenth day, according to the Gospel."<sup>1</sup>

Such are the testimonies proceeding from Asia Minor. They are not the only ones. We can add one from Egypt. Clement of Alexandria, about 190, in the preface to the narrative of the young man whom John recalled in Asia from the error of his ways, wrote these words: "After the tyrant was dead, John returned from the isle of Patmos to Ephesus, and there he visited the surrounding countries in order to establish bishops and to organize the churches."<sup>2</sup>

We omit subsequent witnesses (Tertullian, Origen, Jerome, Eusebius), who naturally rely upon the older narratives.<sup>3</sup>

By what means is it sought to shake such an ancient and widely established tradition?

The Acts of the Apostles, says Keim, do not speak of such a sojourn by John in Asia. Is the man serious who speaks

<sup>1</sup> Eusebius, v. 24. 3; compare iii. 31. 3.

<sup>2</sup> *Τίς ὁ σωζόμενος ἀλούσιος*, c. 42 (compare Eusebius, iii. 24).

<sup>3</sup> With stronger reason we omit the work of Prochorus, recently published by Zahn (*Acta Johannis*), a new edition of which is in course of preparation by a young critic, Max Bonnet, professor at Montpellier. It is a work of pure imagination, without the least historical value, composed, according to Zahn, between 400 and 600. The Johannine fragments of the work of Leucius, which Zahn is disposed to put as far back as 130, do not seem to have more value. See Overbeck in the *Theol. Liter.-Zeit.* 1881, No. 2.

thus? With such logic, replies Leuschner, it could also be proved that Paul is not yet dead to this hour. As if the book of the Acts was a biography of the apostles, and as if it did not close before the time when John dwelt in Asia!

But the silence of the Epistles to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, and of the Pastoral Epistles? adds Scholten. As if the composition of these writings in the second century was a fact so indisputably demonstrated that we can make of them a point of departure for subsequent conclusions! Could critical presumption go further?

But the silence of the letters of Ignatius and of Polycarp is urged with more probability. Ignatius recalls to the Ephesians, Polycarp to the Philippians, the ministry of Paul in their churches; they are both silent concerning that of John in Asia.—As to Ignatius, these are the terms in which he reminds the Ephesians of the Apostle Paul: "You are," he says to them, "*the place of passage* (*πάροδος*) of those who have been taken away to God, the co-initiated of Paul the consecrated, . . . in whose footsteps may I be found."<sup>1</sup> The reference is not to Paul's sojourn at Ephesus in general, but quite specially his last *passage* through Asia Minor, when, intending to repair to Rome, he bade the presbyters of those churches the affecting farewells related in the narrative of the Acts, and associated them in a way with the consecration of his martyrdom. The analogy of that moment with the position of Ignatius, when he was writing to the Ephesians, on the way to Rome, is at once obvious. There was no similar comparison to make with the life of John. Besides, chapter xi. of that same letter contains perhaps an allusion to John's presence at Ephesus: "The Christians of Ephesus," says Ignatius, "have always lived in perfect harmony (*συνήνεσαν*) with the apostles, in the strength of Jesus Christ." Let it, moreover, not be forgotten that Ignatius was from Syria, and that he had not been acquainted with John in Asia Minor.

Polycarp, writing to Christians of Macedonia, had no particular reason for referring to the ministry of John at Ephesus. If he speaks to them of Paul, it is because this apostle had founded and more than once visited their church; and if he mentions Ignatius, it is because the

<sup>1</sup> *Ad Eph.* c. 12.

venerable martyr had just passed through Philippi on his way to Rome.

The similar objection, derived from the narrative of Polycarp's death in the acts of his martyrdom by the church of Smyrna, is not more serious. Sixty years had elapsed since John's decease, and yet that church could not have written without making mention of him! Hilgenfeld, moreover, rightly dwelt upon the title of *apostolic teacher* given to Polycarp (chap. xviii.), which implies his personal relations with one or with several apostles.

Keim and Scholten find the most decisive argument in the silence of Papias; they see even in the sayings of this Father the express denial of any connection with the apostle. Irenæus, it is true, did not understand Papias in this sense. He believes, on the contrary, that he can call him a *hearer of John* (Ἰωάννου ἀκουστής). But, it is said, here precisely is a mistake, which Eusebius has remarked, and which he has rectified by a more thorough study of the terms which Papias employed. The importance of the testimony of Papias on this question is obvious. Leimbach quotes as many as forty-five writers who have treated the subject in our times. We are obliged to study it more closely. First of all, what is the period of Papias, the date of his writing? Irenæus adds to the title of *hearer of John*, which he gives to him, that of *companion of Polycarp* (Πολυκάρπου ἐταῖρος). This term denotes a *contemporary*. Now, the most recent researches place the martyrdom of Polycarp in 155 or 156,<sup>1</sup> and that date seems now to be generally adopted (Renan, Lipsius, Hilgenfeld). As Polycarp himself declares that he had spent eighty-six years in the service of the Lord, we must place his birth at the latest in the year 70. If Papias was his contemporary, he must then have lived between 70 and 160; and if the Apostle John died about the year 100, this Father might, chronologically speaking, have been in contact with him down to the age of thirty. Irenæus at the same time calls Papias a man of Christian antiquity (ἀρχαῖος ἀνὴρ). Papias therefore, as well as Polycarp, belonged to the generation which immediately succeeded the apostles. Finally, there is in the very fragment we are about to consider an expres-

<sup>1</sup> Waddington, *Mémoires de l'Académie des Inscriptions et des Belles Lettres*, vol. xxvi. 2d part, p. 232 ff.

sion which leads us to the same conclusion. Papias says that he acquainted himself with "that which Andrew, then Peter and Philip, etc. etc. etc., *said* (εἶπεν), and that which Aristion and John the presbyter, the disciples of the Lord, *say* (λέγουσιν)." This contrast between the present *say* and the past *said* is too marked to be accidental. It implies, as Keim, Hilgenfeld, Mangold at the present day admit, that at the moment when Papias wrote, the two last-named persons were still alive;<sup>1</sup> and, since they are both designated as *personal* disciples of Jesus, they cannot have lived later than to about the year 110–120 at the utmost. It was therefore also at this period, at the latest, that Papias wrote. He was then thirty or forty years of age.<sup>2</sup>

Here, now, is the fragment quoted by Eusebius,<sup>3</sup> and the question will be to decide whether the personal relation of Papias with John the apostle is *affirmed*, as Irenæus thinks, or *excluded*, as Eusebius holds, by the terms used in this greatly debated passage:—

"Now I shall not fail to add to my explanations also (συγκατατάξαι<sup>4</sup> ταῖς ἐρμηνείαις) all that I have formerly very well learnt, and very well remembered from the elders (παρὰ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων), while guaranteeing to thee the truth thereof. For I did not take pleasure, like the multitude, in those who relate many things, but in those who teach true things; nor in those who spread abroad strange commandments, but in those who spread abroad the commandments given to faith by the Lord, and that come<sup>5</sup> from the truth itself. And if at times, also, one of those who accompanied the elders came to visit me (εἰ δέ που καὶ παρακολουθηκώς τις τοῖς πρεσβυτέροις

<sup>1</sup> Zahn and Riggenbach think that this present "say" may only designate the permanence of the *testimony* of these men; Leimbach, that it arises from the circumstance that Papias thinks that he still hears them speak.—All that would be possible only on condition that the antithesis with the preceding past tense, *said*, did not exist.

<sup>2</sup> One must be resolutely determined to create a history to suit his fancy, to place the writings of Papias in 165, as Volkmar has ventured to do!

<sup>3</sup> *H. E.* iii. 39.

<sup>4</sup> This reading (and not συντάξαι) seems certain; see Leimbach.

<sup>5</sup> The ambiguity of our translation reproduces the possible meaning of the two readings (παραγινόμενας and παραγινομένους), according to which the words "and that come" may refer either to the commandments or to the individuals themselves.

ἐλθοί), I used to inquire about the sayings of the elders (τοὺς τῶν πρεσβυτέρων ἀνέκρινον λόγους); what Andrew or Peter said (τί Ἀνδρέας ἢ τί Πέτρος εἶπεν), or Philip, or Thomas, or James, or John,<sup>1</sup> or Matthew, or some other of the disciples of the Lord (ἢ τις ἕτερος τῶν τοῦ Κυρίου μαθητῶν); then of what Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, say (ἀ τε<sup>2</sup> Ἀριστίων καὶ ὁ πρεσβύτερος Ἰωάννης, οἱ τοῦ Κυρίου μαθηταί, λέγουσιν); because I did not suppose that that which is taken from books could be so useful to me as that which comes from the living and permanent word."

There are in this passage two distinct paragraphs, the second of which begins with the words: "*And if at times also.*" Hilgenfeld and others maintain that the second paragraph is only a commentary on the first, and refers to the same fact. But this interpretation does violence to the text, as is proved by the first words: *And if at times also* (εἰ δέ που καί). This transition indicates a gradation, not an identity. The two paragraphs then refer to different facts.

In the first, Papias evidently speaks of what he had *formerly* learned and remembered *from the elders themselves*, that is to say, by communication from them to himself personally. This is implied (1) by the use of the preposition *παρά* (*from*), the regular meaning of which is direct communication; (2) the adverb *ποτέ* (*formerly*), by placing those communications in an already distant past, shows that such a relation has long ceased to be possible, and consequently, that it belongs to the author's youth.

The essential question regarding the meaning of the first paragraph is this: Who are those *elders* whom Papias heard in

<sup>1</sup> Renan has proposed to cut off from the text the words *or John*. This is altogether arbitrary; and in that case the conclusion of Eusebius on the existence of a second John would lose its foundation.

<sup>2</sup> Papias here substitutes for the interrogative pronoun *τί* (used in the preceding proposition) the relative pronoun *ἃ*, because the idea of interrogation is remote. This *ἃ* is also the object of *ἀνέκρινον*, parallel to the preceding object *λόγους* (thus also Holtzmann). No one, I think, will be tempted to accept of Leimbaeli's translation: or which (*οἱ*) of the disciples of the Lord [has narrated] what Aristion or John says? A sufficient refutation lies in the *οἱ*, placed as it is after *ἃ*, and not after *Ἀριστίων*. And is it not evident that the words *ἢ τις ἕτερος* are the conclusion, and as it were the *et cetera*, of the preceding enumeration? Besides, what does it signify *which* of the disciples has said such and such a thing? Finally, the ellipsis of the verb is inadmissible.

his youth? They cannot be, as Weiffenbach has maintained, the elders or *presbyters* appointed in the churches by the apostles. For how could Papias, Polycarp's contemporary, one of the men of the old generation in the eyes of Irenæus, have been instructed *formerly* (in his youth) by these disciples of the apostles! The anachronism resulting from this explanation is flagrant. On the other hand, neither can those elders be, as has been held, the *apostles* purely and exclusively. In that case Papias would employ this name, and not the word elders.

The title elders (*πρεσβύτεροι, seniores*) has in the Fathers, as Holtzmann has well remarked, a relative meaning. For Irenæus and the men of the third generation of Christians, the *elders* are the men of the second, the Polycarps, Papiases; for these again, they are the men of the first, the apostles chiefly, and, moreover, every immediate witness and disciple of the Lord. This appears clearly from the second paragraph, where Papias gives an enumeration of those whom he calls the elders; it contains seven apostles and two *disciples of the Lord* not apostles, Aristion and the Presbyter John. As the Apostle John has been named among the seven, it seems to me impossible to identify this like-named presbyter with the apostle, notwithstanding the reasons advanced by Zahn and Riggensbach. He is a second John, who lived in Asia Minor, and whom the special surname elder or presbyter was meant perhaps to distinguish from the apostle who was called either simply John or the Apostle John.<sup>1</sup>

Hence it follows that in the first paragraph Papias declares he had personally heard in former days immediate disciples of Jesus (apostles or non-apostles). He does not name them; but we have no reason to exclude the Apostle John from the number, and on the ground of this saying to pronounce, as Eusebius does in his History, these words of Irenæus false: "Papias the fellow-disciple of Polycarp and hearer of John." And that all the more because Irenæus, a native of Asia Minor, had probably known Papias personally, and because Eusebius himself, in his *Chronicon*, affirms the personal relation of Papias, as well as of Polycarp, to St. John.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See the clear and precise exposition of this subject in Weiss, *Commentary on John's Gospel* (5th edition of Meyer's Commentary).

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Zahn, *Patr. apost.*, Gebhardt's ed., Harnack, etc., p. 187.

In the second paragraph, Papias passes from personal to indirect relations. He explains what plan he took at a more advanced period (when he found himself prevented by distance or by the death of the elders from communicating with them) to continue the collection of materials for his book. He took advantage of all the occasions offered to him by the visits he received at Hierapolis, to question every one of those who had anywhere met with the elders; and it is in this connection that he expressly designates the latter: "I asked him what Andrew, Peter, . . . John, etc., *said* (when they were yet alive, regarding this or that circumstance of our Lord's life), and what the Lord's two disciples, Aristion and the Presbyter John, *say* (at the present hour)." And why, indeed, even after having communicated directly in his youth with some of those men, should not Papias have sought to collect any pieces of information indirectly from the mouth of those who had enjoyed this intercourse more recently or more abundantly than himself?—In any case, if it does not follow from the first paragraph that Papias did not know John, then it follows as clearly from the second that he did not gather information personally from John the presbyter; consequently, a second error made by Eusebius to be rectified.

What becomes, then, of the modern argument (Keim and others), drawn from the passage of Papias, against John's sojourn in Asia? "Papias, it is said, declares that he knew no apostle, while he affirms that he knew John the presbyter personally. Therefore Irenæus, in calling him a hearer of the Apostle John, has confounded the apostle with the presbyter." The fact is: 1. That Papias affirms that he knew *elders* (of whom John the apostle might be one); 2. That he denies knowing John the presbyter personally; and 3. That he *expressly* distinguishes John the apostle from John the presbyter. It is not hard to see how much the objection drawn from this testimony is worth.

But, it is said, Irenæus may have been mistaken in alleging that the John known by Polycarp was the apostle, while this person was only the presbyter. And this error of Irenæus may have misled the whole tradition which emanates from him. Keim supports this assertion by this expression of Irenæus himself in his letter to Florinus, in speaking of his

relations with Polycarp, "*When I was still a child*" (παῖς ἔτι ὄν); and by this other similar one in his great work, on the same occasion, "*In our first youth*" (ἐν τῇ πρώτῃ ἡμῶν ἡλικίᾳ). But every one acquainted with the Greek language knows well that such expressions, particularly the term translated by *child* (παῖς), frequently denote a *young man*;<sup>1</sup> and could the youngest Christian, already of an age to be a hearer of Polycarp, have confounded, in listening to his narratives, a mere presbyter with the Apostle John? Besides, Polycarp himself went to Rome shortly before his martyrdom; he appealed in the presence of Anicetus to the apostle's authority in support of the Easter usage of Asia Minor. The misapprehension, if such had existed, would then infallibly have been cleared up. Finally, even had the testimony of Irenæus been founded on a mistake, it could never have had the decisive influence on tradition which is attributed to it. For there exist other statements contemporaneous with his own, and which are necessarily independent of it, like those of Clement in Egypt, and of Polycrates in Asia Minor,—or even prior to his, as those of Apollonius in Asia, of Polycarp at Rome, and of Justin. And consequently it is to attempt an impossibility to make all tradition on this point proceed from Irenæus. Could Irenæus, writing in Gaul about 185, have drawn after him all those writers or witnesses who form a chain from 190 to 150, and that in all parts of the world?<sup>2</sup>

Scholten is agreed as to the impossibility of explaining the error in the way which Keim does.<sup>3</sup> He thinks that it arose from the Apocalypse, which was attributed to the

<sup>1</sup> John is called παῖς by the Fathers at the time when he became the disciple of Jesus.

<sup>2</sup> Against the testimony of Polycrates has been set the error contained in his letter to Victor, in regard to the *deacon* Philip, who, he affirms, was *one of the Twelve*. The hypothesis of Steitz, who considers the words, "*who was one of the seven,*" as interpolated in the text of Acts xxi. 8, would remove the objection. But in any case, if there is an error (which cannot be fully proved), there remains a great difference between an apostolic man, such as the Evangelist Philip, who played so important a part in the narrative of the Acts, and who might easily be confounded with the apostle, and a man so obscure as the Presbyter John.

<sup>3</sup> He decides in favour of Steitz, who has proved that the idea of John's sojourn in Asia was *already in existence* when Apollonius and Irenæus wrote.



Apostle John, and which *appeared* to have been composed in Asia.<sup>1</sup>

Mangold has himself replied with perfect justice, that, on the contrary, it is the certainty of John's sojourn in Asia which could alone have induced the churches of that country to attribute to him the composition of the Apocalypse.<sup>2</sup> If Justin himself, while he was sojourning at Ephesus, where he maintained his public dispute with Trypho, had not ascertained the certainty of John's sojourn in that country, how could he ever have dreamt of attributing to him so positively a book, the first chapters of which evidently imply an Asiatic origin?

Moreover, this tradition was so widespread in the churches of Asia Minor, that Irenæus says that he knew *several presbyters* who, in consideration of their *personal relations* to the Apostle John, testified to the authenticity of the number 666, in opposition to the variant 616. Finally, how is the testimony, comprised in the letter to Florinus, to be set aside? Scholten, it is true, has tried to prove the spuriousness of this document. Hilgenfeld calls this attempt a *desperate undertaking*.<sup>3</sup> We shall add: and a useless one, even if successful; for the letter of Irenæus to Victor, which there is no attempt to dispute, remains, and is sufficient. Besides, nothing can be weaker than the arguments by which Scholten seeks to justify that act of critical violence.<sup>4</sup> There is only one true reason—one which arises from this admission. If the letter were authentic, the personal intimacy of Polycarp with John the apostle could no longer be denied. Well, we can say, the authenticity of that letter remains unassailable, and, from the avowal of Scholten himself, the personal relation of Polycarp to John the apostle cannot be denied.

But it is maintained that, the Apocalypse supposing the death of all the apostles as an accomplished fact, and that in

<sup>1</sup> Keim does not entirely reject this explanation. He says, "The Apocalypse came also to the rescue."

<sup>2</sup> Notes in the third edition of Bleek's *Introduction*, p. 168.

<sup>3</sup> *Einführung*, p. 397.

<sup>4</sup> Thus he asks how Eusebius obtained this letter; how the relation of Polycarp to John is compatible with his death in 168 (it should be 169); why Irenæus does not recall to Florinus his standing as a presbyter of the Roman Church? and other arguments of like strength.!

the year 68,<sup>1</sup> the Apostle John could not still have been alive about the year 100. And what, then, are the words of the Apocalypse, from which the death of all the apostles is inferred? Here they are (according to the text now verified), xviii. 20: "Rejoice, thou heaven, and ye saints and apostles and prophets (*οἱ ἄγιοι καὶ οἱ ἀπόστολοι καὶ οἱ προφῆται*), for God hath taken upon the earth the vengeance due to you." . . . This passage assuredly proves that at the date of the composition of the Apocalypse there were in heaven some saints, apostles, and prophets who had suffered martyrdom. But "some apostles" are not *all* the apostles, any more than "some saints" are *all* the saints!<sup>2</sup>

Thus disappear the objections which critical prejudices have raised against the unanimously authenticated, historical fact of John's sojourn in Asia.<sup>3</sup>

Tradition attests not only in a general manner John's sojourn in Asia; it likewise relates many individual features, which, while they may indeed have been amplified, cannot be wholly fictitious. In any case, these anecdotes imply a well-founded conviction of the reality of the sojourn.

There is, for instance, the meeting of John with the heretic Cerinthus in a public bath at Ephesus. "People are still living," says Irenæus (*Adv. Hær.* iii. 3. 4), "who have heard Polycarp relate that John, having entered a bath at Ephesus, and having seen Cerinthus within, went away abruptly, without bathing, saying, 'Let us go lest the house fall, for

<sup>1</sup> We do not here discuss this alleged date of the Apocalypse; we believe that we have elsewhere demonstrated its falsity. *Études bibliques*, vol. ii. 5th study.

<sup>2</sup> On the objection taken from the narrative of the martyrdom of John by the Jews in the chronicle of Georgius Hamartólos, see p. 81 ff.

<sup>3</sup> In no question, perhaps, do we more distinctly perceive the decisive influence of the will over the appreciation of facts. Hilgenfeld, Baur's disciple, and Baur himself, have need of John's sojourn in Asia, for it is the basis of their argument against the Authenticity of the Gospel, derived from the Apocalypse and the Easter controversy. What happens? They find the testimonies which prove the fact perfectly convincing. But Keim, for whom the sojourn is a most inconvenient fact (since the remote date which he assigns to the composition of our Gospel would bring it too near the time of this sojourn), declares those same testimonies worthless. What are we to think after this of the much-vaunted objectivity of historico-critical studies? It is clear that every critical judgment is determined by a sympathy or antipathy which biases the understanding.

Cerinthus, the enemy of the truth, is there.'” This well-authenticated trait recalls the susceptibility to impression of the young apostle, who refused the right of healing in the name of Jesus to that believer who did not outwardly walk with the apostles, or who requested that fire from heaven might come down on the Samaritan village which had showed a hostile feeling to Jesus. Or, again, there is the incident narrated by Clement of Alexandria, of the young man whom John had entrusted to a bishop of Asia Minor, and whom the aged apostle succeeded in reclaiming from the criminal path on which he had entered.<sup>1</sup> This incident recalls the fervent love of the young disciple, who at his first meeting with Jesus gave himself entirely up to Him, whom the latter had made *His friend*.

Clement says that the apostle returned from Patmos to Ephesus after the tyrant's death. Tertullian (*de prescript. Hær.* 36) states that that exile was preceded by a journey to Rome, and adds the following detail: “After the apostle had been plunged in boiling oil, and had come out of it safe and sound, he was banished to an island.” According to Irenæus,

<sup>1</sup> Here is the fact, loaded with the rhetorical amplifications of Clement, as related in *Quis dives saluus*, c. 42: “Listen to what is related (and it is not a tale, but a true history) of the Apostle John. When he had returned from Patmos to Ephesus, after the tyrant's death, he visited the surrounding countries, to establish bishops and found churches. One day in a town near Ephesus, after having exhorted the brethren and settled matters, he saw a sprightly and handsome young man, to whom he felt himself immediately attracted; whereupon he said to the bishop: ‘I place him on thy heart, and on that of the church.’ The bishop promised to the apostle to take care of him. He received him into his house, instructed and watched over him till he could admit him to be baptized. But after he had received the seal of the Lord, the bishop relaxed in his vigilance. The young man, too soon left to himself, frequented bad company, abandoned himself to all kinds of excess, and ended by stopping and robbing passengers on the highway. Like a spirited horse, which, when it has once left the path, rushes blindly down the precipice; so, carried away by his natural disposition, he plunged into the abyss of perdition. Henceforth despairing of grace, he wished at least to do something great in his life of crime. He assembled his dissolute companions, formed them into a band of brigands, of whom he became the chief, and soon surpassed them all in his thirst for blood and violence. After a certain lapse of time, John returned to the same town; having finished all he had to do there, he asked the bishop: ‘Well! now restore the pledge which the Lord and I entrusted to thee in the presence of the church.’ The latter, terrified, imagined that he alluded to a sum of money which had been confided to him. ‘No, no,’ replied John, ‘but the young man, the soul of thy brother!’ The old man sighed, and, bursting into tears, answered, ‘He is dead!’ ‘Dead!’ replied the

it would appear that that tyrant was Domitian.<sup>1</sup> Some critics maintain that this idea of a punishment undergone by John is to be found in the epithet of *witness* (or *martyr*) bestowed on John by Polycrates. But is there not perhaps in that narrative a fiction, having a merely imaginary foundation, based on those words addressed by Jesus to the two sons of Zebedee: "Ye shall be baptized with the baptism wherewith I must be baptized,"—words the literal realization of which was sought in vain in the life of John? As to the exile of Patmos, we might likewise imagine that that narrative is only an inference from Rev. i. Nevertheless Eusebius says: "*Tradition bears* (λόγος ἔχει);" and as history proves the reality of exiles of that kind under Domitian, and that precisely for the crime of professing the Christian faith,<sup>2</sup> there may well be more in it than the product of an exegetical combination. That banishment and the composition of the Apocalypse are placed by Epiphanius under the reign of Claudius (from the year 41 to the year 54). This date is positively absurd, since at that period the churches of Asia

disciple of the Lord; 'and by what kind of death?' 'Dead to God! He became godless, then a robber. He lives with his companions on the top of that mountain.' On hearing these words, the apostle rent his garments, smote his head, and cried, 'Oh, to what a guardian have I entrusted the soul of my brother!' He took a horse and a guide and went straight to the place where the robbers were. He was seized by the sentinels; and far from trying to escape, he said: 'It is for this purpose that I have come, lead me to your chief.' The latter, fully armed, awaited his arrival. But as soon as he recognised in the new-comer the Apostle John, he took to flight. John, forgetful of his age, ran after him, crying: 'Oh my son, why dost thou fly from me, thy father? Thou an armed man—I, old and defenceless? Have pity upon me! My son, do not fear! There is still hope of life for thee. I wish myself to take the burden of all before Christ. If it is necessary, I will die for thee, as Christ died for us. Stop! Believe! It is Christ who sends me.' The youth on hearing those words stops, with downcast looks. Then he throws away his arms, and begins to tremble and to weep bitterly. And when the old man comes up, he embraces his knees and begs forgiveness with deep groans; those tears are for him a second baptism, only he refuses and still conceals his right hand. The apostle, becoming surety for him before the Lord, with an oath promises him pardon, kneels down, prays, and finally taking him by that hand which he withdraws, he conducts him back to the church, and there struggles so fervently and so mightily by fasting and by his addresses, that at length he is able to restore him to the flock as an example of true regeneration."

<sup>1</sup> For in *Adv. Hær.* v. 33 he places the composition of the Apocalypse under Domitian.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *H. E.* iii. 18.

Minor, to which the Apocalypse is addressed, did not exist. Renan has supposed<sup>1</sup> that the legend of John's martyrdom might have arisen from the fact that the apostle had to undergo a sentence at Rome at the same time as Peter and Paul. But this hypothesis is not sufficiently supported. Finally, according to Augustine, he drank a cup of poison without experiencing any injury from it; and according to the anti-Montanist writer Apollonius, about 180, John is said to have raised a dead man at Ephesus (Eusebius, v. 18); perhaps these two legends have reference to Matt. x. 8 and Mark xvi. 18. Steitz has supposed that the latter was merely a version of the young brigand's history who was snatched by John from perdition.

Clement of Alexandria thus describes the ministry of edification and organization which was exercised by the apostle in Asia. He visited the churches, appointed bishops, and regulated affairs. Rothe, Thiersch, Neander himself,<sup>2</sup> attribute to the influence exercised by him the stable constitution of the churches of Asia Minor in the second century, the first traces of which we already find in the Apocalypse (the *angel* of the church), and a little later in the letters of Ignatius. History thus demonstrates that these churches were visited by an eminent apostle such as John, capable of crowning the edifice erected by Paul. But the noblest monument of the visit of John to those countries, is the maturity of faith and Christian life to which the churches of Asia were raised by his ministry. Polycrates, in his enthusiastic and symbolical language, represents St. John at this period of his life bearing on his forehead, like the Jewish high priest, the plate of gold with the inscription: Holiness to the Lord. "John," he says, "who rested on the bosom of the Lord, and who became the priest bearing the plate of gold, both witness and teacher." It has been sought to render this passage absurd, by taking it in a literal sense; but the meaning of the aged bishop is evident: John, the last survivor of the apostolate, had left on the church of Asia the impression of a pontiff from whose forehead shone the splendour of the holiness of Christ. Perhaps, in this description of the apostle, Polycrates alludes to the three principal

<sup>1</sup> *L'Antéchrist*, p. 27 ff.

<sup>2</sup> *Geschichte der Pflanzung der christlichen Kirche*, book ii. p. 430.

books which were attributed to him ; by the title of *priest* wearing the sacerdotal fillet, to the Apocalypse ; by that of *witness*, to the Gospel ; finally, by that of *teacher*, to the Epistle.

The hour for work had sounded in the first place for Simon Peter. He had founded the church in Israel, and planted the standard of the new covenant on the ruins of the theocracy. Paul had followed : his task had been to liberate the church from the restrictions of expiring Judaism, and to open the door of the kingdom of God to the Gentiles. John succeeded them, he who was the first to come, and whom his Master reserved to be the last. He completed the fusion of those heterogeneous elements of which the church had been formed, and he raised Christendom to the relative perfection of which it was then capable. According to all the traditions,<sup>1</sup> John never had any other spouse than the church of the Lord, nor any other family than that which he salutes in his Epistles by the title of "*My children*." Hence the epithet *virginal* (*ὁ παρθένιος*), by which he is sometimes designated (Epiphanius and Augustine). There is found in the writings of John Cassian an anecdote which well describes the memory which he had left behind him in Asia.<sup>2</sup>

## V.

### ST. JOHN'S DEATH.

All the accounts of the Fathers relative to the last days of John agree on this point, that his life was prolonged to the verge of extreme old age.

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian, *De monogamia*, c. 17 ; Ambrosiaster on 2 Cor. xi. 2 : " All the apostles, except John and Paul, were married."

<sup>2</sup> We transcribe it from Hilgenfeld's *Introduction*, p. 405 : " It is related that the blessed Evangelist John was one day gently caressing a partridge, and that a young man, returning from hunting, seeing him thus employed, asked him in amazement how so illustrious a man could give himself up to so trifling an occupation ? ' What dost thou carry in thy hand ? ' replied John. ' A bow,' said the youth. ' Why is it not bent as usual ? ' ' Not to take from it, by keeping it too constantly bent, the elasticity which it should possess at the moment when I shall shoot my arrow ? ' ' Do not be shocked then, young man, at this brief solace which we allow to our mind, which otherwise losing its spring could not assist us when necessity requires it.'" This trait is in any case a testimony to the calm and serene impression which the old age of John had left on the church.

Jerome (*Ep. to the Gal.* vi. 10) relates that, having reached the most advanced age, and being too weak to repair to the assemblies of the church, he made the young men carry him thither; and having no longer strength to speak much, he contented himself with saying: "My little children, love one another." And when he was asked why he always repeated that one saying, his answer was, "Because it is the Lord's command; and if that is done, enough is done." According to the same Jerome, he died, prostrated with old age, sixty-eight years after the Lord's Passion, that is to say, about the year 100. Irenæus says that "he lived even till the time of Trajan,"—that is to say, till after the year 98. According to Suidas, he even attained the age of 120. The letter of Polycrates proves that he was buried at Ephesus (*ὄστος ἐν Ἐφέσῳ κεκοίμηται*). There were even two tombs shown in this city, each of which claimed to be that of the apostle (Eusebius, *H. E.* vii. 25; Jerome, *de vir. ill.* c. 9), and it is by means of this fact that Eusebius endeavours to establish the hypothesis of a second John, called *the presbyter*, a contemporary of the apostle. The idea had been likewise conceived, that John would be exempted from the necessity of paying the common tribute to death. The words were quoted which Jesus had addressed to him (John xxi. 22), "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" And we learn from St. Augustine that even his death did not dissipate the strange idea. In treatise 124 on St. John's Gospel, he relates that, according to several, the apostle was still alive, sleeping peacefully in his grave; proof of which was furnished by the earth being gently stirred by his breath. Isidore of Seville<sup>1</sup> narrates that, having felt that the day of his departure had come, John caused his grave to be dug, and bidding farewell to his brethren, he laid himself down in it as in a bed, which has made several to allege that he is still alive. They have gone yet further, and have maintained that he was taken up to heaven, like Enoch and Elias.<sup>2</sup>

A more important fact would be that which is narrated in

<sup>1</sup> *De ortu et obitu patrum*, 71.

<sup>2</sup> Hilgenfeld quotes in proof, pseudo-Hippolytus, Ephraem of Antioch, and the *Acta Johannis* in the collection of apocryphal Acts published by Tischendorf, 1851.

a fragment of the chronicle of Georgius Hamartôlos (ninth century), published by Nolte: <sup>1</sup> "After Domitian, Nerva reigned for one year, who, having recalled John from the island, permitted him to reside at Ephesus (*ἀπέλυσεν οἰκεῖν ἐν Ἐφέσῳ*)." Being left the sole survivor of the twelve disciples, after having composed his Gospel, he was considered worthy of martyrdom; for Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, who was witness of the deed (*αὐτόπτης τούτου γερόμενος*), relates in the second book of the *Lord's discourses* that he was killed by the Jews (*ὅτι ὑπὸ Ἰουδαίων ἀνηρέθη*); thus fulfilling, as well as his brother, the words which Christ had spoken concerning him, "Ye shall drink of the cup which I must drink." And the learned Origen also, in his exposition of Matthew, affirms that John thus underwent martyrdom.

Keim and Holtzmann, immediately regarding this fact as authenticated, and placing it without hesitation in Palestine, because *the Jews* are spoken of, have drawn from it an *unanswerable* argument against John's sojourn in Asia Minor.<sup>2</sup> This procedure only proves one thing: the credulity of science when the object is to prove what it desires. And, first of all, were there not then at Ephesus also Jews capable of killing the apostle?<sup>3</sup> Then, does not the fragment itself place the scene in Asia: "Nerva permitted John to return to Ephesus"? Moreover, it is as having been a *witness* of the scene that Papias is said to have narrated it. Did Papias then live in Palestine? Finally, suppose this account had displeased our critics, and been in opposition to their system, they would certainly have asked how, if the work of Papias really contained that passage, every one of the Fathers who had his book in their hands should have been unacquainted with this alleged martyrdom of John, and have left it unmentioned? They would tell us that the quotation which Hamartôlos makes from Origen is entirely false; for that Father relates, indeed, the banishment to Patmos, but nothing further, etc. etc. And

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Quartalschrift*, 1862.

<sup>2</sup> Keim, *Geschichte Jesu*, 3d ed. vol. i. p. 42: "A newly-discovered testimony which puts an end to all illusions."

<sup>3</sup> Those who have visited the tomb of Polycarp at Smyrna, and have been received with a shower of stones from the hands of the Jewish children while passing through the Jewish quarter, know something of the fanaticism of the Jews of Asia to this very hour. What was it then?



their criticism in that case would, no doubt, be well founded. All unprejudiced critics have in fact admitted that the chronicler has had a spurious Papias, or an interpolated Papias, in his hands. But, at all events, if we accept this incident of the narrative: *killed by the Jews*, it would only be logical to see in the testimony rendered to that fact by Papias as *an eye-witness*, an unanswerable proof of the personal relation which had existed between Papias and the apostle in Asia Minor. And Keim and Holtzmann find means of seeing in it the very opposite!

To conclude: Supposing that John was 20–25 years old when he was called by Jesus, about the year 30, he would be 90 to 95 about the year 100, three years after the accession of Trajan; there is nothing improbable consequently here. He might have had personal relations with the Polycarps, the Papiases, born about the year 70, and with many other presbyters younger still, who, as Irenæus says, *saw him face to face* while he lived in Asia down till the reign of Trajan.

## VI.

### PLACE FILLED BY ST. JOHN.

Ardent affection and lively intuition, such seem to have been in respect of feeling and intelligence the two marked features of John's nature. These two tendencies must have powerfully concurred to produce the close personal union which was formed between the disciple and his Master. As he loved, John contemplated, and the more he contemplated, the more he loved. He was absorbed in this intuition of love, and from it he derived his inmost life. So he does not analyze faith and its object like St. Paul. John does not argue; he "affirms," says De Pressensé. It is enough for him to state the truth, so that every one who loves it may receive the truth as he himself received it, by way of immediate intuition and not of demonstration. To the Apostle John may be applied in the highest degree what Reuan has said of the Semite, "He proceeds by intuition, not by deduction." At one bound, the heart of John rose to the

dazzling height where faith is enthroned. Already he feels himself in absolute possession of victory: "He who is born of God doth not commit sin." The ideal belongs to him, realized in Him whom he loves and in whom he believes.

Peter was distinguished by his power of practical initiation, which is not very compatible with tender receptivity. Paul united to active energy and the most consummate administrative power, the penetrating vigour of an unparalleled dialectic. For although a Semite, he had spent his earliest years in one of the most brilliant centres of Hellenic culture, and had there appropriated the subtle forms of the Western spirit. John differs entirely from both. He could not, like Peter, have laid the foundation of the Christian Church; he could not, like Paul, have wrestled with dialectic keenness against Jewish Rabbinism, and composed the Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans. But in the last times of the apostolic age, it was he who was charged with putting the last hand to the development of the primitive church, founded by St. Peter and emancipated by St. Paul. He has bequeathed to the world three writings in which he has raised to their sublime perfection these three supreme intuitions in the Christian life: that of Christ's person, in his Gospel; that of the individual believer, in his first Epistle; and that of the church, in the Apocalypse. The same theme, under three aspects: divine life realized in man; eternity filling time. An expression of John himself sums up and links together these three writings: *eternal life abiding in us*. This life appears in the state of full realization in the first, in the state of progress and conflict in the other two. John, by his writings and his person, is, as it were, the terrestrial anticipation of the divine festival.

## BOOK SECOND.

### ANALYSIS AND CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL

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**B**IEDERMANN, in his *Christian Dogmatic* (p. 254), calls the fourth Gospel the *most wonderful of all religious works*. And he adds: "From one end of that work to the other, the most profound Christian truth and the most fantastic monstrosities meet, not only with one another, but in one another." Neither this admiration nor this contempt can surprise us. For the Johannine conception possesses in the highest degree these two characteristics, the one repelling and the other attracting Pantheism: the transcendency of the divine personality and the immanence of perfect life in the finite being.

#### CHAPTER I.

##### ANALYSIS.

We do not here intend to discuss the different plans of the Johannine narrative which have been proposed by commentators.<sup>1</sup> We shall merely indicate the course of the narrative as it opens up on an attentive study of the book itself.

I. The narrative is preceded by a *preamble*, which, as interpreters<sup>2</sup> almost unanimously admit, comprises the first eighteen verses of the first chapter. The author sets forth in this introduction the supreme grandeur and vital import-

<sup>1</sup> See introduction of the Commentary, vol. ii.

<sup>2</sup> Reuss is an exception; see on i. 1.

ance of the subject he is about to treat. This subject is nothing less in fact than the appearing in Jesus of the perfect revealer, the communication in His person of the life of God Himself to humanity. To reject this *Word made flesh*, will therefore be the greatest sin and the greatest misfortune, as is seen from the example of the rebellious Jews; to welcome Him will be to know and enjoy God, as is already proved by the experience of all Jewish and Gentile believers. The three aspects consequently of the evangelical fact are set forth in the prologue. 1st, The *Word*, as the agent of the divine work; 2d, The rejection of the *Word*, by the act of *unbelief*; 3d, The *acceptance* given to the *Word* by the act of *faith*. The first of these three ideas predominates in vv. 1-5; the second, in vv. 6-11; the third, in vv. 12-18.

But we must not regard these three aspects of the narrative which is about to follow as being of equal importance. The primordial and fundamental fact in the history is the appearing and manifestation of the *Word*. On this permanent basis there rise alternately the two secondary facts, *unbelief* and *faith*, the progressive manifestations of which determine the phases of the narrative.

II. The narrative begins with the account of the three days, i. 19-42, in which the work of the Son of God began on the earth and in the heart of the evangelist, if it is true, as most commentators admit, that the anonymous companion of Andrew, in ver. 35 and following verses, is none other than the author himself.

On the first day, John the Baptist proclaims before an official deputation of the Sanhedrim the startling fact of the actual presence of the Messiah in the midst of the people: "There standeth one among you whom *ye* know not" (ver. 26). The following day he points out Jesus personally to two of His disciples as the person of whom he meant to speak; and on the third day, he so insists before them on his declaration of the day before, that the two disciples resolve to follow Jesus. This day becomes at the same time the birthday of faith. Both recognise the Messianic dignity of Jesus. Then Andrew brings his brother Simon to Jesus, and a slight indication, i. 42 (see the exegesis), seems to indicate that the

other disciple likewise brings his brother (James the brother of John). Here is formed the first nucleus of the society of believers. Three days follow (i. 43—ii. 11), the first two result in adding two new believers, Philip and Nathanael, to the three or four preceding; the third day, that of the marriage feast of Cana, serves to confirm the growing faith of all. Thus faith, called forth by the testimony of the forerunner, and by the contact of the first disciples with Jesus Himself, spreads and is strengthened by the growing spectacle of His *glory* (ii. 11).

Jesus on His return to Galilee, and still surrounded by His family, leaves Nazareth and comes to settle at Capernaum, a city much better suited to become the centre of His work (ii. 12).

But the feast of the Passover is at hand. The time has come for Jesus to begin His Messianic work in the capital of the Theocracy at Jerusalem (ii. 13—22). Henceforth he calls His disciples constantly to accompany Him (ver. 17). The purification of the temple is a significant appeal to every Israelitish conscience; by this bold act He invites the people and their rulers to undertake under His direction the spiritual elevation of the Theocracy. If the people responded to this signal, all was gained. But instead of that they remain cold. It is the sign of a secret hostility. The future triumph of unbelief is, as it were, decided in principle. Jesus discerns and reveals all the importance of the moment (ver. 19).

Nevertheless, some symptoms of faith shine forth in face of that nascent opposition (ii. 23—iii. 21); but this good movement is mingled with a carnal alloy. It is as a *doer of miracles* that Jesus attracts attention. A remarkable instance of this faith which is not *faith*, is presented in the person of Nicodemus, a Pharisee and member of the Sanhedrim. Along with several of his colleagues and many other believers in the capital, he recognises Jesus as having a divine mission, attested by His miraculous works (iii. 2). Jesus seeks to raise him to a purer apprehension of the person and work of the Messiah than that which he has imbibed from Pharisaical teaching, and dismisses him with this encouraging farewell (ver. 21): "He that doeth truth cometh to the light." The sequel of the Gospel will show the fulfilment of the promise (comp. vii. 50 ff., xix. 39 ff.). These few traces of faith,

however, do not counterbalance the grand fact of the national unbelief, which becomes more and more pronounced. This tragical fact is the subject of a last testimony rendered to Jesus by John the Baptist before leaving the scene (iii. 22-36). They are both baptizing in Judea; John takes advantage of this proximity to proclaim Him once more the bridegroom of Israel. Then, in face of the marked indifference of the people and their rulers towards the Messiah, John pronounces this threat; the last echo of the thunders of Sinai, the final word of the Old Testament (ver. 36): "He that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

On the occasion of the two ministries, thus contemporary for the moment, the evangelist makes a remark which astonishes us. "For John," says he, ver. 24, "was not yet cast into prison." Nothing at all in the preceding narrative could have given rise to the idea that John was already apprehended. Why then this uncalled-for explanation? The author evidently wishes to rectify a contrary opinion which he supposes to exist in the minds of his readers. The comparison of Matt. iv. 12 and Mark i. 14<sup>1</sup> explains this rectification thrown in by the way.

With this general unbelief on the one hand, and this defective faith in some, there contrasts the joyful spectacle of an entire city which, without the aid of any miracle, welcomes Jesus with faith, as all Israel should have received Him. And this example of faith is given by Samaria (iv. 1-42). It is the prelude to the future lot of the gospel in the world.

Jesus returns for the second time into Galilee (iv. 43-54). The welcome which He there receives from His fellow-countrymen is more favourable than that which He found in Judea; they feel themselves honoured by the impression which their fellow-citizen had produced in the capital. But it is always the worker of miracles, the *thaumaturge*, whom they salute in Him. As an instance of this disposition there is related the cure of the son of a nobleman, who hastes from Capernaum to Cana on the first announcement of the arrival of Jesus.

Here, again, we meet with a remark (v. 54) intended to

<sup>1</sup> "When Jesus heard that John was cast into prison, He departed into Galilee." "After that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee."

combat a false notion which the preceding narrative could not have occasioned: the confusion between the two returns to Galilee which had been previously related (i. 44 and iv. 3). The author shows the distinction between these two arrivals, by the difference of the two miracles, both wrought in Cana, which signalized them. The cause of the confusion which he strives to rectify is easy to show. It is found in the narrative of our Synoptics: comp., besides the passages already quoted, Luke iv. 14 (with all the context which precedes and which follows).

Thus far we have seen the work of Jesus extended in succession to all parts of the Holy Land, and we have witnessed the various manifestations which it called forth either of true faith (among the disciples and the inhabitants of Sychar), or of faith mingled with a carnal alloy (among the believers of Jerusalem and of Galilee), or finally, of entire indifference and unbelief (at Jerusalem and in Judea). We believe that it is in accordance with the intention of the evangelist to make here, at the end of the fourth chapter, a full pause in the narrative.

Thus far we have had only a period of preparation in which the various moral phenomena have rather shown themselves than become distinctly marked. A change takes place from ch. v. onwards. The general movement declares itself, especially at Jerusalem, in the direction of unbelief. It goes on constantly increasing till the close of the twelfth chapter, where it attains its provisional limit. Here the author stops to cast a look backwards to inquire into the causes of this moral catastrophe and to point out its irremediable gravity. What is related from the beginning of ch. v. to the end of ch. xii. thus forms the third part of the book, the second of the narrative properly so called.

III. The development of national unbelief (ch. v.—xii.).—Though Jesus determined to leave Judea in consequence of a malicious report made to the Pharisees regarding His operations in that country (iv. 1, 3), we find Him again at Jerusalem from ch. v. onwards. He wished to make a new experiment in the capital. On that account he takes advantage of one of the national feasts,—probably that of Purim, which took place

a month before the Passover; His intention no doubt was to prolong His sojourn, if possible, down to the latter feast. But the cure of the impotent man on the Sabbath day furnishes an opportunity for the explosion of the hatred which was cherished against Him by the rulers; and when Jesus justifies Himself by urging His filial duty to labour at the work of salvation which His Father is accomplishing, their indignation knows no bounds; they accuse Him of blasphemy for making Himself equal with God. Jesus defends Himself, by showing that this alleged equality with God is in reality only the most profound dependence on God. He then quotes, in support of the testimony which He bears to Himself, not only the witness of John the Baptist, but above all that of the Father,—first, in the miraculous works which He gives Him to accomplish; next, in the Scriptures, especially in the writings of that Moses in whose name they accuse Him. By this defence, which the miracle He had recently performed rendered unanswerable, He escapes the present danger; but He sees Himself forced immediately to leave Judea, which for a long time remains closed against Him.

In ch. vi. we find Him accordingly again in Galilee.

The Passover is nigh (ver. 4). Jesus cannot go and keep it at Jerusalem. But God has reserved for Him, as well as for His disciples, an equivalent in Galilee. With them He repairs to a desert place; the multitudes follow Him thither; He welcomes them compassionately, and extemporizes for them a divine banquet (the multiplication of the loaves). The people are transported; but it is not the hunger and thirst after righteousness which excites them,—it is the expectation of the earthly enjoyments and grandeurs of the Messianic kingdom, which seems to them quite near. They desire to *make Him a king* (vi 15). Jesus measures the danger with which this carnal enthusiasm threatens His work. And as He is well aware how accessible His apostles still are to this spirit of error, and as He discerns in this or that one of them the author of the movement, He hastens to isolate them from the people by making them recross the sea. He Himself remains alone with the multitude to quiet them; and after having anew commended His work to the Father in solitude, He walks on the sea and rejoins His disciples, who are struggling against



the wind; and the day following, in the synagogue of Capernaum, where the people rejoin Him, He speaks so as to chill their false zeal. He gives them to understand that He is by no means the Messiah whom they seek, but the "bread from heaven" designed to nourish souls which are spiritually hungry. He pushes His opposition to the common ideas to such an extent that almost the whole of His disciples who follow Him habitually, break with Him. Not content with that purgation, He desires even that it should penetrate into the circle of the Twelve, to whom He proudly gives liberty to withdraw also. It was to Judas, the representative of the carnal Messianic principle in the midst of the Twelve, that Jesus thus opened the door, as the evangelist remarks in bringing this incomparable narrative to a conclusion (v. 70, 71).

A whole summer passes, of which we learn nothing. The feast of Tabernacles is at hand (ch. vii.). Jesus has an interview with His brethren, who are astonished that, having already neglected the two feasts of the Passover and of Pentecost at Jerusalem, He does not intend to repair to the latter to manifest Himself also to His Judean adherents. He answers them, that the time of His public manifestation as the Messiah is not yet come. This time—He knows well—will undoubtedly be that of His death; now His task is not yet accomplished. Nevertheless He repairs to Jerusalem, however, "as it were in secret," and only about the middle of the feast. He thus surprises the rulers, and does not allow them time to take measures against Him. On the last and great day of the feast, He compares Himself to the rock whose waters anciently quenched the thirst of the fainting people in the desert. Lively discussions arise regarding Him among His hearers. At every word which He utters He is interrupted by His adversaries; and while one part of His audience recognise in Him a prophet, and some even declare that He is the Christ, He has to reproach others with nourishing hostile feelings inspired by him who is a liar and a murderer from the beginning. All these discourses, which fill ch. vii. and viii., are summed up, as He Himself says, in these two words: *judgment and testimony*; judgment on the moral condition of the people, testimony rendered to His own Messianic and divine character. A first judicial

measure is taken against Him. Officers are sent by the authorities to apprehend Him in the temple where He is speaking (vii. 32). But, arrested by the power of His word over their conscience, and by that of public opinion, which is still favourable to Jesus, they return without having laid hands on Him (ver. 45). The rulers then take a new step. They declare that whoever recognised Jesus as the Messiah should be put out of the synagogue (comp. ix. 22); and as a consequence of one of His sayings which appeared blasphemous: "Before Abraham was, I am" (viii. 58), a first attempt is made to stone Him.

Ch. ix. also belongs to that sojourn at the feast of Tabernacles. Another miracle on the Sabbath day, the cure of the man who was born blind, exasperates the rulers. According to the Sabbatical law, that miracle *ought* not to be, *cannot* have been. The blind man reasons in an inverse manner: the miracle *is*; therefore the Sabbath has not been broken. This fruitless controversy terminates in the forcible expulsion of the blind man. Jesus reveals to this man His divine character, and after curing him of his double blindness, welcomes him into the number of His own. Thereupon, ch. x., He describes Himself as the divine Shepherd, who brings His own sheep from the ancient theocratic sheepfold in order to lead them to life, while the greater part of the flock is led to slaughter by those who had usurped authority over it. He finally announces the incorporation into His flock of new sheep brought from other folds (ver. 16). On hearing these words, a still more marked division takes place among the people, between His adversaries and His partisans (vv. 19-21).

Three months elapse: the evangelist does not tell us how they were spent. The supposition is inadmissible, that in the condition in which matters stood, Jesus spent all that time in Jerusalem, or even in Judea,—He who, previous to all those scenes, could only reappear at Jerusalem secretly. He returned undoubtedly to Galilee. In the end of December, Jesus repairs to the feast of Dedication (x. 22-39). The Jews surround Him, determined to wrest from Him the great avowal: "Tell us if thou art the Christ?" Jesus, as always, affirms the thing, while avoiding the word. He lays emphasis on His perfect unity with the Father, which necessarily

implies His Messianic character. His adversaries are already taking up stones to stone Him. Jesus causes them to fall from their hands by this question (ver. 32): "Many good works have I showed you from my Father. For which of these works do ye stone me?" He well knew that it was His two preceding miracles (ch. v. and ix.) which had made their hatred overflow. He then appeals, against the accusation of blasphemy, to the divine character attributed by the Old Testament itself to the theocratic authorities, which should have led Israel to believe in the divinity of the supreme ambassador—the Messiah.

From Jerusalem, Jesus repairs to Perea, into the countries where John had baptized, into that country which had been the cradle of His work (x. 40-42).

It is there that He receives the summons from the sisters of Lazarus (ch. xi.). We are surprised to see (ver. 1) Bethany designated as *the town of Mary and Martha*. These two sisters, not having yet been named, how can they serve as a guide to the reader? We must here again admit that the author alludes to other narratives with which he supposes his readers to be acquainted (comp. Luke x. 38-42; then also John xi. 2 with Matt. xxvi. 6-13 and Mark xiv. 3-9). The miracle of the resurrection of Lazarus forms the consummation of that for which the two preceding had prepared the way. It brings the plans of the enemies of Jesus to maturity. Acting on the suggestion of Caiaphas (xi. 49, 50), the Sanhedrim determines to get rid of the impostor. And while Jesus withdraws towards the north, to the neighbourhood of a solitary hamlet called Ephraim, the rulers at last decide to take their first public measure against Him. They publish an order to every Israelite to show where Jesus might be found (ver. 57). Then, perhaps, the first thought of treachery sprung up in the heart of Judas. Soon after, six days before the Passover, Jesus set out for Jerusalem; He halted at Bethany, and there, at a banquet which was offered to Him by His friends, He detects the first manifestations of the murderous hatred of Judas (xii. 4, 5).

The next day took place the royal entry of Jesus into His capital; this event fulfilled the desire which His brethren had expressed six months previously. His miracles and the

resurrection of Lazarus, in particular, excited in the highest degree the enthusiasm of the pilgrims who had come to the feast; the rulers seemed paralysed, and took no action. Thus was accomplished the great Messianic act by which Jesus, once at least, publicly said to Israel: "Behold thy King!" But at the same time the fury of His adversaries was urged to extremity (xii. 9-19). The resurrection of Lazarus, and the public homage which it called forth, were thus, according to John's account, the two proximate causes of the catastrophe which had been long ago prepared.

Jesus was not ignorant of what was going on; nor was He indifferent to it. The opportunity was given Him of expressing, even in the temple, what was passing in His heart in those days when He saw the end approaching. Certain Greeks desired to speak to Him (ver. 20). Like an instrument whose tightly stretched strings become sonorous at the first contact of the bow, His soul responded to that appeal. The Greeks? Yes, the Gentile world is about to open, and the power of Satan is about to crumble away in that vast domain of heathendom, and to give place to that of the divine Monarch. But speech will not be enough for that great work; there must be death. It is from the height of the instrument of punishment that Jesus will draw all men unto Him. And what anguish does not that bloody prospect cause Him! His soul is moved, even *troubled* by it. John alone has preserved the account of that exceptional hour. It was the close of His public ministry. After having once more invited the Jews to believe in the Light which was about to be veiled from them, "He departed," it is said, "and did hide Himself from them" (ver. 36).

Having arrived at this point, the evangelist casts a glance backward on the path which has been traversed—the public ministry of Jesus in Israel. He asks how the unbelief of the Jews has been able to resist so many and so great miracles (ver. 37 ff.), so many and so powerful lessons (ver. 44 ff.), yet this general blindness had not been universal (ver. 42). Divine light had penetrated into many hearts, even among the members of the Sanhedrim; fear alone of the Pharisees prevented them from confessing their faith. And, indeed, the element of faith is not entirely wanting, even in that portion of the Gospel devoted to tracing the development of national

unbelief. We follow throughout the whole narrative the traces of a development of faith parallel though subordinate to that of unbelief: so in Peter's confession, ch. vi.; in the selection which takes place at Jerusalem, ch. vii. and viii.; in the case of the man born blind in ch. ix., and of those sheep in ch. x. who, at the shepherd's call, follow him out of the theocratic fold; finally, in the case of His numerous adherents in Bethany, and among the multitudes who accompany Jesus on Palm-day. Here are the hearts prepared to form the church of Pentecost.

IV. If from ch. v. we have seen the tide of unbelief predominating, from the thirteenth chapter it is faith in the person of the disciples which becomes the preponderant element of the narrative, and that until that faith has reached its relative perfection, and Jesus can give thanks for the work accomplished (ch. xvii.). This development is effected no longer by manifestations of power, but of love and light. The washing of the feet comes first,—intended to make them understand that true glory lies in serving, and to root out from their heart the false Messianic ideal, which still concealed from them on this point the divine thought realized in Jesus. Next come the discourses in which He explains to them in words what He has just revealed to them in act. He especially soothes them on the subject of the approaching separation (xiii. 31—xiv. 31): it will be followed by an early reunion, His return in spirit. For death is to Him the way to glory; and if they cannot now follow Him into the perfect communion of the Father, they will be able to do so later in the way which He is about to open up to them. In the meanwhile, through the strength which He will impart to them, they will do in His stead what He has only been able to prepare for. If they love Him, let them rejoice, then, in His departure, instead of grieving, and receive His peace as a last farewell. After that, Jesus carries them in thought to the moment when, by the bond of the Holy Spirit, they shall live in Him and He in them, in the same way in which the branch lives united to the vine (xv. 1—xvi. 15). He points out to them the sole duty of this new position: *to abide* in Him by obeying His will; He next describes to them with all frankness the relation-

of hostility which will be formed between them and the world ; but He also reveals to them the power which will fight by them, and by which they shall conquer : the Spirit, *who will glorify Him in them*. Finally, in concluding (xvi. 16-33), He returns to that impending separation, which preoccupies them so painfully. He forcibly describes to them both its brevity and its magnificent results. And in summing up the object of their faith in those four propositions, which mutually correspond (ver. 28) : " I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world ; again I leave the world, and go to the Father," He illumines them with a clearness so vivid, that the promised day, that of the Holy Ghost, appears to them to have arrived, and they cry out : " We believe that Thou camest forth from God ;" Jesus answers them : " *At length ye believe.*" And to this profession of their faith He affixes, in ch. xvii., the seal of thanksgiving and of prayer. He asks the Father to restore Him to His state of glory, which is indispensable to Him, in order that He may give eternal life to His believing followers on the earth. He gives thanks for having gained those eleven men, and prays for their preservation and their perfect consecration to the work which He entrusts to them. Finally, He intercedes for the whole world, to which their word is to bring salvation. This prayer of the seventeenth chapter recapitulates, in the most solemn manner, the work accomplished in His disciples (ch. xiii.-xvii.), in the same way as the conclusion of ch. xii. was the *résumé*, made by the evangelist, of the development of unbelief in the nation and among its rulers (ch. v.-xii.). Nevertheless, as the element of faith was not wanting in the part devoted to unbelief, so the fact of unbelief appears also in this description of the development of faith. It is represented in the inmost circle of His disciples by the traitor, whose presence is frequently referred to in the course of ch. xiii. The departure of Judas (ver. 30) indicates the moment when that impure element finally gives place to the spirit of Jesus.

There is in the history of Jesus something more and something else than the revelation of the character of God, and the impressions of faith and unbelief, which that revelation awakens. The essential fact in this history is the work of reconciliation, which is being wrought out, and which pre-

pares the way for the communication of the life of God Himself to believers. This is the reason why the history of Jesus includes, besides the picture of His ministry of teaching, the narrative of His death and resurrection.<sup>1</sup> It is by means of these last facts that faith will come into complete possession of its object, and will attain to its full maturity, as it is by them also that the refusal will be consummated which constitutes final unbelief.

V. The entire narrative of the Passion, in ch. xviii. and xix., is related from the standpoint of that Jewish unbelief which is consummated by the crucifixion of the Messiah. This portion is connected with the preceding, in which the development of that unbelief was related (v.—xii.). At the very first, we remark the complete omission of the scene in Gethsemane; but after the numerous allusions to the synoptic narratives, which we have already established, these words, "Having said that, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, *where was a garden, into the which He entered, with His disciples,*" can only be regarded as referring the reader to the narrative of that struggle which was known from previous writings. There follows the deliverance of the disciples under the impression produced by the utterance of the words: "I am He." On the occasion of the wound inflicted by the sword, Peter and Malchus are designated by name in this Gospel only. The narrative of the trial of Jesus only makes mention of the preliminary inquiry which took place in the house of Annas. But in expressly designating that judicial appearance as the *first* (ver. 13: "to Annas *first*"), though a second is not related, and in indicating the sending of Jesus to Caiaphas (ver. 24: "Annas sent Jesus bound to Caiaphas the high priest"), the evangelist lets it here again be understood, as clearly as possible, that he presupposes as known other narratives which complete what is omitted in his. The three denials of St. Peter are not related in succession, but they are, as must in reality have been the case, interwoven with the phases of the trial of

<sup>1</sup> It is easy to notice the perplexity of those who, like Reuss, Hilgenfeld, etc., make the substance of the narrative of our Gospel to be the idea of *the revelation of the Logos*. They cannot account for the two portions that follow.

Jesus (xviii. 15-27). The tableau of the appearance before Pilate (xviii. 28 to xix. 16) unveils with admirable precision the bold, and at the same time crafty, tactics of the Jews. The instinct of truth, and respect for the mysterious person of Jesus, which restrain Pilate till at last he yields to the requirements of personal interest,—the cunning of the Jews, who pass without shame from one accusation to another, and who end by wresting from Pilate, through the influence of fear, what they despair of obtaining from him in the name of justice, but who only gain this shameful victory at the price of the denial of their most cherished hopes, and pledging themselves as vassals to the heathen empire (xix. 15): "We have no king but Cæsar,"—all is described with an incomparable knowledge of the situation. It is perhaps the masterpiece of the Johannine narrative.

One feature of the narrative ought to be specially noticed. In xviii. 28, the Jews will not enter into the judgment-hall of Pilate, "lest they should be defiled; but that they might eat the Passover." The Paschal feast was therefore not yet celebrated on the day of Christ's death according to our Gospel; it was not to be till the evening. It was then the 14th Nisan, the day of the *preparation* of the Passover. That circumstance is brought forward with so evident a purpose in several other passages (xiii. 1, 29, xix. 31, etc.), that we are led to think of other accounts which placed the death of Christ only on the *following* day, 15th Nisan, and after the Paschal feast. Now this is what the synoptic narrative appears to do. A fresh proof of the constant relation between the two accounts.

In the picture of the crucifixion, the disciple whom Jesus loved, that mysterious person who had already played an altogether special part on the last evening, is the only one of the disciples who is found near the cross. To him Jesus entrusts His mother. It is he, likewise, who sees the water and the blood flow from the pierced side of Jesus, and who verifies in that fact the simultaneous accomplishment of two prophecies.

VI. The narrative of the resurrection (ch. xx.) includes the description of three appearances which took place in



Judea: that which was accorded to Mary Magdalene near the sepulchre; that which took place in the evening in the presence of all the disciples, and in which Jesus renewed to the apostles their commission, and imparted to them the first-fruits of Pentecost; that, finally, which occurred eight days afterwards, and in which the obstinate unbelief of Thomas was overcome. Thus we see that, even as the element of faith was not entirely wanting in the scenes of the Passion (it is enough to recall the parts played by the disciple whom Jesus loved, by the women, by Joseph of Arimathea, by Nicodemus), so also the element of unbelief is not wanting in the portion which describes the final triumph of faith. Thomas's adoring exclamation: "My Lord and my God," in which the faith of the most incredulous of the disciples suddenly takes the most daring flight, and completely attains the height of its divine object, as it is described in the prologue, brings the narrative to a conclusion. It is thus that the end unites with the starting-point.

The Son of God, Jewish unbelief, the faith of the church,—these three aspects, previously indicated in the prologue, are therefore now fully treated: the subject is exhausted.

VII. The last two verses of ch. xx. form the conclusion of the book.<sup>1</sup> The author there declares the aim which he set before him. It is not a complete history which he wished to relate; it is, as we ourselves have proved, a selection of certain features designed to produce in his readers belief in the Messiahship and divinity of Jesus, faith in which they will find life, as he himself has found it.

VIII. Ch. xxi., in consequence of what precedes it, is a supplement. Is it from the hand of the author? The *pro* and *con* are still maintained. It is not of much importance; for, even if it *did* proceed from any other hand than that of the evangelist, that hand has merely edited a narrative which was frequently uttered by his lips; so like are the style and

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld, with some others, thinks that he can maintain that the narrative goes on till the end of ch. xxi. But that is to come into collision with the evidence. Renan says, without any hesitation: "With all critics, I conclude the first redaction of the fourth Gospel at ch. xx." (p. 534).

mode of narration to those of the book itself. This appendix must have been added at a very early date, and before the publication of the work, since it is not wanting in any manuscript or version. It completes the narrative of the appearances of Jesus, by relating one which took place in Galilee. Jesus gives to the disciples, by a symbolical act which is connected with their former worldly vocation, the pledge of the immense success of their future apostleship (xxi. 1-14). Then He reinstates Peter in his charge, and announces to him his future martyrdom, by which he will succeed in effacing the stain of his denial. The author takes advantage of this opportunity to restore the exact tenor of a saying which Jesus had uttered on that occasion concerning the disciple whom He loved; He had been wrongly made to say that this disciple should not die.

In this appendix may easily be noticed a want of coherence, which is foreign to the rest of the Gospel. It is a desultory narrative, the unity of which can only be established in a somewhat artificial manner. We must regard it as an amalgam of various recollections which have issued from time to time from the lips of the narrator.<sup>1</sup> Vv. 24 and 25, which close the appendix, are, without dispute, from another hand than that of the author of the Gospel. "*We know,*" is said in name of several. The singular, no doubt, returns in ver. 25, "*I think.*" But he who here speaks in his own name is no other than that member of the preceding whole (ver. 24) who holds the pen for his colleagues. These attest unitedly (ver. 24) by his pen (ver. 25) that the disciple specially beloved by Jesus is he "who testifieth of these things, and who wrote them." From the contrast between the present *testifieth* and the past *wrote*, it seems to follow that the authors of these lines added them during the author's life, when his work was completed. The entire book, then, is composed of *eight* parts, *five* of which form the body of the narrative or the history properly so called; *one*, the preamble; *one*, the conclusion; the *eighth* is a supplement.

The permanent basis of the history narrated is the revelation of Jesus as Messiah and Son of God (xx. 30, 31). On

<sup>1</sup> "This conclusion resembles," says Renan, "a series of private notes, which have a meaning only for him who wrote them, or for the initiated" (p. 535). We do not subscribe to the last words.

this basis there are raised, first confusedly (i. 19–iv.), then more and more distinctly, these two decisive moral facts: unbelief and faith; unbelief which repels the object of faith in proportion as it discloses itself more fully (v.–xii.), and faith which apprehends it with increasing eagerness (xiii.–xvii.); unbelief which seeks even to destroy it (xviii.–xix.), and faith which concludes by embracing it in its glorious sublimity (xx.).

This exposition would suffice to set aside every hypothesis opposed to the unity of the writing. The fourth Gospel is indeed, according to the felicitous expression of Strauss, "the robe without seam, for which lots may be cast, but which cannot be divided." It is the admirably graduated and shaded delineation of the development of unbelief and of faith in the Word made flesh.

## CHAPTER II

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Before entering on the questions which relate to the mode in which our Gospel was composed, it will be well to take exact account not only of its contents, but of its nature, aim, and literary characteristics. This is the study to which we proceed. It is the more indispensable, because there have arisen in modern times in regard to these various subjects very different ideas from those which were previously current.

Thus Reuss maintained in his earliest works, and still maintains, that the aim of the fourth Gospel is not historical, but purely theological. The author has inscribed a speculative idea at the opening of his book; it is clear from his own narrative, and by comparing it with that of the Synoptics, that he does not scruple to modify facts in the service of this idea, and he develops it in the forefront in the discourses which he puts into the mouth of Jesus, and which form the largest part of his book.

Baur shares the same view. The fourth Gospel is, according to him, an entirely speculative work. The few truly historical elements which may occur in it are facts borrowed from the synoptic tradition. Keim, too, in his *Life of Jesus*, denies all historical value to this work.

Another point which the two leaders of the Strasburg and Tübingen schools have sought to demonstrate is the anti-Jewish tendency of our Gospel. It was generally thought that this writing was bound to the revelations of the Old Testament, and to all the theocratical dispensations, by a respectful and sympathetic faith. These two critics have endeavoured to prove that in the eyes of the author the bond between Judaism and the Gospel does not exist, and that, on the contrary, a feeling reigns in his book hostile to the whole Israelitish economy.

We shall therefore seek first of all to elucidate the three following points, so far as it will be possible for us to do so without encroaching on the questions of the authenticity and aim of the Gospel, which are reserved for Book III. :—

1. The distinctive features of the Johannine narrative, and its relations to that of the synoptic Gospels.
2. The attitude taken by it toward the Old Testament.
3. The forms of view and style which are peculiar to it.

### § 1. THE NARRATIVE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Our study must bear here on three points: the general idea of the book; the facts; the discourses.

#### I. *The ruling Idea of the Book.*

Heading this narrative there is inscribed a general idea, the notion of the incarnate Logos, which may indeed be called the ruling idea of the whole work. This feature, we are told, profoundly distinguishes our Gospel from the synoptic writings. These are mere collections of isolated facts and detached sayings accidentally brought together, and their historical character is obvious at a glance; while this speculative notion, placed here at the head of the Gospel narrative, immediately betrays a dogmatic tendency, and impresses on the whole book the stamp of a *theological treatise*. Reuss even goes the length of asserting that the term *Gospel* cannot be applied to this work in the sense in which it is given to the other three, as designating a history of the ministry of Jesus. We must go back to the purely spiritual meaning which this

term had at the beginning, when in the New Testament it denoted the message of salvation in itself, without the least idea of a historical exposition. This general estimate seems to me to rest on two errors.

A ruling idea, formulated in the prologue, certainly governs the following narrative, and sums it up. But is this feature peculiar to the fourth Gospel? It meets us in the first, which opens with the words, containing, as we have seen, a whole programme: "The genealogy of Jesus the Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." It is needless again to show how this idea of the Messianic kingship of Jesus, and of the fulfilling by Him of all the promises made to Israel in David and to the world in Abraham, penetrates the slightest details of Matthew's narrative. The same is the case with Mark's Gospel, which opens with the words: "Beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, Son of God." Such is the formula which sums up the whole following narrative: Jesus, realizing in His life as Messiah-king the wisdom and power of a being come from God. St. Luke has not himself expressed the prevailing idea of his book; but it is nevertheless easy to find it: the Son of man, the perfect representative of human nature, freely bringing the salvation of God to all that bears the name of man. If, then, the fourth Gospel also has its parent idea, that of the Son of God manifested in the form of the Son of man, this feature by no means constitutes, as is alleged, a "capital difference" between it and the other three. The central idea is a different one from that of those three—that is all. Each of them has its own, because none of the four writers has related merely to relate. They relate to bring into relief each an aspect of the person of Jesus, which they present especially to the faith of their readers. They all propose not to satisfy curiosity, but to save.

The second error attaching to the criticism of Reuss is this: A general idea, placed at the head of a narrative, cannot fail to impair its historical character. Not at all. Would the description of the life and conquests of Alexander the Great become a didactic treatise because the author gave, as an introduction to the history, this great idea which his hero was called to realize: the fusion of East and West, long separated and hostile, into one civilised world? Or would the author

of a life of Napoleon compromise the fidelity of his narrative because of his putting it under this controlling idea: the restoration of France after the revolutionary tempest? Or to narrate the life of Luther, in conformity with the reality of things, would it be necessary to refuse to give him the title: the Reformer of the Church? Every great historical fact is the expression, the realization, of an idea; and this idea constitutes the essence, the greatness, even the truth of the fact. To set it forth at the outset is not to render the fact suspicious; it is to render it intelligible. The presence of an idea at the head of a narrative does not therefore exclude its historical character. The only question is, whether this idea is the true one,—whether it rises of itself from the fact, or is imported into it. Hase thus expresses himself on this point: “The force of the objection would vanish if Jesus was really, in the metaphysical sense, what our Gospel teaches (the Word made flesh). I dare not affirm it.” And, borrowing the confession which Goethe puts into the mouth of Faust, he says: “I know the message well, but I lack the faith.” Well and good! This lack of faith is an individual affair. But the writer acknowledges that the raying of the idea across the fact does not resolve it into a myth. A fact without an idea is a body without a soul. Such a notion has no place except in the system of materialism.

The prologue of the Johannine Gospel has therefore in itself nothing incompatible with the strictly historical character of the narrative which is to follow.

No, not necessarily, it will be said; but is it not to be feared, that once the idea has taken possession of the author's mind, it will more or less deeply influence the manner in which he considers and sets forth the facts? Might it not even happen that, in all good faith, he should invent the situations and events which might appear to him best fitted to put in full light the idea which he has formed? Let us see if it is so in the case before us.

## II. *The Facts.*

Baur held that, excepting the small number of materials borrowed from the Synoptics, the facts here related are mere

creations of the author's genius, who has sought in this dramatic form to expound the internal dialectic of the idea of the Logos. Reuss, without going quite so far, regards the narrative sometimes as freely modified for the sake of the idea, sometimes as wholly created for its service. Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the Greeks of ch. xii., are purely fictitious personages, brought on the stage by the author that he may have the opportunity of putting into the mouth of Jesus the conception which he has formed of His person. The history related in this Gospel is so far from real, that it has scarcely begun (ch. v.) when it seems to have reached its conclusion: the Jews already desire to put Jesus to death (v. 16)! The sojourns at Jerusalem, which form the salient points of the narrative, are fictitious scenes, the theatre of which has been chosen with the view of contrasting the light (Jesus) with the darkness (the Jewish authorities), and of giving to the Christ the opportunity of testifying to the divinity of His person. For this same reason the miracles of the fourth Gospel are made more marvellous than those of the Synoptics; and, moreover, they are presented no longer as works of mercy, but as signs of the divinity of Jesus. The author thus weaves them into his theory of the Logos. The account of the Holy Supper is omitted, because, from his idealistic point of view, the author is content with having stated its spiritual essence in ch. vi. The scene in Gethsemane is suppressed, because it would present the Logos in a state little becoming His divine greatness. No cure of any demoniac is related, because impure spirits are too ignoble adversaries for such a being. No mention is made of the miraculous birth, because this prodigy is eclipsed by the greater miracle of the incarnation, etc. etc. Thus it is that the study of the book, both in itself and comparing it with the Synoptics, reveals at every step the alterations which are due to the influence of the idea on the history.

To study this grave question with the scrupulous fidelity it demands, we must begin by establishing the essential characteristics of the narrative we have to estimate.

The first is certainly the strong *unity* of the work. The narrative begins and ends exactly at the point determined by the plan of the book. The author, as we have seen, proposes to relate the gradual and simultaneous development of unbelief

and faith under the sway of the growing manifestations of the Christ as the Son of God. His narrative therefore takes as its point of departure the day when, for the first time, Jesus was revealed as such by the testimony which John the Baptist, without as yet naming Him, rendered in the presence of the deputation of the Sanhedrim, a day which was consequently also that of the first dawn of faith in Jesus in the heart of His oldest disciples. On the other hand, the conclusion of the narrative places us at the moment when faith in the Christ, fully revealed by His resurrection, reached its climax, and, if one may so say, its normal level in the profession: "My Lord and my God," proceeding from the mouth of the least credulous of the disciples.

Between those two extreme points the history moves consecutively and progressively, both on the part of Jesus,—who on each occasion, and especially at each feast, adds some new feature to the revelation of Himself in keeping with the new situation (iii. 14: the brazen serpent; iv. 10: the living water; v. 19: the Son working with the Father; vi. 35: the bread of life; vii. 37: the rock giving forth living water; viii. 56: He in whom Abraham rejoices; ix. 5: the light of the world; x. 11: the good Shepherd; xi. 25: the resurrection and the life; xii. 15: the lowly King of Israel; xiii. 14: the Lord who serves; xiv. 6: the way, the truth, and the life; xv. 1: the true vine; xvi. 28: He who came from the Father and returns to the Father; xvii. 3: Jesus the Christ; xviii. 37: the king in the kingdom of truth; xix. 36: the true Paschal lamb; xx. 28: our Lord and God),—and in regard to faith which grows by appropriating each of those testimonies in acts and words, and the progress of which is frequently indicated by expressions like this: "And His disciples believed in Him" (ii. 11; comp. vi. 68, 69, xi. 15, xvi. 30, 31, xvii. 8, xx. 8, 29),—and in respect of Jewish unbelief, the hostile measures of which follow one another with an increase of violence of which all the degrees can be marked (ii. 18, 19: refusal to join in the Messianic reform; v. 16-18: first explosion of hatred and desire to kill; vii. 32: first active measure, the order given to the officer to seize Jesus; viii. 59: a first attempt to stone Him; ix. 22: the excommunication of any one who will acknowledge Him to be the Messiah;



x. 31 : new and more decided attempt to stone Him ; xi. 53 : a sitting of the Sanhedrim at which the death of Jesus is decided in principle, so that all that remains is to find ways of executing it ; xi. 57 : first official measure in this direction by the public summoning of witnesses against Jesus ; xiii. 27 : contract of the rulers with the traitor ; xviii. 3 : request for a detachment of Roman soldiers to carry out the arrest ; xviii. 13 and 24 : sittings for investigation before Annas and for judgment before Caiaphas ; xviii. 28 : request made to Pilate for His execution ; xix. 12 : final means of intimidation used to obtain his consent ; xix. 16 : the execution). — Such is the history as traced by the fourth Gospel. And Reuss can seriously put the question : “ Is there anywhere the least trace of a progress or development in any direction whatever ? ” (p. 23) ; and Stap can assert that “ the catastrophe might be placed on the first page as well as on the last ; ” and Sabatier, finally, can speak of “ stampings on the spot ” (violent efforts without motion), which characterize the course of our Gospel ! Is it not rather against the synoptic narrative that this charge might be brought ? For in it Jesus passes abruptly from Galilee to Jerusalem, and perishes in the city after only five days of conflict ! Is this a sufficient preparation for such a catastrophe ? Reuss takes offence because in v. 16 it is said that they already seek to put Him to death. But he can read exactly the same thing in the Gospel of Mark, the Gospel which is in his eyes the most primitive type of the narrative, iii. 6 : “ Then the Pharisees took counsel with the Herodians against Him *to put Him to death.* ” This is said as a consequence of one of the first miracles, and at the beginning of the Galilean ministry.

The strong unity of the Johannine narrative appears, finally, in the exact and complete data by means of which the course of the ministry of Jesus is as it were marked off, so that by means of this writing, and of this writing alone, we can establish its principal dates and reconstruct its external framework. The following are the data with which it furnishes us. Ch. ii. 12 and 13 : a first Passover, at which Jesus inaugurates His public work ; it is followed by several months’ activity in Judea, and finally, by a return to Galilee through Samaria, about the month of December of that same year ; ch. v. : a

feast at Jerusalem, undoubtedly that of Purim, in the following spring, and a month before the Passover; vi. 4: the second Passover, which Jesus cannot go to celebrate at Jerusalem, so great is the hostility against Him, and which He passes in Galilee; vii. 2: the feast of Tabernacles, in the autumn of that second year, to which Jesus can only repair *incognito*, and as it were by surprise; x. 22: the feast of Dedication, two months later, in December, at which again He only makes one appearance at Jerusalem; finally, xii. 1: the third Passover, at which He dies. Such is a series of dates traced with a firm hand, with natural intervals, which forms a sufficient guide to us as to the course and duration of the Lord's ministry, and which enables us to draw up a rational plan of it. The only account which does not fall organically into this firmly connected whole is that of the adulteress, which belongs logically neither to the development of unbelief nor to that of faith, and which would thus sound suspiciously to a delicate ear, even if the external testimonies did not exclude it so positively as they do.

But, at the same time, this narrative, so perfectly one, so consecutive and so graduated, forming so perfect a whole, turns out to be amazingly *fragmentary*. It begins at the middle of John the Baptist's ministry, without describing the first part of it. It stops at the scene of Thomas, without mention of the subsequent appearances in Galilee, or even of the ascension.—In ch. vi. 70, Jesus says to the apostles: "Have not I chosen you twelve?" and not a single word has yet been said of the founding of the apostleship; the reader knows only five of the disciples from ch. i.—In ver. 71, Judas Iscariot is named as a perfectly well-known person, and it is the first time that he appears on the stage.—In ch. xiv. 22, the presence of another Judas among the Twelve is assumed as known, and it has not been once mentioned.—In xi. 1, Bethany is called *the town of Mary and her sister Martha*, and the names of the two have not yet been given.—In xi. 2, Mary is designated as she "who had anointed the Lord with ointment;" and this incident, which the reader is supposed to know, is not related till afterwards.—In ii. 23, mention is made of those who believed at Jerusalem *on seeing the miracles which Jesus did*; iii. 2, Nicodemus alludes to those same miracles; and iv. 45, it is said that the Galileans welcomed Jesus on His return

*because they saw the miracles which He did at Jerusalem, and not one of those miracles is related.*

We have seen that from the first Passover to the return of Jesus to Galilee (ch. iv.) there have elapsed some seven or eight months (from April to December). Now, of all that passed during that time, that long sojourn in Judea, with the exception of the single conversation with Nicodemus, we know only one fact: the continuance of John the Baptist's baptism side by side with that of Jesus, and the last testimony borne by the forerunner (iii. 22 ff.). From the return of Jesus to Galilee, ch. iv., till His new journey to Jerusalem, ch. v. (feast of Purim), three months elapse, which the author sums up in the simple word, *after these things* (v. 1). Between this journey to Jerusalem and the second Passover (ch. vi.) there is a whole month of which we know nothing except this one saying (vi. 2): "And a great multitude followed him because they saw His miracles which He did on them which were diseased." Of those numerous miracles which attracted the crowd, not one related! Between this Passover (ch. vi.) and the feast of Tabernacles (ch. vii.), that is to say, during the six months from April to October, many things certainly took place; regarding them we have only these two lines (vii. 1): "After these things Jesus walked in Galilee; for He would not walk in Judea." Between this feast and x. 22 (December), two months, then from that to the Passover, three months, of which (except the resurrection of Lazarus) nothing is related. Thus, of two years and a half, twenty months regarding which there is complete silence!<sup>1</sup>

In ch. xviii. 13, it is said that they led Jesus to Annas *first*; an expression which indicates a subsequent sitting in another place. The report of the latter sitting is omitted. It is referred to indeed (ver. 24: "And Annas sent Jesus bound unto Caiaphas the high priest"), but not related; and yet it is one of the most indispensable links in the history, for the sitting before Annas had been occupied with a simple investigation, and for a capital execution it was absolutely necessary

<sup>1</sup> Can we understand how, in face of such facts, a writer who respects himself can dare to write the following lines: "John, it is well known (!), presents no trace of blanks or divisions in which might be placed the materials furnished by the Synoptics."—(STAP, *Études Historiques et Critiques*, p. 259.)

to have an official sitting of the Sanhedrim, at which sentence should be pronounced according to certain fixed forms. The subsequent appearance before Pilate, at which the Jews endeavour to get from him the confirmation of the sentence, leaves no doubt as to the fact that sentence was really pronounced. Now all that is omitted in our narrative, as well the sitting in the house of the high priest Caiaphas as the pronouncing of the sentence. How are we to explain the omission of such facts? In iii. 24, these words: "Now John was not yet cast into prison," suppose the idea present in the reader's mind that at that time he was already arrested. Now not a word in what precedes was fitted to create such a misunderstanding.

Is not such a mode of narration a perpetual enigma? On the one hand, a connection so firm and compact; and, on the other, as many parts empty as full, as many blanks as contents. Is there any supposition which can in some way explain so contradictory characteristics in one and the same narrative? Yes, and this solution must be sought in the relation of our fourth Gospel to the three preceding, as we shall now try to show.

The relation of the Johannine narrative to that of the synoptic Gospels may be described by these two characteristics: A *correlation* which is constant on the one hand, and on the other marked *independence* and even *superiority*.

1. The adaptation between the two wheels, in a system of wheelwork, is not closer than that which we remark on a somewhat attentive study between the two narratives we are comparing. The full parts of the one correspond to the blanks of the other, as the outstanding details of the latter to the void spaces of the former. John begins his narrative with the last part of the Baptist's ministry without having described its first half, without even relating the baptism of Jesus; exactly the reverse of what we find in the Synoptics. He relates the call of the first believers on the banks of the Jordan, without mentioning their subsequent elevation to the rank of permanent disciples on the shores of the lake of Gennesaret; again the reverse of the synoptic narrative. Anterior to the Galilean ministry he gives a pretty long ministry in Judea, which is omitted by the Synoptics; then,

coming to a period of the Galilean ministry so amply described by his predecessors, he relates in common with them only a single scene of it, that of ch. vi. (we shall see the reason which leads him to make this exception), and for all the rest of those ten to twelve months of the work in Galilee, he confines himself to indicating the framework and compartments of it without filling them otherwise than by the two brief summaries, ver. 1 of ch. vi. and ver. 1 of ch. vii. These compartments, left empty, cannot be naturally explained except as references to other accounts with which the author knows his readers to be acquainted. But while he thus passes, without entering into the least detail regarding the whole Galilean ministry, he insists with marked partiality on the sojourns at Jerusalem, which he describes most circumstantially, and the omission of which in the Synoptics is so striking a blank in their narrative. In the last sojourn at Jerusalem he omits the embarrassing questions which were addressed to Jesus in the temple, but he carefully relates the approach of the Greeks, omitted in all the other accounts. He gives a place in the description of the last meal to the act of the feet-washing, and omits the institution of the Supper; and in the account of the trial of Jesus he brings into prominence the appearance before Annas, omitted by all the others, and in return passes over in silence the great sitting of the Sanhedrim in the presence of Caiaphas, at which Jesus was condemned to death. In the description of the cross he quotes three sayings of Jesus not related by his predecessors, and omits the four mentioned by them. Among the appearances of the risen One, those to Mary Magdalene and Thomas, omitted or barely indicated by the Synoptics, are circumstantially described; one only of the others is referred to, and that with details that are entirely special.

Could the dovetailing relation to the Synoptics which we have indicated appear more manifestly? We by no means conclude from it that John related *in order to complete them*,—he certainly had a higher aim before him,—but we believe we can assert that he wrote *completing them*; that to complete was not his aim, but one of the guides of his narrative. On the part of the author there was choice or selection, determined by the narratives of his predecessors. If

his work left any doubt on this point, its closing declaration should be enough to convince us: "*Many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of His disciples which are not written in this book (ἐν τῷ βιβλίῳ τούτῳ).*" The words here used signify two things: (1) That he left aside a part of the facts which he might also have related; (2) that those facts were omitted by him because they were already related in other writings than his (*this book*, opposed to others). What books were those? It is impossible not to recognise our three Synoptics by the following proofs: The election of the Twelve, referred to John vi. 70, is related Mark iii. 13-19 and Luke vi. 12-16. The two sisters, Martha and Mary, expressly designated, John xi., as persons already known, are introduced on the scene of gospel history by Luke (x. 38-42). The confusion of the first two returns to Galilee (comp. John i. 44 and iv. 3), which John so evidently makes it his task to dissipate (ii. 11 and iv. 54), occurs in our three Synoptics (Matt. iv. 12 and parall.); and the idea that no activity of Jesus in Judea had preceded the imprisonment of John the Baptist, an idea which John corrects iii. 24, is found expressly stated in Matthew and Mark (passages quoted). How, then, is it possible to doubt the close and deliberate correlation of John's narrative with that of the synoptic Gospels? Renan has always recognised it;<sup>1</sup> and Reuss, after having disputed it more or less,<sup>2</sup> now consents to admit it. He even goes, as we shall see, the length of transforming this correlation into a connection of dependence on John's part relatively to the Synoptics. Baur and Hilgenfeld likewise acknowledge this relation, so that it may be regarded as a point gained.

Starting, then, from this fact, are we not entitled to say: That two narratives which are so closely and constantly related to one another cannot be written from entirely different points

"The position of the Johannine writer is that of an author who is not ignorant that the subject of which he treats has already been written about, who approves of many things which have been said, but who believes that he possesses more trustworthy information, and gives it without disturbing himself about others" (p. 531).

<sup>1</sup> He said formerly: "Only with difficulty can there be discovered in this Gospel traces of a relation to the so-called anterior Gospels. The facts do not force us absolutely to admit that the author was acquainted with our synoptic Gospels."

of view, and that if the former, while seeking, in each of its three forms, to exhibit one of the salient characteristics of the person of Jesus, pursues this end in a truly historical way, it must be the same with the other, which at each step completes it and is in turn completed by it?

It will perhaps be objected that the author of the Johannine narrative, being a man of extraordinary ability, labours, by all that he borrows from the previous accounts, not to break with the universally received tradition, and at the same time, by all the new matter he adds to it, endeavours, as Reuss says, to assert his dogmatic conception; in other words, to make his theory of the Logos triumphant.

This explanation requires to be examined in the light of the two other features which we have remarked in the relation between our Gospel and the Synoptics. I mean: the complete independence and even the decided historical superiority of the former.

Baur had affirmed the dependence of John for all truly historical information on the synoptical narrative; Holtzmann has sought to demonstrate this in detail, and Reuss now declares himself, despite his previous denials, converted to the same opinion.<sup>1</sup>

We must here distinguish between the correlation which we have just proved, and which, like every relation whatever, is a sort of dependence (but solely as to the mode of narration), and the dependence which bears even on the knowledge of the facts. As much as we affirm the former, so much are we in a position to deny the latter, and to assert that the author of the Johannine narrative is in possession of a source of information which is peculiar to him, and which, as to the matter of his accounts, renders him absolutely independent of the synoptic tradition. Let us consider the facts.

It is not from the Synoptics that he knows the public testimony rendered by the forerunner to Jesus. For before the baptism of Jesus nothing of the kind is and nothing could be ascribed to Him by them, and after His baptism the

<sup>1</sup> "In my former works I thought I could maintain the independence of the fourth Gospel in respect of the synoptic texts. I am obliged to side with the opposite view, which is now shared even by those who in other respects adopt the traditional opinions" (*La Théologie johannique*, p. 76).

Synoptics mention nothing beyond this single saying of John, which is rather an expression of doubt: "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" And yet the answer of Jesus on occasion of the official question of the Sanhedrim as to His Messianic authority (Matt. xxi. 23 and paralls.), implies the existence of a public and well-known testimony rendered by the forerunner, such as that which John relates i. 19 ff.—It is not from the Synoptics that John has borrowed the account of the first relations of Jesus to His oldest disciples (ch. i.); and yet these relations are necessarily assumed by the call to the latter to become fishers of men, on the shore of the lake of Gennesaret (Matt. v. 18 ff.).—It is not from the Synoptics John learned that Jesus inaugurated His public ministry by the purification of the temple, for they place this act during His last sojourn at Jerusalem. Now, all the probabilities are in favour of the time assigned by John to this deed. Reuss himself thinks so, for, according to him, if Jesus was several times at Jerusalem (which he admits), it is almost impossible to hold that on the first time He was indifferent to what was able to excite His holy indignation on a later occasion.<sup>1</sup>—It is certainly not from the Synoptics that John borrows the correction which he makes in their account, iii. 24, by recalling the fact that Jesus and His forerunner had baptized simultaneously in Judea at the beginning of the Lord's ministry, and, iv. 54 (comp. with i. 44 and iv. 3), by distinguishing exactly between the first two returns of Jesus to Galilee, which are confounded together by the synoptic narrative. And yet every one must confess that these corrections are well-founded rectifications in keeping with the real course of the history; for (1) if Jesus had not at first publicly taught in Judea, the imprisonment of John the Baptist would have been no reason for His withdrawing and repairing to Galilee (Weizsäcker); and (2) there remains a manifest blank in the synoptic narrative between the baptism of Jesus and the imprisonment of the Baptist, a blank which is precisely filled up by the Johannine narrative (Holtzmann).—Westcott says, with perfect truth: "Matt. iv. 12 and Mark i. 14 have no meaning except on the supposition of a *Judean* ministry prosecuted by Jesus, which those books have not related."

<sup>1</sup> P. 139.



It is not from the Synoptics that John borrows the account of the sojourns at Jerusalem, the characteristic which most profoundly distinguishes his narrative from theirs. And yet, if the Johannine narrative possesses a pronounced character of superiority over the other, it is in this point, one may say. Keim speaks, it is true, very pathetically of those "breathless journeys"<sup>1</sup> of Jesus to Jerusalem. All are nevertheless agreed on this subject. Weiss expresses himself thus: "All the historical considerations speak in favour of John's account, and in the synoptical narratives themselves there are not wanting evidences which lead to this way of understanding the history."<sup>2</sup> Renan himself remarks that "men transplanted only a few days before [the disciples, on the supposition that they had never previously stayed at Jerusalem] would not have chosen that city for their capital" . . . And he adds: "If things had passed as Mark and Matthew will have it, Christianity would have been developed chiefly in Galilee."<sup>3</sup> Hausrath and Holtzmann express themselves to the same effect.<sup>4</sup> Without pursuing this enumeration, let it suffice to quote Hase, who in a few lines seems to us to sum up the question: "In so far as we know the circumstances of the time, it was natural that Jesus should seek to obtain the national recognition [of His Messianic dignity] in the very centre of the people's life, the Holy City; and even the mortal hatred of the priests at Jerusalem would be more difficult to explain if Jesus had never threatened them at close quarters. But it is quite natural that those journeys to Jerusalem, as chronological waymarks, should have been effaced from the Galilean tradition and blended in the one last journey which led to the death of Jesus. In the synoptic Gospels there are preserved the traces of a previous sojourn of Jesus in the capital and its neighbourhood: 'Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; *how often* would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not!' This mournful exclamation, escaping from the very

<sup>1</sup> "Das Athemlose Festreisen."

<sup>2</sup> Introd. p. 35.

<sup>3</sup> *Vie de Jésus*, 13th ed. p. 487.

<sup>4</sup> *Neutestamentliche Zeitgeschichte*, i. p. 386; *Gesch. d. Volks Israel*, ii. pp. 372, 373.

depths of the heart of Jesus, cannot be explained by the few days' sojourn which He made in the city, according to the Synoptics." The explanation of Baur, who thinks that the children of Jerusalem are taken here as representatives of the whole people, while the words are addressed in the most precise and local manner to Jerusalem itself, is a mere subterfuge; as it is also a pure evasion of Strauss to find here the quotation of a passage from a lost book (*The Wisdom of God*), a passage which in any case could only have been thus put into the mouth of Jesus if the public mind remembered more than one sojourn at Jerusalem. Besides, according to the Synoptics also, Jesus has hosts at Bethany, to whose roof He returns every evening.<sup>1</sup> . . . Sabatier cites, moreover, the owner of the colt at Bethphage, the master of the house where Jesus bids the Passover be prepared at Jerusalem, Joseph of Arimathea, who comes requesting His body. It is difficult to believe that all these relations of Jesus in Judea were contracted in the few days merely which preceded the Passion. Finally, let us not forget this remarkable fact, that Luke himself places at a long anterior date the first visit of Jesus to the house of Martha and Mary (x. 38 ff.).

Reuss cannot deny the weight of these arguments. While continuing to think that the choice of this theatre was dictated to the author "by the very nature of the antithesis, the antagonism between the gospel and Judaism," that it was consequently "the theological view which created this framework," he is nevertheless obliged to confess "that there are evident traces of a more frequent residence of Jesus at Jerusalem" than that spoken of by the Synoptics. But if historical truth is so *evidently* on John's side, how, on the other hand, is it possible to maintain that "this frame is due to the theological conception"?<sup>2</sup>

Reuss is likewise led by facts to give the preference to the *chronological* framework of John's account, which assigns to the ministry of Jesus a duration of two years and a half, and not one year merely, as the synoptic narrative appears to do. "We do not think," says he, "that it can be affirmed that Jesus employed only a single year of His life in acting on the spirit

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte Jesu, nach acad. Vorles.* p. 40.

<sup>2</sup> *Théol. johann.* pp. 57-59.

of His surroundings."<sup>1</sup> . . . Weizsäcker makes the same observation: "The transformation in the previous ideas, views, and beliefs of the apostles, to have power to survive the final catastrophe, and rise anew immediately after, must have penetrated to the very depths of their being. There was needed thereto the school of a prolonged contact with Jesus. Here neither instructions nor emotions were enough; they needed to grow into inward and personal union with the Master."<sup>2</sup> Renan, too, declares that the mention of the different sojourns of Jesus at Jerusalem (and, consequently, of His two or three years' ministry) "constitutes a decisive triumph for our Gospel."<sup>3</sup> This is not a secondary detail in the relation of John to the Synoptics. It is the capital point. How is it possible to maintain, after such avowals, that the fourth Gospel is dependent on its predecessors? How can we help, on the contrary, recognising the complete independence of the materials of which it makes use, and their decided *historical* superiority to the tradition deposited in the Synoptics?

In the account of the last night, the first two Synoptics distribute the sayings of Christ into three groups: 1. The revelation of the betrayal and the betrayer; 2. The institution of the Holy Supper; 3. The personal impressions of Jesus. Luke the same, but in the inverse order. It is still three distinct collections in juxtaposition. This order was that of the traditional narrative which tended to group homogeneous elements. But it is not that of real life; so it is not found in John. Here the Lord reverts again and again both to the treachery of Judas and to his own impressions.—The same difference in the narrative of Peter's denial. The three acts of the denial are brought together in the Synoptics as into one space of time; this narrative was one of the *ἀπομνημονεύματα* (traditional accounts) which formed each a little complete whole in popular narration. In John we do not find these three acts grouped artificially; they are divided among other facts, as they certainly were in reality; the account has recovered its natural articulations. This characteristic has not escaped the sagacity of Renan, who thus expresses himself: "The same superiority in the narrative of Peter's

<sup>1</sup> P. 58.<sup>2</sup> *Untersuchungen*, p. 313.<sup>3</sup> P. 487.

denials. This whole episode as given in our author is more circumstantial, better explained."

It is well known that, according to John's account, the day of Christ's death was the 14th of Nisan, the day of the preparation of the Paschal supper, and not, as it seems from the first view of the Synoptics, the 15th, the day after the feast. It has been alleged that this difference arose from the fact that the author of the fourth Gospel wished to make the time of Jesus' death coincide with the time when the Paschal lamb was sacrificed, a ceremony which took place in the afternoon of the 14th; and that in a purely dogmatic and typological interest. It is difficult to understand what the author would have gained by making so violent a transposition of the central fact of the Gospel, that of the cross. For in the end, the typical relation between the sacrifice of the lamb and the crucifixion of Christ does not depend on the simultaneousness of the two acts. This relation had already been proclaimed by Paul (1 Cor. v. 7: "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us"); it was recognised by the whole church, on the ground of the sacramental words: "Do this in remembrance of me," by which Jesus had put Himself in the place of the Paschal lamb. It is easier, on the contrary, to understand the risk which the author ran by subjecting the history to such an alteration; he compromised in the church the authority of his work, and thereby even (to put ourselves at the viewpoint of those who give this explanation) that of his conception of the Logos, which, besides, had nothing to do with typological and Judaic symbolism, and was even opposed to it. But more than that, we shall show, and that from the Synoptics themselves, that the date of John is the true one. Reuss cannot help admitting this with us for the same reasons (the facts mentioned Mark xiv. 21, 46 and parall. which could not have passed on a Sabbatic day, as the 15th of Nisan was).<sup>1</sup> Here again, then, it is John's narrative which restores to light the true course of things left in obscurity by the Synoptics.

We shall not enter upon the detailed study of the accounts of the Passion and resurrection. I may confine myself to quoting this general judgment passed by Renan on the last

<sup>1</sup> See *Théol. johann.* p. 60.

days of Jesus' life: "In the whole of this part, the fourth Gospel contains particular notices infinitely superior to those of the Synoptics." And with regard to the fact of the resurrection of Lazarus, he adds: "Now, singular to say, this account is connected with the last pages [of the Gospel history] so intimately, that if it is rejected as imaginary, the whole edifice of the last weeks of the life of Jesus, so solid in our Gospel, crumbles away at the same blow."<sup>1</sup> And, indeed, everything is historically connected in the Johannine narrative: the resurrection of Lazarus decides the ovation of Palm-day; and the latter, taken with the treachery of Judas, forces the Sanhedrim to precipitate the catastrophe.

It is true that Hilgenfeld regards this explanation of the relation between John and the Synoptics as "a *degradation* of the latter, they not being more than defective beginnings, of which John's narrative was the censor."<sup>2</sup> Reuss more than once expresses the same idea: "A singular way to strengthen the Christian's faith, by suggesting to him the idea that what he may have read previously in Matthew or Luke has great need of being corrected."<sup>3</sup>—But to complete is to confirm what precedes and what follows the blank which is filled up; and to rectify an inaccuracy of detail in a narrative, is not to overthrow the authority of the whole, but, on the contrary, to strengthen it. The corrections and completions supplied by John to the synoptic narrative have been remarked from the first ages of the church, but they have not in the least impaired the confidence placed in these writings.

We have now the necessary elements for resolving the two questions: "Is the fourth Gospel, in the truths which it relates, dependent on the Synoptics? In the points wherein it differs from these, does the author modify the history according to a preconceived and favourite theory?"

As to the first question, the facts closely studied have just demonstrated that the author of the fourth Gospel possesses a source of information independent of the synoptic tradition. The negative solution of the second follows clearly from the fact that in the case of difference between the two narratives, it is in every instance the Johannine narrative which, *from the historical point of view*, merits the preference. An account

<sup>1</sup> P. 514.<sup>2</sup> *Zeitschr. für wissenschaft. Theol.* i. 1880.<sup>3</sup> P. 32.

which is constantly superior, historically speaking, is secure from the suspicion of being the product of an idea.

What is opposed to this conclusion from facts which are for the most part granted by the objectors themselves? They claim, in spite of all, to find in the Johannine narrative certain traces of dependence on the synoptic account. Holtzmann has exercised his critical dexterity in this domain. The following are some of his discoveries.<sup>1</sup> John says (i. 6): "There was a man (*ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος*)." This is an imitation of the: "There came a word (*ἐγένετο ῥῆμα*)," Luke iii. 2. John says (i. 7): "The same came;" he copies the: "And He came," Luke iii. 3. The words: "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth" (John xi. 11), reproduce those of Mark v. 39 and parall.: "She is not dead, but sleepeth" (though Mark's term, *καθεύδει*, is different from that of John, *κεκοίμηται*). The sickness of Lazarus (John xi.) is a copy of the picture of Lazarus, covered with sores, in the parable, Luke xvi. 20, and the whole account of the resurrection of Lazarus of Bethany is only a fiction created from this parable of the wicked rich man. According to Renan, it is the opposite. The two assertions are of equal value. In Luke, Abraham refuses as useless to send back the dead Lazarus to the earth; in John, Jesus restores him to the living: what an imitation! It is maintained again, from this point of view, that the account of Martha and Mary, ch. xi., is an imitation of that of Luke x. 38 ff.; or that Philip's two hundred pence (vi. 7) are taken from the text of Mark vi. 37, as the three hundred of Judas (xii. 5) are borrowed from the text of Mark xiv. 5; or that the strange term *νάρδος πιστικῆ* (pure nard, worthy of trust), in John (xii. 3), is founded on Mark xiv. 3. The comparison of the three accounts of the anointing of Jesus at Bethany has produced so great an impression on Reuss, that it has determined his conversion to the view of dependence maintained by Holtzmann.<sup>2</sup> According to him, indeed, two different anointings are related by the Synoptics, that which took place in Galilee by the hands of a woman that was a sinner in the house of Simon the Pharisee (Luke vii.), and that which took place at Bethany by a woman of the place in the house of Simon the leper (Matt. xxvi.; Mark xiv.).

<sup>1</sup> *Zeitschr. für wissenschaftl. Theol.* 1869.

<sup>2</sup> *Theol. johann.* p. 76, note.

"Well," says Reuss, "the author of the fourth Gospel gives us a third version," which can only be understood as a combination of the other two. He puts into the mouth of Jesus the same words as Mark's account. And at the same time he borrows from Luke this characteristic detail, that the oil was poured not on His head (Mark and Matthew), but on His feet. Moreover, he thinks good to get rid of the account of the first two Synoptics by transporting the scene from the house of Simon the leper to that of Lazarus newly raised from the dead. The truth is: (1) That John relates exactly the same scene as Mark and Matthew; but (2) that he relates it with more precise details; and (3) without contradicting them in the least. He is more precise, he mentions exactly the day of the feast; it was that of the arrival of Jesus at Bethany from Jericho, the eve of Palm-day; in Matthew and Mark there is nothing to determine the chronology. He mentions the anointing *of the feet*, that of the head being understood, for it was a matter of ordinary courtesy (comp. Ps. xxiii. 5; Luke vii. 46); while to anoint *the feet* with such a perfume, was an altogether extraordinary instance of prodigality. It was precisely this exceptional fact which occasioned the murmuring of some disciples, and the conversation which followed. Then John alone mentions Judas as the fosterer of the discontent which broke out among some of his colleagues. Matthew and Mark here only use vague terms: *the disciples; some*. But these Gospels themselves, by the place they assign to this account, by making an insertion of it, and, as it were, an episode in the treachery of Judas (comp. Mark xiv. 1, 2 and vv. 10, 11, and the parallel in Matthew), indirectly bear witness to the exactness of that more precise detail in John's narrative. Tradition had assigned this place to the narrative of the anointing exactly on account of the part Judas played on this occasion, which was a sort of prelude to his treachery. It was an association of ideas for which John substitutes the true chronological situation. Finally, John's narrative does not at all contradict the parallel account of the two Synoptics as to the house where the supper took place. For the expression: "And Lazarus was one of them that sat at the table with Him" (in John), far from proving that the entertainment took

place at the house of Lazarus, proves exactly the contrary. It would not have been necessary to say that Lazarus was at table in his own house, and that Martha served there. There remain the identical detail of the three hundred pence and the common term *πιστική*. There would be nothing impossible, certainly, in supposing that John, having Mark's narrative before him, borrowed from him such trifling statements; his general historical independence would nevertheless remain intact. But those borrowings even are doubtful; for (1) John's narrative possesses, as we have seen, details which are altogether original; (2) the term *πιστική* was a technical term, opposed to the equally technical one (see Pliny), *pseudonard*; (3) the two numbers being certainly historical, might be transmitted in two relations independent of one another. Besides, in the account of the multiplication of the loaves, the parts attributed to Philip and to Andrew betray in John the same independence of information which we have just established in the account of the anointing at Bethany.

We come to the solution of the second and most decisive question: whether the philosophical idea of the Logos, which is thought to be the soul of the narrative, has not exercised an unfavourable influence on the statement of facts, and whether it is not to this influence that we must ascribe the most of the differences which are remarked between this narrative of the history of Jesus and that of the three Synoptics.

The facts which we have just established contain in a general way the answer to the question. If, in the cases of divergence previously examined, we have in every instance established the indisputable *historical* superiority of John's narrative, what follows therefrom? That the author had too much respect for the history he was relating to allow the idea which inspired him to affect the faithful statement of the facts; or that this ruling idea belonging to the history itself pervaded the narrative, not as a cause of alteration, but as an advantageous and conservative guide.

Let us, however, enter into details, and deal with the particular divergences which are cited as specimens of the disturbing effect of the theological point of view. They involve either facts *omitted*, or narratives *repeated*, with or without modification, or finally, incidents *added*, by the Johannine narrative.



There are especially three facts, the *omission* of which appears significant to many critics: the temptation, the institution of the Holy Supper, and the agony of Gethsemane. The first and third of these facts, it is held, appeared to the author unworthy of the Logos; as to the second, it was enough for him, from his spiritualistic standpoint, to have unveiled its essence in the discourse of ch. vi.; after that, the external rite had no more value in his eyes. Is it not the same in regard to baptism? Neither does he relate its institution, but he expounds its essence, iii. 5.—We think that John's silence on these points is to be explained in a wholly different way. If the author feared to compromise the dignity of the Logos by showing Him in conflict with the invisible adversary, would he make Him say, xiv. 30: "I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh"? It must not be forgotten that the starting-point of John's narrative is posterior to the fact of the temptation. The same is the case with the baptism of Jesus, which also is unrelated, but which the author has no thought of denying, for he makes distinct allusion to it in the saying attributed to John the Baptist, i. 32: "I saw the Spirit descend from heaven like a dove, and abide on Him." The scene of Gethsemane is omitted; but it is sufficiently indicated by these words, which are really a reference to the synoptic narratives, xviii. 1: "When Jesus had spoken these things, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Cedron, *where was a garden, into the which He entered, and His disciples.*" John does here exactly as he does with the chief sitting of the Sanhedrim, in which Jesus was condemned to death; this scene, which is necessarily supposed by the appearance before Pilate, he yet does not relate, but contents himself with indicating it in the words, xviii. 24: "And Annas sent Him bound to Caiaphas the high priest" (comp. also the: "to Annas *first,*" ver. 13). This tacit reference to the Synoptics belongs to John's style of narration. Confining himself to a delicate indication which is to serve as a *nota bene*, he passes over the particulars which he knows to be sufficiently familiar to his readers. If he had feared to compromise the dignity of the Logos, how would he have related in ch. xii., in a scene which he alone has saved from oblivion, that inward struggle, the secret of which Jesus did not fear to betray to the people surrounding

Him, ver. 27 : "Now is my soul troubled, and what shall I say?" How would he make Him *weep* at the grave of Lazarus (xi. 35), and represent Him as *troubled in spirit* in presence of the traitor (xiii. 21)?—The omission of the institution of the Holy Supper is not less easily explained. John did not write the Gospel for neophytes; he told his story in the midst of churches founded long before, and in which the Holy Supper was celebrated probably every week. Far from wishing to describe the ministry of Jesus in its totality, he exhibited those manifestations in deeds and sayings which had chiefly contributed to reveal to himself the Christ, the Son of God; comp. xx. 30, 31. Now this aim did not oblige him to report particularly the institution of the Supper; and as this ceremony was well enough known and universally celebrated, he could omit its institution without disadvantage. No more does he relate the institution of baptism, though he makes allusion to it, iii. 5 and iv. 2.

Three examples should prove to a circumspect criticism how much it behoves to be on its guard when it seeks to draw from such omissions conclusions as to the secret intentions of the author. He omits the account of the election of the twelve apostles; is it to disparage them? But he himself puts into the mouth of Jesus this saying, vi. 70 : "Have not I *chosen you twelve?*" Suppose this declaration were not found there, what consequences would not a vehement criticism draw from the omission? The fourth Gospel does not relate the ascension; does it seek to deny it? In vi. 62, we find this saying in the mouth of Jesus : "What and if ye shall see the Son of man *ascending up where He was before?*" The reason of the omission is simply that the conclusion of the narrative, the scene of Thomas, is anterior to that event, which besides suited, as no other could, the idea of the Logos. If there was in the Synoptics a fact which might be turned to account in the interest of this theory, assuredly it was that of the transfiguration. Well! it is omitted, no less than the scene of Gethsemane. Such examples should suffice to recall criticism from the false way in which it has gone astray for forty years, and in which it draws after it an immense public who swear blindly according to it.

But here we are called to halt. If the author of the fourth

Gospel, we are told, really proposed to complete the other two, why does he relate a number of facts already reported by them; for example, the driving out of the traders and the multiplication of the loaves, the anointing by Mary at Bethany and the entrance into Jerusalem on Palm-day?

We have said already: the author does not write to complete. He sets before him a higher aim, mentioned by himself, ch. xx. 30, 31. But in these same verses he also defines his method, which consists in *choosing* among the things already, or not yet written, what best suits the end he follows: to give the ground of his faith in Christ the Son of God, that he may reproduce it in his readers: "Many other signs did Jesus . . . which are not written in this book; but *these are written that*" . . . This mode of choosing supposes omissions, —we have shown them,—but also authorizes repetitions, whenever the author judges them necessary or even useful for his purpose.

Thus the driving out of the traders (ch. ii.) is related anew by him, because he knows that it played a much graver part in the ministry of Jesus and the development of national unbelief than was attributed to it in the synoptic narrative. The latter, placing this fact at the end of the ministry of Jesus, prevented it from being regarded as the bold step by which Jesus had summoned His people to join Him in beginning the spiritual reform of the theocracy; the refusal of the people and their rulers on this occasion thus ceased to be the first step in the way of resistance and rejection.

The multiplication of the loaves (ch. vi.) appeared in the Synoptics only as one of the many miracles of Jesus. The important part played by the crisis which resulted from this fact in the history of Jewish unbelief was in them almost completely effaced. It is this side of the fact which John restores to full light. He shows the carnal and political character of the Galilean enthusiasm, which wishes on this occasion to proclaim the kingship of Jesus, and which takes offence immediately afterwards at the declarations in which He refuses to promise anything else to His own than the satisfaction of spiritual hunger and thirst. At the same time, the fact thus presented becomes a very distinct waymark in the history of faith, by bringing out the contrast between the forsaking of Jesus by

the greater part of His former disciples, and the energetic profession of Peter: "To whom else should we go? . . . Thou art the Holy One of God."

The narrative of the anointing at Bethany (ch. xii. 1 ff.) is, on the one hand, connected with the resurrection of Lazarus, which had just been related in the previous chapter, and, on the other, with the treachery of Judas, which is about to play so great a part in the description of the last Supper. This double relation did not appear in the Synoptics, who did not relate the resurrection of Lazarus, and who, by substituting the vague terms: *some* (Mark), *the disciples* (Matthew), for the name of Judas, failed to show the connection between this malignant manifestation and the monstrous act which was immediately to follow.

The entrance into Jerusalem (xii. 12 ff.) is so summarily related by John that it is really only a complement of the synoptic narrative. Thus, when he says: "Having found an ass," and when he adds that after the ascension "the disciples remembered that those things were written, and *that they had done* those things unto Him," while in his own account they have done nothing at all, it is perfectly evident that for the full picture of the scene he refers to other writings already known. Only he is obliged to refer to the fact, to present it partly as the effect of the raising of Lazarus (vv. 17 and 18), and partly as the cause which forced the Sanhedrim to precipitate the execution of the sentence they had already given against Jesus (ver. 19).

It is easy, therefore, to see how these accounts are not needless repetitions, but essential features of the general picture which the author proposed to draw. Reject them, and you have not merely a simple omission, but a breach in the very woof of the narrative.

It remains to consider a last class of facts in which critics think they detect in a particularly marked way the influence exercised on the narrative by the dogmatic conception which filled the mind of its author. These are the facts and the particular incidents which John adds to the accounts of his three predecessors.

One of the features distinguishing this Gospel most profoundly from the preceding is certainly the chronological

framework already described. The question is, whether this framework is a product of the idea, or if it belongs to real history. We have already shown that, from the confession of Reuss, the second is the true answer. What, besides, would it signify to the idea of the Logos that the ministry of Jesus lasted a year, or two years and more? that He taught and baptized during a first year in Judea, before settling in Galilee, as John relates; or, on the contrary, that He repaired to that province immediately after His baptism by the forerunner, as seems to be the case from the Synoptics (Matt. iv. 12 and parall.)? It seems rather that the shorter the sojourn of the Logos on the earth was, the more grandly does the power of the work accomplished by Him shine forth.—Or again, are we to take those wide intervals, wholly devoid of facts, which extend from one to three, or even six months as pure inventions of the author in the interest of the theory of the Logos? But, Sabatier justly asks: “if the author had invented this framework, how should he have neglected to fill it?” (p. 188). Reuss thinks he cites a decisive fact against the historical aim of the Johannine narrative when he says: “A single fact fills a whole season, vi. 4—vii. 2.”<sup>1</sup> But how does he not see that this almost total silence of the author as to the contents of those six whole months, between the Pass-over and the feast of Tabernacles, is the unanswerable proof that he did not invent “this season” with a speculative view, and that he mentions it only with a truly historical object.

It is in the sojourns at Jerusalem that critics think they can establish most clearly the influence of the idea on the Johannine narrative. The great struggle between light and darkness demanded the capital as its theatre. But those who reason thus are themselves forced to recognise in those sojourns at Jerusalem, related by John, an indispensable element of the history, a factor without which neither the tragical catastrophe at Jerusalem, nor the foundation of the church in the same city, are intelligible (see pp. 97, 98). These sojourns, then, are not a product of the idea. All that can be alleged is, that they were *selected* and put forward by the author as the principal object of his narrative, because he judged them particularly fitted to bring out the principal idea of his work.

<sup>1</sup> P. 23.

Let us here add, however, that this idea is by no means a metaphysical notion, such as that of the Logos, but the fact of the development of faith and unbelief towards Jesus Christ. To this *ideal* explanation of the sojourns at Jerusalem, Sabatier, besides, rightly opposes the narrative of ch. vi. : "It will be matter of surprise," says he, "to find the crisis begin in Galilee, in the synagogue of Capernaum, the catastrophe of which will come to Jerusalem. It is impossible to explain such a falling away from the system"—we say, for our part: the alleged system—"of the author, except by the very exact remembrance he had of the Galilean crisis."

Here no doubt arises a difficult question, the most obscure of all the questions which bear on the relation between John and the Synoptics: that of the omission of the sojourns at Jerusalem from the latter. We have seen that their entire narrative supposes these sojourns and requires them; how do they not relate them? This strange omission, it seems to us, can only be explained by these two facts; the one: that our three Synoptics are the publication of the popular tradition which gradually formed at Jerusalem after Pentecost; the other: that this tradition had from the beginning left these sojourns in the background for some reason or other which can only be conjectured. As we have seen that the different allusions to the treachery of Judas during the last meal (John xiii.) became blended in one in the traditional and synoptic narratives, and as John's narrative was needed to restore them to their true places; as in the same way the account of Peter's three denials, which in the Synoptics forms a single and unbroken cycle, has found in the Gospel of John its natural articulations,—a similar event probably happened in regard to the journeys to Jerusalem. In popular narration they came to be all confounded in the last journey, the only one which really told with violence on the history of the Messianic work, and which consequently remained in the tradition. It is obvious, in studying the three accounts of the Galilean ministry in the Synoptics, that they are divided into certain groups or cycles, each containing one and the same series of accounts; what Lachmann has called the *corpuseula historię evangelicę*. The journeys to Jerusalem did not fall into any of these groups. And when the Gospel tradition,

thus divided and grouped, was consigned to writing, those journeys remained in the shade. The very contents of the discourses which Jesus had delivered in the capital might also contribute to this omission in the ordinary course of evangelization. It was not easy to reproduce, for the Jewish and Gentile multitudes who heard tell of the Gospel for the first time, such discourses as that of ch. v. of St. John regarding the dependence of the Son on the Father, and regarding the different testimonies which the Father bears to the Son; or discussions such as those which are reported in ch. vii. and viii., in which Jesus can no longer say a word without being interrupted by hostile hearers. The discourse of ch. vi., given in Galilee, could not be reproduced for the same reason; while the fact of the multiplication of the loaves, which gave rise to it, remained in the tradition. How much easier, more natural, and more immediately useful, was it to reproduce varied scenes such as those of the Galilean life, or moral discourses and conversations like the parables or the Sermon on the Mount? For all these reasons, or for some other still unknown to us, this important part of the ministry of Jesus was omitted in the tradition, and afterwards also in our Synoptics. But, as Hase so well says, "just as it was fitting that those who, like Luke, wished to describe the life of Jesus without having lived with Him should hold to what was published and believed in the church regarding that life, so it was also natural that if an intimate disciple of the Lord came to undertake the work, he should hold much less to the common material which was accidentally and involuntarily formulated, than to his own recollections. Then such a man was less bound by piety to that holy tradition; for he was still himself a living source of it. I am not at all surprised, then, that a Johannine Gospel, in its lofty originality, diverges from that common stock; rather, if a Gospel published under this disciple's name did nothing more than repeat this collected heritage, and differed no more from it than the Synoptics differ from one another, then, indeed, I should doubt the authenticity of that Gospel."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte Jesu*, pp. 39, 40. Let us remark that Hase, in this passage, is discussing the question of the authenticity. As for us, we are still treating only the historical or speculative character of our narrative.

Objection is also raised from the miracles, to the number of seven, related in our Gospel; it bears on these four points: (1) The facts have a still more wonderful character than those of the Synoptics; (2) they are presented as manifestations of the glory of the Logos, and no longer as simple effects of the compassion of Jesus; (3) several of these miracles are omitted by the Synoptics, a fact which, for the very reason of their extraordinary greatness, makes them more suspicious; (4) not an instance of demon expulsion is mentioned.

1. We think it would be difficult to say how the change of water into wine at Cana, ch. ii., is more extraordinary than the multiplication of the loaves and fishes, related by our four Gospels alike. Is it more marvellous to transform the qualities of matter than to produce it? Has not this last act more analogy with the creative act?—If, in the healing of the son of the royal employé, ch. iv., the miracle is wrought at a distance, it is not otherwise in the case of the centurion's servant at Capernaum, Matt. viii., and in that of the daughter of the Canaanitish woman, Matt. xv.—The impotent man at Bethesda, John v., was ill for thirty-eight years; but what do we know of the time during which the impotent man, whose cure the Synoptics relate with particular circumstantiality, was paralyzed? If, in the account of walking on the waters, John vi., the boat arrives at the shore immediately after Jesus enters, the account of Matthew presents a no less extraordinary detail, the person of Peter associated with the miracle wrought in that of Jesus.—There remain two miracles in which John's account seems to heighten the analogous facts reported by the Synoptics: the healing of the man *born* blind, ch. ix., and the resurrection of Lazarus after being dead *four days*. By these two altogether peculiar circumstances the author, it is said, proposes to glorify the Logos extraordinarily.—But how can we harmonize such an intention with several sayings which the same author puts into the mouth of Jesus, and in which the value of miracles as means of establishing faith is expressly combated, or at least lowered? “Unless ye see signs and wonders ye will not believe” (iv. 48); with this reproach Jesus receives the request of the royal employé. “If ye believe not me, believe at least my works” (x. 38); comp.



also xiv. 11. And we are to suppose that the author who has preserved to us such declarations of Jesus, the authenticity and high spirituality of which every one acknowledges, makes himself the flatterer of the grossest religious materialism, by inventing new miracles and giving them a more marvellous character!

2. Is it true that our Gospel contrasts with the Synoptics, in that the latter present the miracles as works of compassion, while in the former they are signs of the glory of the Logos? Let us remark, first of all, that in John's Gospel the miracles are not even ascribed to the power of Jesus. It is one of the characteristic features of this narrative that it makes miracles, so far as Jesus is concerned, acts of *prayer*, while the operating power is ascribed to the Father only. "I can do *nothing* of myself," says Jesus, v. 30, after the healing of the impotent man. "The works which *God has given me* to do, these works testify for me," adds He, ver. 36. The miracles are an attestation from the Father only because it is the Father who works them in His favour. In xi. 41, 42, Jesus says publicly, before the sepulchre of Lazarus: "Father, I thank Thee that *Thou hast heard me . . .*; I know that *Thou hearest me always.*" He must then ask or beg His miracles, as one of us might do; and these acts, we are told, were the glorification of *His* divine power. No doubt it is also said, ii. 11, after the miracle at Cana, "that He manifested forth *His glory*;" and xi. 4, "that the sickness of Lazarus is for the glory of God;" then it is added, "that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." If this glory is not that which He derives from His own power, what can it be? Evidently that which results from His compassion manifested in His prayer, as the glory of the Father arises from His love manifested in hearing. Here, indeed, is the glory "full of *grace* and truth" of which the author himself spoke, i. 14. It is therefore perfectly easy to escape from the antithesis which Reuss sets up between the miracles of compassion (in the Synoptics) and those of revelation and personal glorification (in St. John). The glory of the Son in the latter consists exactly in *obtaining* from the Father what His compassion asks. How, for example, is the resurrection of Lazarus introduced in our Gospel? By the saying overflowing with tenderness, and which has no

parallel in the Synoptics: "And Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus" (xi. 5). To apprehend fully the manner in which the miracles are presented in our Gospel, it must be considered that the true *end* of these acts went far beyond the consolation of the suffering being who was the object of them. If Jesus had only been moved with compassion for individual suffering, why, instead of restoring sight to some blind only, did He not banish blindness from the world? Why, instead of raising two or three dead, not abolish death itself? He did not do so, though His compassion would certainly have impelled Him so to do. The reason was because the suppression of suffering and death is only a blessing for humanity as a corollary from the destruction of sin. This must therefore precede that; and the miracles were *signs* intended to manifest Jesus as the deliverer by whom first sin, and then suffering and death, must one day be radically destroyed. As collective love for mankind does not exclude compassion for a particular individual, so the notion of the miracles in John does not exclude the synoptic point of view, but includes it, while subordinating it to a more general point of view.

3. But how does it happen that of the seven miracles related by John, five are omitted in the preceding Gospels? That of Cana naturally dropped with the first year of the ministry which they omitted. That of Bethesda and the man born blind are omitted with the sojourns at Jerusalem, of which they form part. That of the son of the royal employé had nothing particularly striking about it, and had its parallel in a miracle related by the Synoptics, that of the healing of the centurion's servant, which many even identify—mistakenly, we think—with the miracle reported by John.

The omission of the resurrection of Lazarus in the Synoptics is the most difficult fact to explain. It is not enough to say that the miracle took place in Judea; for at the time when it happened the Synoptics show us the Lord sojourning in Perea and the regions of the south. We have only one explanation: tradition was silent on the fact out of regard to Lazarus and his two sisters. This family lived a few paces from Jerusalem, and was thus exposed to the stroke of the Sanhedrim. We read in John xii. 10, that "the priests took counsel to

put Lazarus also to death," along with Jesus, on account of the influence which the sight of this risen one exercised on the numerous pilgrims arriving in the capital. The same exactly might be the case after Pentecost; and it was probably found prudent for this reason to pass over the fact in silence in the Gospel tradition. There were likewise omitted either the names of Martha and Mary in the account of the anointing (see Mark and Matthew), or the name of Bethany, when the two sisters were designated by their names (see the account of Luke x. 38). No doubt it was for a similar reason that in the account of the apprehension of Jesus in Gethsemane the name of the disciple who drew the sword was suppressed in the tradition (see the three synoptical accounts), while it is mentioned without scruple by John, who wrote at a date when no trouble could any longer accrue to Peter from the precise indication. We are met with the objection, it is true, that the synoptic narratives were composed after Peter's death, and after that of the members of the family of Bethany. Why, then, those precautions (see Meyer)? But we, too, by no means attribute those precautions to the *authors* of the narratives; we attribute them to the evangelical tradition, formed at Jerusalem *onwards from the days which followed Pentecost*. From the accounts of the maltreatment to which the Sanhedrim subjected the apostles, the martyrdom of Stephen and of James, and the persecutions of which Saul became the instrument, it is clear that at that time the power of the enemies of Jesus was still intact, and that it was exercised in the most violent way. Their hatred went on increasing with the progress of the church; and there was just fear that to put publicly on the scene those who had played a part in the history, would be to make them pay very dear for such an honour. John, who wrote at a period when there was no longer either Sanhedrim or Jewish people or temple, and who wrote under the control, not of tradition, but of his own recollections, could without fear exhibit the facts in their integrity. Hence he designates Peter as the author of the stroke given in the scene of Gethsemane, recalling at the same time along with this name that of the wounded Malchus; and hence he gives himself up to the happiness of tracing in all its details the admirable scene of the resurrection of Lazarus.

4. We shall not dwell long on the omission of the cures of demoniacs. Does not the author himself say that there were in the history of Jesus *many* other miracles *different* from those he has mentioned (xx. 30 : πολλὰ καὶ ἄλλα σημεῖα)? Does not Jesus speak, xiv. 30, of "the prince of this world coming to Him"? There would be nothing therefore to hinder the evangelist from speaking of the victories of Jesus over His subordinates. Facts of possession are rarely mentioned in a Greek country (Acts xvi. and xix.). They were less known there.

The want of historical reality which criticism charges against the accounts of miracles in the fourth Gospel, it finds also in *the personages* which this book presents on the stage. They are not, it holds, living beings, but mere types. Nicodemus is the personification of learned Pharisaism: "We see his coming, but we do not see his going;" such is a favourite observation of Reuss; it passes from one to another of his works. He adds: "In any case, he is no more heard of." Finally, he holds that the answer given by Jesus to this nocturnal visitor "terminates in a theoretic exposition of the gospel," and consequently is not at all addressed to him. The same appreciation of the personage of the Samaritan woman, in ch. iv.; in this woman there is simply personified "the child-like and confident faith of the poor in spirit." And the same also with the Greeks of ch. xii.; they represent paganism longing for salvation. What would be the meaning of the mediation of Philip and Andrew to which they have recourse, and which was not in the least necessary in the case of one whom all might freely approach? These, then, are ideal figures, as accords with the essence of a book which is nothing but a treatise of theology.<sup>1</sup>

Reuss would no doubt like that the report of the conversation with Nicodemus had been followed by the observation: And Nicodemus returned to his house. The narrator did not deem this detail necessary. He judged it more useful to tell us in ch. vii. that in a full sitting of the Sanhedrim this same senator, who at the beginning came to Jesus *by night*, was bold enough to take up His defence, and bear insult from his colleagues. He preferred to show us again, on the day of deepest darkness, when the most intimate friends of Jesus

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, pp. 14, 15.

despaired of Him and His work, this same man offering a royal homage to His body at the foot of the cross, and publicly proclaiming his faith in Him in whom he now recognised the true brazen serpent lifted up for the salvation of the world; comp. John iii. 14, 15. Such, it seems to us, are details which attest the reality of a man, and in view of which it should not be said: "In any case there is no more of him." It is wholly false also to call the end of the conversation of Jesus with him in ch. iii. "a theoretical exposition of the gospel;" for every saying of Jesus directly states a feature of the true Messianic programme, in opposition to the false Pharisaic programme which Nicodemus brought with him: The Messiah must be lifted up like the brazen serpent; which means: and not like a new Solomon. God so loved the world; and not the Jews only. The Son came to save, and not to judge the uncircumcised. The man who is condemned, is whosoever does not believe; and not the Gentile as such. The man who is saved, is whosoever believes; but not the Jew as such. By adding the last word: "He that doeth truth *cometh to the light*," it is very clear to any one who puts himself in the situation, that Jesus makes an encouraging allusion to the step taken by Nicodemus; there is here an adieu full of goodness which guarantees his future progress. Everything, then, in this account applies to him personally, from the first word to the last.—Is it possible to imagine a scene more real and living than that of Jacob's well? That fatigue of Jesus carried to extremity, even to exhaustion (*κεκοπιακῶς*); that malicious observation of the woman: "How dost thou ask drink of me who am a woman of Samaria?" that water-pot which she leaves, and which remains there as a pledge of her speedy return; those Samaritans hastening to the spot, and whose eagerness produces on Jesus the effect of a harvest already yellow after a sowing which has just that instant taken place; that sower who rejoices to see His work once at least in His life terminate in the harvest home; those people of Sychar who with such simplicity attest the difference between their first act of faith, founded solely on the woman's account, and their present faith, the fruit of their contact with Jesus Himself. . . . What a painter do they make of our author by attributing such words, such a picture,

to his creative imagination!—Were the Greeks really lost out of sight in the answer which Jesus makes to the communication of Philip and Andrew? But to whom then does this saying apply (xii. 32): “When I am lifted up from the earth, I shall draw *all men* unto me”? The Lord means: My doctrine and miracles will not suffice to spread the kingdom of God over the earth, and to bring into it all peoples; there will be needed my lifting up on the cross, followed by lifting up on the throne. Then only, “after it is cast into the earth, will the grain of seed bear much fruit” (ver. 24). Then will be possible that great event of the fall of Satan’s power, and of the conversion of the Gentiles, which cannot yet be realized. The answer of Jesus then amounts in meaning to that which He gave to the Canaanitish woman: “I am not sent (during my earthly career) but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.” It little matters after that whether the Greeks were admitted or not to a few moments’ conversation with the Lord. It was the moral situation in itself, and its gravity for Israel and the world, which the narrator wished to indicate, as Jesus Himself had so solemnly characterized it on the occasion; and what proves that it was really Jesus who spoke thus, is the picture which follows of the profound emotion which this first contact with the Gentile world produces in Him: “And now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour. But for this cause came I unto this hour.” It may be said with all confidence: these are words which are not invented, and which in any case were not invented in the interest of the theory of the Logos! Now, if this saying is historical, the whole scene cannot but be so. As to the mediation of Philip and Andrew, it is really more difficult to understand the objection than to resolve it.

Having given an account of the difficulties raised, we ourselves proceed to raise some against this *ideal* explanation of the Johannine narrative. The historical differences between this Gospel and the three preceding, arise, it is said, from the influence exercised by the theory of the Logos, which this writing is intended to expound. But a multitude of details in John’s narrative are either wholly alien or even opposed to this alleged intention.

We ask, of what interest, from the point of view described,

can that *tenth hour* be so expressly mentioned, i. 40, or that first sojourn of Jesus at Capernaum, indicated ii. 12, but of which the author does not relate the slightest particular; what advantage is it to the idea of the Logos to mention, viii. 20, that the place where Jesus was speaking was the part called *the Treasury* of the temple, or x. 23, that "it was winter," and that "Jesus walked in Solomon's porch;" or again, xi. 54, that after the resurrection of Lazarus, Jesus withdrew to a place called Ephraim, in the neighbourhood of the desert, without our learning anything of what He did and said there? What does the idea of the Logos gain by our knowing that the name of the servant whose right ear Peter cut off was Malchus, and that he was the brother of a servant of the high priest; that it was the Apostle Andrew who found the lad with the two barley loaves and five fishes; or that the disciples had already gone twenty-five furlongs when Jesus reached them on the sea (vi. 8, 19); or that in the scene of the sepulchre John was nimbler than Peter, but Peter more courageous than John; that it was Philip who said: "Show us the Father;" Thomas who asked: "Show us the way;" Judas, "not Iscariot," who wished to know why Jesus would only reveal Himself to believers and not to the world (ch. xiv.)? Is it in the way of fictitious realism that the author here proceeds, introducing those names, figures, trivial details, or does he attach to them some symbolical signification in connection with the theory of the Logos? The gravity of the writing does not admit the former explanation, common sense excludes the latter.

Yet more: a host of particulars in the narrative are in open contradiction to the notion of the Logos, such as it is ascribed to our author. The Logos wearied and thirsty! The Logos remaining in Galilee to escape the death with which He is threatened at Jerusalem, and who proceeds to that city only *in secret*! The Logos, overwhelmed in soul and even in spirit, then giving way to weeping; praying, and at a given time, so troubled that He knows not how to pray! It is easy to see that in none of our Gospels is the truly human side of the person of Jesus so forcibly emphasized as in the account of the fourth. If the theme of the narrative is contained in the words: "The Word was made flesh," the predicate

of this proposition is set in relief at least as much as the subject.

But suppose, notwithstanding many particulars alien or contradictory to the philosophical notion of the Logos, that the author's intention had been to proclaim this new thesis and gain the Church for it: what purpose would it have served to introduce into the generally received narrative modifications which could only render the whole writing suspicious? Why create in a manner of whole pieces a new history of the Lord's life, while it was so easy for him, as is shown by the discourse following the narrative of the multiplication of the loaves (ch. vi.), to connect his favourite theory with facts already known and universally admitted?

Finally, is it possible, without an insurmountable psychological contradiction, to hold that the author believed his own fictions so far as to amalgamate them in one and the same account with facts which to him were the most sacred, those of the Passion and resurrection,—or that not believing them himself, he presented them as real to his readers, with the view of strengthening and developing their faith (xx. 30, 31)? Is it conceivable, in particular, that on those miracles, invented by him, he founded the great charge which he draws up, at the close of the part v.—xii., against Jewish unbelief: "*Though He did so many miracles before them, they believed not in Him, that the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled*" . . .? (xii. 37, 38). And he who wrote thus knew perfectly that those miracles, on the ground of which he condemns his people, never took place! Here we reach the limits of absurdity.

And so more and more, men like Weizsäcker, Hase, Renan, feel themselves constrained to recognise in the fourth Gospel a real and considerable historical basis. No doubt they stop half way; but the general conscience will not rest there. The purely and simply historical character of the whole narrative will impress itself on the public conscience as soon as the present crisis is past; and we await the time with confidence when reparation shall be made to the narrative we have been studying. This will not be, as we have seen, the first retraction which it has wrung from science.



III. *The Discourses.*

But if the narrative of facts has not been affected by the speculative idea, can the same thing be affirmed of the other—and it is the more considerable—part of our Gospel, the discourses which he puts into the mouth of Jesus? According to Baur's opinion, these discourses are only the evolution of the idea of the Logos presented in its different aspects. Reuss thinks that the author takes as his point of departure certain authentic sayings of Jesus, but that he amplifies them freely, giving them developments borrowed from his own Christian experience. In favour of this view, there are alleged the startling improbabilities which are observable in the account given of the most of the discourses; the singular conformity of thought and style between the manner in which the author makes Jesus speak and the language which he ascribes to the forerunner; or his own in the prologue and in his Epistle; finally, and above all, the entire contrast in matter and form which exists between the discourses of Jesus in our Gospel and His teaching in the Synoptics.

To treat this important subject thoroughly, we shall study the three following questions:—

1. Should the discourses of Jesus in this Gospel be regarded as simple variations of the speculative theme placed by the author at the beginning of his book? Or, on the contrary, should the prologue be regarded as a summary, a quintessence, of the history and teachings reported in the following narrative?

2. Do the alleged difficulties render the historical character of the discourses inadmissible?

3. Is it possible to rise to such a conception of the person of Jesus that the Johannine teaching shall flow from it as naturally as the synoptic preaching?

A. *The Relation of the Prologue to the Discourses and the Narrative in general.*

Let us determine in the outset the true bearing of what is called the theorem of the Logos. It is alleged that the author, by opening his book thus, places the reader, not on the

domain of history, but on that of philosophical speculation.<sup>1</sup> This assertion is tenable only on one condition, that of restricting the prologue, as Reuss, and he only, does to the first five verses. The instant it is extended, as the sequel forces us to do, to ver. 18, it is obvious that the intention of the author is not to teach that *there is* in God a Logos,—that would indeed be a speculative theorem,—but that this Logos, this divine being, *has appeared* in Jesus Christ—which is not a philosophical idea, but a fact, an element of history, at least as the author understood it. And, in fact, John the Baptist, vv. 6–9, does not testify to the existence of the Logos, but to the historical fact that in Jesus the true divine light has been manifested. John does not say, ver. 11, that the fault of the Jews consisted in refusing to believe in the existence of a Logos, but in not receiving as their Messiah this divine being manifested in Jesus. The blessedness of the church (vv. 14–18) does not flow, according to him, from its having believed the theorem of the Logos, but from the fact that it has received and possesses Him in Jesus Christ as the Son, the source of grace and truth. What we have to do with, then, in the prologue is solely what Jesus is, He whose history the author is about to relate. The aim of this preface is historical and religious, not metaphysical.

But more than that: the true notion of the person of Jesus is itself only one of the essential ideas of the prologue. This passage contains two other ideas no less important, and which belong to history still more evidently. These are the rejection of Jesus by the Jews (ver. 11): “He came unto His own, and His own received Him not,”—unbelief with its consequence, perdition,—and the faith of the church (ver. 16): “And of His fulness have we all received grace on grace,”—the blessedness and salvation of all believers, Jews and Gentiles. These two ideas are not metaphysical notions; they are not less than the appearance of Christ, real facts, which the author had seen pass under his own eyes, and which he proposed to describe in his narrative. He beheld them realized at the very moment he was writing, whenever he cast a glance over the world which surrounded him. Let us hear no more, then, of “abstract formulas placed at the

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, p. 11

head of this book as a sort of programme."<sup>1</sup> It is the very essence of the history he is about to describe, which the author sums up by anticipation in this preface.

There is in his view such a correspondence between the Gospel history which is to follow and the prologue, that the course of the former has exactly determined the place of the latter. The narrative shows us three facts developing simultaneously: the growing revelation of Jesus as the Christ and the Son of God (xx. 30, 31); the refusal of the Jewish nation as such to accept this revelation; and the faith of a certain number of individuals in those testimonies delivered in acts and words. This course of the history meets us exactly in that of the prologue: vv. 1-5, the Logos; vv. 6-11, the Logos rejected; vv. 12-18, the Logos received. Now, who could hesitate for a moment over the question whether the history was invented to suit the plan, or whether the plan was conceived and drawn up from the history?

Let us remark, also, that the discourses of Jesus were one of the most important factors in the development of the history. What the successive battles in a war lead on to, final victory or defeat, such in the ministry of Jesus were those solemn encounters in which the Lord gave testimony to the work which God was accomplishing by Him, and in which there were formed among the people, on the one side that aversion and hatred, on the other that sympathy and devotion, which decided the result of His coming. If it is so, how could the discourses of Jesus related by the author be in his eyes nothing but free theological compositions? As truly as the twofold result indicated by the prologue, the rejection of Israel and the foundation of the church, are real facts, so truly must the discourses of Jesus, which so powerfully contributed to bring the history to this double goal, be facts not less real in his view.

Finally, there is a singular and often remarked fact, which is absolutely opposed to the view which regards the discourses of Jesus in our Gospel as developments of a speculative theory peculiar to the author: it is that not once does the term Logos, or *Word*, which so strikingly characterizes the prologue, figure in the same sense in the discourses of Jesus.

<sup>1</sup> REUSS, p. 11.

The expression *word of God* is often used in them to denote the contents of divine revelation. It needed only one step more to apply this term to the revealer Himself, as in the prologue. The author has not succumbed to this temptation. He might have had occasion more than once to make Jesus speak thus, especially in the conversation of ch. x. 33 ff. The Jews accuse the Lord of blasphemy, because being a man He makes Himself God. He replies to them that in the Old Testament itself, the theocratic judges receive the title of *gods*; comp. Ps. lxxxii. 6: "I have said, Ye are gods." It was in these terms that the Psalmist addressed the members of the Israelitish tribunal, as organs of the divine justice here below. From this saying Jesus draws the following argument: If Scripture, which cannot blaspheme, gives the name gods to men *to whom the word of God comes*, how say ye that I blaspheme, I, . . . , we expect here almost infallibly: I who am the Word itself. But no; the sentence ends with the words: "I whom the Father hath sanctified and sent into the world." The author, then, does not yield to any theological bias; he remains within the limits of the strict language of our Lord.

Other facts, besides, attest the fidelity with which he confines himself to the part of historian, even in what concerns the discourses. In his prologue he had attributed to the Logos the part of divine agent in the work of creation. He had done so proceeding on the testimonies of Jesus regarding His pre-existence, and completing them by the account of Genesis, and especially by the striking expression: "*Let us make man in our image*" (comp. also Gen. iii. 22). Yet this notion of the creative Logos he had not heard expressly from the mouth of Jesus; so he does not introduce it into any of His discourses. And yet it would have presented itself very naturally to his pen in more than one case. Thus, when Jesus prays, saying: "Give me the glory which I had with Thee, before the world was made," how easy would it have been to substitute for these last words: Before I made the world, or: before Thou madest the world by me! In the prologue the Logos is also represented as the enlightener of mankind during the ages anterior to His coming (vv. 5, 9, 10). This idea, once enunciated by the evangelist, has played a great part in theology from the first ages of Christianity. The

author nowhere exhibits it in the discourses of Jesus. And yet in a passage like x. 16, where Jesus declares that He has yet *other sheep* who are not of this (Jewish) fold, and whom He will by and by bring in, or in the discourse of ch. vi., where He several times expresses the idea that there is needed a previous divine *teaching* or *drawing* in order to believe in Him, how natural would it have been to revert to the idea of the illumination of the human soul by the educating light of the Logos! No, assuredly; he who made Jesus say: "I speak only what my Father teaches me," did not allow himself to make Him speak as he chose. As he says himself, First Epistle i. 1: "What he declares to his brethren, is simply what he has seen and *heard*." The discourses of Jesus are so far from being only the development of a theorem, placed at the head of the book, that the prologue is to the entire writing only what the argument put at the head and taken from the contents of a chapter is to that chapter of a book of history. It is a powerful, freely expressed synthesis of the history and doctrines reported in the writing itself.

We should find a confirmation of this result in a fact frequently noted by Reuss, if the fact were as assured in our view as it is in his. According to this critic, there often occur in our Lord's discourses expressions tending to establish a doctrine directly contrary to the speculative theory of the prologue. This doctrine is that of the subordination of Jesus in relation to God, which, it is said, is in contradiction to the notion of the perfect divinity of the Son, so clearly taught in the prologue. Reuss thinks he finds in this very contradiction a proof of the fidelity with which the doctrines of Jesus on certain points have been preserved by our evangelist, in spite of his own theology. But, so far as we are concerned, we shall take good care not to use this argument, which rests on a wholly false interpretation of the statements of the prologue. For it is easy to prove that the subordination of the Logos to the Father is taught in this passage, as well as in all the rest of the Gospel.

Before leaving this subject, let us state a strange observation of the same writer. The occasion of it is the saying, John xvii. 3. The distinction between *Jesus Christ* and the *only true God* is there very strongly emphasized, which, according

to Reuss, is also in contradiction to the teaching of the prologue regarding the divinity of the Saviour. This judgment on his part would not be at all suprising, if, in his view, this saying had been really uttered by Jesus; it would come under the category of those of which we have been speaking. But no; according to this critic, the saying is invented by the author, as well as those of the prologue. The evangelist would therefore in this case put into the mouth of Jesus a saying in contradiction to his own theology! It had been asserted thus far that he had freely composed the discourses to put into them *his own* theology, and lo, now he makes Jesus speak to combat himself! In what a labyrinth of contradictions does poor criticism here lose itself!

B. *The Difficulties alleged against the Historical Character of the Discourses.*

It is a very widespread view at the present day, that Jesus cannot have spoken as our evangelist makes Him speak. Renan regards the Johannine discourses as "pieces of theology and rhetoric to which historical reality must no more be attributed than to the discourses which Plato puts into the mouth of his master in his dying hour."

I. This judgment is based, first of all, on the *improbabilities inherent in the discourses themselves.*

The first argument is taken from the *obscurity* of these teachings. It would have shown a strange want of pedagogical wisdom on the part of Jesus to teach in so unintelligible a way. "It would be said Jesus takes to speaking in riddles, to soaring ever in the higher regions, inaccessible to the understanding of the vulgar." By such a mode of teaching He never would have "gained hearts, awakened that enthusiastic faith which survived the catastrophe of Golgotha."<sup>1</sup>—Assuredly not, if He had always spoken thus, never otherwise. But our Gospel no more claims to be complete in respect of the teachings, than in respect of the facts it narrates. As we have pointed out, this writing describes only a score of occasions, chosen in a ministry of two years and a half. There

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, *Théol. johann.* p. 51.

were days—and they were the most numerous—when Jesus led His hearers on the lower or middle slopes of the mountain which He wished men to scale; but there were other days when He sought to bring them near the lofty heights, and to give them a glimpse of their sublime beauties. Without the discourses of the first kind, no bond would have been formed between their soul and His. Without those of the second, He would not have raised the church to the height from which it was to conquer and sway the world. It is these latter discourses in particular which the fourth Gospel has reproduced, because this higher element in the Saviour's teaching had not found a sufficient place in primitive tradition, intended for popular evangelization. It is easily intelligible, indeed, how the lively and brilliant parables, the strongly marked moral maxims, and all such like elements, should have rather fed the catechetical instruction of the first times, and how the lessons of a more elevated nature should have been kept to the second stage, without, however, being altogether wanting to the former, as we shall see.

To this first charge there is added that of a certain *monotony*. At bottom there is in the whole Gospel, according to Sabatier, "only one discourse;" Reuss will have it there are two. According to the former of these writers, it is this one idea all through: "I am the way, the truth, the life." According to the second, this theme is developed, sometimes in regard to the unregenerate world, sometimes in regard to those who already belong to Jesus Christ.<sup>1</sup>

Do the facts, when seriously questioned, confirm this estimate? On the contrary, has not every discourse in this Gospel its originality, its particular viewpoint, as well as the teachings contained in the Synoptics? When Jesus reveals to Nicodemus the *spiritual nature* of the kingdom of God, in opposition to the earthly idea of it which the Pharisees formed; when He teaches the Samaritan woman the *universality* of the worship which He is about to inaugurate on the earth, in opposition to the local character of the ancient worships; when, at Jerusalem, He displays the mystery of the *community of action* between the Father and the Son, as well as of the entire dependence of the latter; when, at Capernaum, He

<sup>1</sup> Sabatier, p. 185; Reuss, p. 23.

expounds His *relation to the lost world*, and offers Himself to His hearers as the bread of heaven bringing the life of God to mankind; when, in ch. x., He reveals to the people of Jerusalem the formation of the *new flock* which He is about to draw from the old one, and which He will complete with sheep brought from all the other folds; when, on the last evening, He declares to His disciples the charge He confides to them of taking His place on the earth by *doing greater works* than His; then, when He describes to them the *hatred of the world*, of which they will be the objects; and when, finally, before bidding them a last adieu, and commending them to His Father in prayer, He promises them *the new support* by which they shall convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, and shall gain a full victory in His name,—can this be called always teaching the same thing? Is there not some prejudice in this judgment? There is monotony, if you will, in the light of the sun; but what variety in its reflections! There is the same in the infinite azure of the sky; but what richness in its contrasts with the varied lines of the earthly horizon! At the foundation of every Johannine discourse there is an open heaven, the heart of the Son in communion with that of the Father. But this living personal heaven is in constant relation to the infinitely varied individuals which surround it, and with the changing situations through which it pursues its life. The monotony of which the evangelist is accused is not that of uniformity, but unity.

The same monotony has been a cause of offence in the *method* used by the evangelist to bring in the exposition of his theology. He begins regularly, by means of a figurative expression which he puts into the mouth of Jesus, by making the hearer commit a gross and absurd misunderstanding, on which Jesus develops His thought and displays His superiority, and that usually by pushing His thought to the extreme of contradiction to that of His interlocutor. So it is in the case of Nicodemus and of the Samaritan woman, of the people after the multiplication of the loaves, finally, in the conflicts at Jerusalem. This is a manner adopted by the author, and which cannot belong to the history.—But if the people who surrounded Jesus were carnal in their aspirations, they must have been so also in their understanding; for in the moral



domain, it is from the heart that both light and darkness spring up; Jesus says so Himself (Matt. vi. 22). What, then, more natural than the constant repetition of this shock at every encounter between the thought of Jesus and that of His contemporaries? On the one side, the immediate intuition of things above; on the other, the grossest carnal ignorance! What point of spiritual development had the apostles reached, according to the Synoptics themselves, after two whole years, during which Jesus had sought, in daily conversations, to initiate them in a new view of things? He gives them this warning: "Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees;" and they imagine that He means to reproach them for their forgetfulness in neglecting to provide themselves with bread for the intended journey. Jesus is obliged to say to them: "Have ye no understanding? have ye your heart yet hardened? having eyes, see ye not? having ears, hear ye not?" (Mark viii. 17, 18). And a similar misapprehension would be declared impossible in the cases of Nicodemus, the woman of Samaria, His hearers of Galilee or Jerusalem who were conversing with Him for the first time! And besides, it must not be forgotten that the thought of Nicodemus is simply this: "It is not, however, possible that" . . . This is what is signified by the  $\mu\acute{\eta}$  (negative interrogation) which begins His question;—and that in other cases, such as John vii. 35 and viii. 22, the apparent misunderstanding of the Jews is in reality only a piece of raillery on their part. As to the misunderstanding of the people of Capernaum (John vi.), many others were deceived, even afterwards, notwithstanding the explanation of Jesus (ver. 63): "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing." The phenomenon which is remarked as suspicious is therefore simply a feature taken from fact.

It is the same with the *dialogue* form, in which several doctrines of Jesus are presented, especially in ch. vii. and viii., and in ch. xiv. How could such minute details have been preserved, either by the individual memory of the author or traditionally? "Those questions and objections, it is said, belong not to the history, but to the form of editing." They point to a marvel the state of men's minds as the *author* met it face to face with him when he wrote, but not such as it

was when Jesus preached.<sup>1</sup>—But are we then so exactly acquainted with the difference which the state of men's minds might present at the beginning of the second century or about the middle of the first? And how is it possible to maintain seriously, that the following questions and objections agree better with the state of men's minds in Asia Minor at the beginning of the second century, than with the Palestinian prejudices in the time of Jesus? "Does the Christ then come from Galilee . . .? Is He not of Bethlehem, the town whence David was?" (vii. 41, 42). "We know whence this man is; but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence He is" (ver. 27). "Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan?" (viii. 48). "Art thou greater than our father Abraham?" (ver. 53). "We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man" (ver. 33). "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (vi. 52). "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?" (ver. 42). If one would find a speaking proof of the truly historical character of the teachings of Jesus in our Gospel, it is precisely in those dialogues it must be sought. It is enough to open a commentary to be convinced that we have in them living manifestations of the Palestinian Judaism which was contemporary with Jesus. Moreover, this dialogue form is not constant; barely indicated in ch. iii.—v., a little more developed in ch. vi., it is entirely dominant in ch. vii. and viii., which is in perfect keeping with the situation, since here is the culminating point of the conflict between the Lord and His adversaries at Jerusalem. Scarcely any traces of it are to be found in ch. x., where Jesus begins to withdraw from the conflict. It does not reappear in a marked way till ch. xiv., where again it is explained by the situation. It is the last conversation between Jesus and His own; the latter take advantage of it freely to express the doubts they each have on their hearts. Suppose a Christian of the second century exclaiming, with the simplicity of Philip: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us!" or setting himself to say, as one feigning to share the ignorance of Thomas: "We know not whither Thou goest, and how can we know

<sup>1</sup> Reuss, *Théol. johann.* p. 9.

the way ?" or asking, like Judas : " Why wilt Thou make Thyself known unto us, and not unto the world ?" or, murmuring aside like the disciples (xvi. 17) : " What is this that He saith, A little while and ye shall not see me ; and again, a little while and ye shall see me ? We cannot tell what He saith." The situation which gave rise to these questions and doubts existed only for a moment on that last evening on which John's account places them. Ever since the days that followed all those mysteries had received their solution through the great facts of salvation henceforth accomplished. Those objections and questions, which critics affect to place in the second century, thus bear their date in themselves, and belong by their very nature to the upper chamber ; the same is consequently the case with their corresponding answers.

There are further alleged certain *historical contradictions*. The two principal are the following :—Chap. x. 26, in the account of the sojourn of Jesus at the feast of Dedication, in December, the evangelist puts into His mouth this rebuke : " Ye are not of my sheep, *as I said unto you,*" which is judged to be a quotation of the words addressed to the Jews some months before at the feast of Tabernacles (comp. the allegories of the Shepherd, the Door, the good Shepherd, in the first part of the same chapter). He therefore forgets, when he makes Jesus speak thus, that the audience had entirely changed between one feast and another. But why changed ? we would ask. It was not to pilgrim strangers that Jesus had spoken so severely some months before. It was to that group of Pharisees who asked Him in derision (ix. 40) : " And we, are we also blind ?" They spoke thus in the name of their whole party, and this party, as is known, had its seat at Jerusalem. I do not say with certainty that at the feast of Dedication it was the same *individuals* who again stood face to face with Jesus ; but it was certainly the same class of persons, the Pharisees of Jerusalem, with the population of the capital, who were entirely swayed by their spirit. Besides, every one knows that the words : *as I said unto you,* on which the whole accusation rests, are omitted in six of the principal majuscules, in particular, in the *Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus*.

Another similar argument is drawn from the discourse of

Jesus reported xii. 44 ff. It is "a recapitulation of evangelic theology," says Reuss; and the author here puts it into the mouth of Jesus, without thinking that, according to his own narrative, Jesus has just "withdrawn and hidden Himself from the eyes of the public." "Here is a fact well suited," adds this critic, "to give us a just idea of the nature of the discourses of Jesus" in this writing.<sup>1</sup> Baur had already concluded from this passage that the historical situations are nothing to the author but simple forms.—It is not the evangelist's fault if his writing is thus judged. He had reckoned on readers who would not doubt his common sense. He has just expressly closed the account of the public ministry of Jesus with this solemn saying: "And departing, He did hide Himself from them" (ver. 36). And we are to suppose he put into His mouth immediately after a solemn address to the people! No; from ver. 37 the author himself begins to speak; he gives himself up to the sad contemplation of the failure of so extraordinary a ministry. He proves by facts how vain have been the numerous miracles of Jesus to overcome the people's unbelief (vv. 37-43). Then in ver. 44 he passes, in this same recapitulation, from the miracles to the doctrines which, as well as the miracles, remained ineffectual in face of such hardness; and to make clear what the whole ministry of preaching carried out by Jesus in Israel had been, he sums it up in the discourse (vv. 44-50), which is to the discourses of Jesus what ver. 37 was to His miraculous activity, a simple summary: "And nevertheless He cried aloud!" Then follows the summary, thus announced, of the many solemn testimonies which have remained fruitless. And so this passage is distinguished from all the real discourses, in that it does not contain *one* new idea; for every word there may be cited two or three parallels in the preceding discourses. Reuss, then, is unfortunate in seeking to derive from this discourse, which is not one in the mind of the evangelist himself, the true standard for estimating all those which, in this book, are put into the mouth of the Lord.

Finally, objection has also been taken to the truth of the discourses on the ground of the impossibility there would

<sup>1</sup> P. 50.

have been in the author's retaining them in memory down to the time, undoubtedly late in life, when he published them. Reuss abandons this objection. He thinks that the sayings of Jesus, in so far as the author either heard them himself or derived them from tradition, "must have been the lifelong subject of his meditations, and must have graven themselves the more profoundly in his mind the longer he fed on them."<sup>1</sup>—Indeed, if the matter in question is the warm discussions held at Jerusalem (ch. vii. and viii.), how could they fail to impress themselves distinctly on the memory of one who witnessed them with such lively anxiety? As to the discourses of some length, like those of ch. v. and vi., x., xv., xvii., the hearer's memory found in each case a point of support in a central idea clearly expressed at the outset, and which was afterwards unfolded in a series of particular views subordinate to the parent idea. So it is that in ch. v., the first part of the apologetic discourse of Jesus, is contained, in germ, in the so striking words of ver. 17: "My Father worketh hitherto, and [consequently] I work." This idea of the necessary co-operation of the Son with His Father is developed in a first cycle in its two aspects: the Son beholding the Father, and the Father revealing His work to the Son (vv. 19 and 20). Then this first and very summary cycle becomes the starting-point for a new and more precise development, in which is displayed even to its most concrete applications the work of the Son, the execution of the Father's thought. This work consists in the two divine acts of *quicken*ing and *judg*ing (vv. 21-23), acts which are each taken up successively, and pursued through all their historical phases to their complete realization, first spiritual, then external and material (vv. 24-29).—It is almost the same in the second part of this discourse (vv. 30-47), where everything is subordinate to the principal thought: "There is another [the Father] who bears witness of me," and where there is set forth the triple testimony of the Father in favour of the Son, with a final powerful application to the hearers.—In ch. vi. it is easy to see that everything, discourses and conversations, is equally subordinate to a great idea, that which springs naturally from the miracle of the previous day:

<sup>1</sup> P. 44.

“I am the bread of life.” This affirmation is developed in a series of concentric cycles, which finally terminate in this the most striking and concrete saying: “Except ye eat my flesh and drink my blood, ye have no life in you.” In ch. xvii., in the second part of the high-priestly prayer, which contains the intercession of Jesus for His disciples, His thought follows the same course. The general idea: “I pray for them,” soon divides into these two more particular prayers which each become the centre of a subordinate cycle: “*Keep them*” (τήρησον), ver. 11; that is to say, “Let not the work decay which I have already wrought in them,” and “*Sanctify them*” (ἀγιάσον), ver. 17, that is to say, “Perfect and complete their consecration.” In these various cases, if the thoughts of Jesus were really unfolded in this form which best suits the nature of religious contemplation, it was clearly not difficult for an attentive hearer to reproduce such sayings. It was enough for him to fix his attention firmly on the central thought distinctly impressed on his memory, then inwardly to repeat the same process of evolution which from this germ had produced the discourse. He thus recovered the subordinate ideas, from which he arrived at the most concrete details. But Jesus did not always speak in this way; we have the proof in our Synoptics and in the fourth Gospel itself. This method was natural when a theme of great richness was marked out for Him by the situation, as in ch. v. and vi. But we do not find anything of the kind either in the conversation with Nicodemus or in those of ch. xiv., which proves that we are not called to see in it a style peculiar to the evangelist. The following is probably what resulted in the last cases indicated. The conversation with Nicodemus certainly lasted much longer than the few minutes we take to read it, and the last conversations of Jesus with the disciples, having filled great part of the evening, must have lasted some hours. It must therefore be admitted (unless the whole of it be invented) that there took place in the mind of the narrator a work of condensation in which the essential thoughts were gradually detached from the secondary thoughts and transitions, then directly and without connecting particle joined to one another as they actually meet us in John’s account. What remains to us,

therefore, of those conversations is nothing more than the principal heads. Nothing more simple than this process.

The conclusion, therefore, from our study is that there is no serious internal difficulty to prevent us admitting the historical truth of the teachings of Jesus contained in our Gospel.

II. But a more serious objection is drawn from the relation of the discourses to those of *John the Baptist*, and to the author's own statements *in the prologue and in his first Epistle*. Jesus in St. John speaks exactly like John the Baptist (comp. i. 15, 29, 30, iii. 27-36), exactly like the evangelist himself in his own writings. Is there not here an evident proof that the discourses, those of Jesus like those of John the Baptist, are of John's own composition?—The question here cannot be one of style, as to its grammatical and syntactical forms; how, indeed, could it fail to be that of the evangelist? Neither Jesus nor John the Baptist spoke in Greek; and to reproduce their discourses tolerably in that language the genius of which is the very opposite of that of the Aramaic language in which our Lord and His forerunner spoke, a literal translation was impossible. The author required, therefore, in any case to go back from the words to the thoughts, then to clothe these with a new form of expression borrowed from the language in which he was narrating. In such a process of assimilation and reproduction, how could the language of John the Baptist fail to take a colouring similar to that of the language of Jesus, and these two languages that of the evangelist's style? The question here is not one as to the external forms of speech; it is as to the faithful preservation of the thoughts. In translating the sayings of John and of Jesus, did the author alter their meaning? Was there something added of his own? Or did he even compose with complete freedom? It is thought this can be answered affirmatively. The discourse of John the Baptist, iii. 27-36, is pointed to above all. Reuss no doubt grants that two sayings of this discourse proceed from the forerunner, that with which it opens: "I am not the Christ," and its central word: "He must increase, and I must decrease." "Besides," continues the critic, "there is not in all the rest a word which might not be as well, or rather a hundred times

better, put in the mouth of a Christian fully imbued with the ruling ideas of this book, and which is not elsewhere reproduced essentially in the discourses ascribed to Jesus Himself."<sup>1</sup> But what! are we to suppose these two words formed the Baptist's entire answer to his disciples, who accused Jesus so bitterly of ingratitude! Let it be allowed us to think that he developed them somewhat, and particularly to place in the number of authentic sayings that word of inimitable beauty (ver. 29): "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice; this my joy, therefore, is fulfilled." Men did not invent this in the second century, our Apocrypha being witness! Let us go further: If we hold the narrative of the Synoptics, according to which the forerunner had heard the Father's voice say to Jesus: "Thou art my beloved Son; in Thee I am well pleased," is it inadmissible that the same man should have uttered the saying which the evangelist puts into his mouth (ver. 35): "*The Father loveth the Son, and hath put all things into His hand*"? If it is true again, always according to the Synoptics, that John saw the Holy Spirit descend on Jesus in the form of a dove, that is to say, in His organic and indivisible fulness, is it incredible that he should have expressed himself regarding Jesus as he does according to John, in ver. 34: "He speaketh the words of God; for *God giveth Him the Spirit without measure* (or, the Spirit gives them to Him without measure)"? And if John the Baptist expressed himself at the beginning of his ministry as the Synoptics make him do: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from *the wrath to come*? Every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is about to be cut down and cast into the fire!" (Matt. iii. 7-10), is it not very natural that he should close his public activity with the warning, "He that refuseth to obey the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him"? Here is the last echo of the thunders of Sinai, which is thoroughly in place in the mouth of the last representative of the Old Testament. But the objection falls back on the saying: "What He hath seen and heard that He testifieth, and no man receiveth His testimony," and it asks

<sup>1</sup> Pp. 48, 49.



how it is possible for John the Baptist to repeat so literally the declaration of Jesus Himself in His conversation with Nicodemus (ver. 11): "Verily I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen; and ye receive not our witness." Yet he was not present at that conversation. No; but it is quite possible that some of it had been reported to him; and even if it was otherwise, what meaning would the saying of the Baptist have which we have just quoted: "The friend of the bridegroom who standeth and heareth him rejoiceth greatly *because of the bridegroom's voice*; and *this my joy is fulfilled*"? He hears the voice of the bridegroom! Some saying of Jesus has therefore come to his ears. And, indeed, is it not natural that while John and Jesus were baptizing in the neighbourhood of one another (vv. 22 and 23), those of the apostles who had been disciples of the forerunner should have taken a few steps to greet their old master, and should have reported to him what Jesus was doing and saying? The discourse of John the Baptist is thus explained from beginning to end. And the word to which Reuss reduced it, ver. 30, was simply its central idea. In fact, all that precedes (vv. 27-29) is the development of the second proposition: "I must decrease," and all that follows, vv. 31-36, is that of the first: "He must increase."

But is it possible to regard as historical the saying put into the mouth of John the Baptist in the prologue, i. 15, and repeated afterwards in the narrative itself, i. 30: "He that cometh after me was before me." Could John know and proclaim the divine pre-existence of Jesus?—If this declaration were only mentioned in the prologue, which is the composition of the evangelist, hesitation would be possible. But the author expressly repeats it a little later in its historical context (ver. 30). He relates how it was at Bethany that the forerunner uttered it, on the day which followed that of the deputation of the Sanhedrim. There would be singular affectation, not to say palpable bad faith, in these subsidiary notices of time and place, if the saying were one of the author's invention. Besides, it possesses a seal of originality and mysterious conciseness which is foreign to later fictions. And why should it not be authentic? When John the Baptist began his ministry, we know that the programme of

his work was the double prophecy of Isa. xl. 3: "A voice crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord," and of Mal. iii. 1: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me" (Matt. iii. 3, xi. 10; Mark i. 2, 3; Luke i. 17, vii. 27). Now, in the latter of those two passages, always so closely connected, He who *sent* the messenger (Jehovah) was no other than He who was soon to follow him Himself (Jehovah as Messiah), as is unanswerably proved by the word: *before me*, in the prophetic saying. If John the Baptist knew this passage, could he not understand—what do I say? could he fail to understand that this *aftercomer* (the Messiah) was his *sender*, and consequently his *predecessor* on the stage of history, the invincible theocratic King? The question therefore amounts to this: Could John the Baptist read?

No more serious difficulty arises from the resemblance in matter and form between the *prologue* and the discourses of Jesus. For, on the one hand, we have seen that the matter of the doctrines of the prologue is in great part only a summary of those discourses themselves; and, on the other hand, the author, in translating the latter from Aramaic into Greek, could not possibly help clothing them, in a certain measure, in his own style. The conformity mentioned is therefore a fact which is easily explained.

Would the similarity of the discourses and of the *first Epistle* be more compromising for the authenticity of the former? As to form, the resemblance is explained by the causes already pointed out in speaking of the prologue. But even from this external point of view Henri Meyer makes out a kind of impoverishment in the vocabulary of the Epistle, compared with that of the discourses.<sup>1</sup> Some thirty substantives, a score of verbs, such is the entire linguistic basis of the Epistle. What a difference from the discourses, so rich in lively and original words, and in striking and varied figures! There are also, on the other side, certain particular expressions which belong to the Epistle and which are foreign to the Gospel, such as *being born of God* (ii. 29, iii. 9, iv. 7, v. 1, comp. the prologue, i. 13); the *unction* of the Spirit (ii. 20 and 27); the title *Paraclete* applied to Jesus (ii. 1).

<sup>1</sup> *Les discours du IV<sup>e</sup> évangile*, p. 94.

As to matter, we find differences still more remarkable between the Epistle and the Gospel, which prove that the author observed very carefully the line of demarcation between his own thoughts and the teachings of Jesus. We shall cite chiefly three points which hold an important place in the Epistle, and which are nowhere mentioned in the discourses: (1) The expiatory value of the Lord's death (Ep. i. 7-9, ii. 2, iv. 10, v. 6); (2) the coming of the Antichrist (ii. 18, 22, iv. 1-3); (3) the expectation of the Parousia (i. 18, 28, iii. 2). These three notions, while connecting our Epistle closely with the synoptic Gospels, distinguish it thoroughly from the Johannine discourses. It has been attempted nevertheless to explain this difference by ascribing the Epistle to a different author from the Gospel. This hypothesis has not been able to stand its ground, even within the school in which it originated. The disciples of Baur, such as Hilgenfeld, Lüdemann, etc., are at one in rejecting it. How then are we to explain this singular difference? Several critics have been led to think that the author of the two writings was still imbued with his old Jewish ideas when he composed the Epistle, and that it was not till later that he rose to the sublime spirituality which distinguishes the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> The Epistle would thus be more ancient than the Gospel. We think this hypothesis untenable. The discourses contained in the Gospel are distinguished from the teachings of the Epistle by a firmness of thought and vigour of expression which point to a date for them anterior to the composition of the latter writing. Besides, the man who in the Epistle addresses not only *children* and *young men*, but also *fathers* of families and all the members of the churches, calling them "my little children" (ii. 1, 18, 28, v. 21), must have been far advanced in years. It is not in such circumstances that the author rises from the epistolary style to that of the Gospel, from the somewhat slow and even hesitating march of the one to the direct and powerful flight of the other.<sup>2</sup> What further proves that the composition of the discourses preceded that of the

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld, *Einführung*, p. 738; Lüdemann, *Zur Erklärung des Papst-Fragments*, in *Jahrb. für prot. Theol.* 1879.

<sup>2</sup> Sabatier himself admits (p. 189) that the Epistle is poorer and weaker than the discourses in the Gospel.

Epistle, is the fact that all the notions which in the discourses appear in a historical form belonging to an actual occasion, applicable to particular circumstances and hearers, reappear in the Epistle in an abstract form as general Christian maxims, and as the elements, so to speak, of a religious philosophy. In the Gospel, Jesus said: "*God so loved the world,*" or "*Thou lovedst me* before the foundation of the world." The Epistle says: "God is love." Jesus said: "Ye are of your father the devil; and *the lusts of your father ye will do.*" The Epistle says: "*He that committeth sin* is of the devil." Jesus said: "Ye have not chosen me, but *I* have chosen you." The Epistle says: "Herein is love, *not that we loved* God, but that *He loved us.*" Jesus said: "I am the light of the world; he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness." The Epistle says: "God is light . . . The true light now shineth." Jesus said: "I have greater witness than that of men." The Epistle says: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." Is it not evident that the aphorisms of the second writing merely generalize the particular and historical affirmations of the first? The Gospel is history; the Epistle is the spirit of history. It is therefore contrary to all sound criticism to place the latter before the former.

The difference between these two writings must therefore be otherwise explained. It is an indisputable fact that the notions which we have mentioned as precisely distinguishing the Epistle from the Gospel, belong to the synoptic teaching, and consequently form part of the apostolic beliefs, and of the doctrine of the church in general. Here, therefore, was the store from which the author drew in writing the Epistle. But when he published the five or six discourses which he has preserved to us, he did not allow himself to go beyond their original tenor, nor to put into them, as Reuss alleges, his *whole* theology. He confined himself to what he had *heard* on those particular occasions. The Epistle thus forms a natural link of connection between the Johannine teachings and those of the Synoptics. And the more closely it is associated with the latter in the matter of its ideas, the more does it become a confirmation of the historical character of both.

Far, then, from giving grounds of suspicion, the comparison

of the discourses with the author's compositions is converted into a proof of the fidelity with which he has reproduced the former, and the author seems nowhere to have crossed the line of demarcation between what he had heard and what he composed himself.

III. We now reach the most difficult side of the question before us. In the three Gospels we have three documents of the teachings of Jesus, perfectly harmonious, and of undisputed value. These teachings appear in them in a simple, popular, practical form; they are what they must have been to charm crowds and carry their assent. How could the abstruse and theological discourses of the fourth Gospel have proceeded from the same mind and the same mouth? "A choice must be made," says Renan; "if Jesus spoke as Matthew represents, He cannot have spoken as John describes. Now," adds he, "between these two authorities no critic has hesitated, nor will hesitate."

Is the contrast mentioned really so insoluble as is alleged? It is to the study of this question that we proceed to devote the following pages.

As to the *contents* of the teachings, there are especially three points which appear to distinguish the discourses of John from those of the Synoptics: 1. The difference of the part assigned to the person of Jesus in the work of salvation; 2. The Johannine notion of the existence of Jesus, as a divine being, previously to His earthly life; 3. The omission in John of every saying relative to His visible return as judge of the world.

In regard to the part taken by Jesus in the matter of salvation, it is alleged that while the Christ of the Synoptics simply proclaims the kingdom of God, the *good tidings* of the near advent of that glorious state of things, the Christ of John can only preach Himself, and tell what He is to God and to the world. While the synoptic teachings bear on the most varied moral obligations, beneficence, humility, veracity, unworldliness, watchfulness, prayer, in a word, *the righteousness of the kingdom*, according to Jesus' own expression; in John, on the contrary, every duty is reduced to connecting ourselves with this Being come from heaven, in whom God reveals and

gives Himself. In the Synoptics, Jesus is the preacher of salvation; in John, He is salvation itself, eternal life, everything.

Is the difference indicated so considerable as it is said to be, and the contrast insoluble? No, it cannot be so; for the *central* position occupied by the person of Christ in the Johannine teaching is quite as decidedly attributed to Him in that of the first three Gospels. The moral precepts which Jesus gives in these are put in intimate connection with His own person; and among the duties of human life, that which takes the lead of all others is in them, as in John, faith in Christ, the indispensable condition of salvation. Witness the following.

“Sell all thou hast and give to the poor, . . . and *follow me*,” says Jesus to the rich young man (Matt. xix. 21). The second of these commands explains the first; this is the condition, that the end. “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it to one of these my brethren, ye did it unto *me*” (Matt. xxv. 40). It is sympathy for *Him*, Jesus, which forms the value of this assistance, and which is, if one may so speak, the good work in the good work (comp. x. 42). Jesus adds (xxv. 41), turning to the condemned: “Depart *from me*, ye cursed!” Perdition is the rupture of every bond to *Him*. To receive Him is to receive God, He tells His disciples (Matt. x. 40). The most indubitable proof that one possesses the disposition of humility required for entering into the kingdom, is to receive a little one *in the name of Jesus*, that is to say, as if he were receiving Jesus Himself; and the offence which shall infallibly destroy him who has the misfortune to give it, is that it is caused to *one of those little ones who believe in Him* (Matt. xviii. 5, 6); so true is it that the good in the good is love to *Him*, and the crime in the crime is the evil done to *Him*. The infallibly effectual prayer is that of two or three persons praying *in His name* (Matt. xviii. 20). Real watchfulness consists in waiting for Him, *Him*, the returning Lord; and the condition of entrance with Him into His glory, is being ready to receive *Him* at His coming (Luke xii. 36). If the foolish virgins are rejected, it is for not having fulfilled this duty towards *Him* (Matt. xxv. 12). To confess *Him* here below is the means of being

owned by Him above, as also to deny *Him* is to pronounce one's own sentence (Matt. x. 32, 33; Mark viii. 38). The most intimate and sacred relations of human life must constantly remain subordinate to the bond which unites the believer to Jesus, so that he must be ready to break them, "to hate father, mother, child, wife, his own life," if the supreme bond demands the sacrifice (Matt. x. 37). Otherwise the man would not be *worthy of Him*, which is the same as *being ranked among the workers of iniquity*, and shut out along with them (Matt. vii. 23, xxv. 12). Not to have turned to profit the favours confided by Him with a view to work in *His cause*, to increase *His* wealth here below, to have been *His* unprofitable servant, that is enough to secure being cast into the *outer darkness*, where are only weeping and gnashings of teeth (Matt. xxv. 30). The most decisive act of moral life, the indispensable condition in order to be able one day *again to find* our life, — to give ourselves, *to lose ourselves*, this act can only be accomplished *from love to Him* (Matt. x. 39).—Could Jesus describe otherwise the relation of man to God Himself?

There is in the Gospel history a fact omitted by John, but preserved by the three Synoptics, which shows more clearly than any sayings how really Jesus made all the religious and moral life of His own consist in personal union with Himself. It is the institution of the Holy Supper, with the two declarations which explain it: "This is my blood shed for many for the remission of sins;" and: "The Son of man came to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xxvi. 28, xx. 28). Incorporation into Jesus is the appropriation of life. Jesus is not only the preacher of salvation; He is also, as in John, salvation itself.

The part of Jesus in salvation does not therefore differ substantially in the two teachings; and the church has never experimentally felt the contrast referred to. The difference and its origin, it seems to me, are simply this. The Synoptics—and we have seen the reason of it—have described with predilection the popular and daily preachings of Jesus, in which He sought to awaken the moral life of His hearers, and to stimulate the spiritual instincts which alone could guide them to Him. Now, these hearers were Jews nursed from

infancy on the expectation of the Messianic kingdom. Jesus therefore, like John the Baptist, takes this glorious hope as the starting-point of His teaching, while endeavouring to spiritualize it and to present holiness as the essential characteristic of that future state of things. With this view He dwells with strong emphasis on the moral qualities which its members must possess. But that was only the preparatory and elementary teaching, the general basis (which was common to Him with the law and the prophets) of the special and truly new preaching which he brought into the world. This related to the part borne by His person in the work of salvation and in the establishment of the kingdom. And when He comes to this subject in the Synoptics, He insists, no less than in the fourth Gospel, on the vital importance of faith in Him, and on the concentration of salvation in His person and work. Without the first form of teaching, He would have spoken only to deaf hearers. Without the second, He would never have carried them to the level to which He wished to raise them. While delineating the first in particular, the Synoptics have nevertheless faithfully preserved the second; and it is in the latter that we discover particularly, as we have just done, the matter which is common to them and John.

There is one point, however, on which the teaching of Jesus in John's Gospel seems decidedly to go beyond that of the synoptic Gospels. It is the idea of the *divine pre-existence* of Jesus. Must we recognise here an idea imported by the author of the fourth Gospel into our Lord's teaching, or should we regard this notion as a real element in the testimony of Jesus regarding Himself?

There are especially three sayings in the Gospel of John which evidently contain this notion, vi. 62: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up *where He was before?*" viii. 58: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, *I am;*" xvii. 5: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee *before the world was;*" or, as Jesus says, ver. 24: "For Thou lovedst me *before the foundation of the world.*" Beyschlag, Weizsäcker, Ritschl, and others attempt to give a merely ideal sense to this pre-existence: Jesus, they say, felt and owned Himself as the man whom God eternally foresaw, loved, elected, and



destined to be the Saviour of mankind, and the feeling of this eternal predestination found expression in Him as the consciousness of His personal pre-existence.—But this attempt at explanation falls far beneath the meaning of the words we have just quoted. “Where *He* was before,” can only denote as real and personal an existence as the present existence of the speaker. And in the two other declarations, the comparison with Abraham (“before Abraham was,” literally: *became, γενεσθαι*) and with the world (“before the world was”), two perfectly real beings, forbids us to ascribe to Him who is compared to them, in respect of precedence, an existence less real than theirs. The only question, consequently, is whether Jesus *Himself* spoke thus, or some one else put such assertions into His mouth.

Let us call to mind, first of all, that the idea of the divinity of the Messiah was one of the fundamental points of the teaching of the prophets. Only an exegesis resolved not to bow before the texts can deny it. We shall not support our view, if you will, on Ps. ii., though according to our conviction the words: “Thou art my Son,” and these: “Kiss the Son,” can denote nothing else than the Messiah’s participation in the divine being, and the obligation on men to worship Him. But what cannot be denied is the titles *Mighty God* and *Eternal Father* given by Isaiah to “the child born to us” (ix. 5); the contrast established by Micah (v. 2) between the earthly birth of Israel’s ruler, at *Bethlehem*, and His higher origin, which is *from everlasting*; the identification, in Zechariah, of Jehovah with the suffering Messiah, in the words which critics torture in vain: “They shall look on *me* whom they have pierced” (xii. 10); finally, and above all, that promise which Malachi puts into the mouth—of whom? of Jehovah or of the Messiah? evidently of both, since it identifies them, as we have already seen: “Behold, *I send* my messenger (the forerunner), and he shall prepare the way *before me*: and the Lord, whom ye seek, *the angel of the covenant*, whom ye desire, shall suddenly come to *His* temple: behold, He shall come, saith the Lord of Hosts” (iii. 1). The coming of the Messiah is that of the Lord, of *Adonai*, a name which is given only to God; it is that of the *angel of the covenant*, of that angel of the Lord frequently mentioned in the Pentateuch,

and whom Isaiah calls (Ixiii. 9) "the angel of His presence," that mysterious Being in whom the Lord appears from the earliest times when He would manifest Himself in a sensible manner, and of whom God says (Num. xxiii. 21): "*My name* (my manifested essence) is in Him." It is this mysterious being who, in the words of Malachi, which may be called the culminating point of Messianic prophecy, declares Himself at once the Messiah who is to follow and the God who sends the forerunner, and who is worshipped at Jerusalem. And let it not be said that we are putting into the passage what is not in it, or at least what was not yet seen in it in the time of Jesus. We have already had the proof of the contrary. As to the saying of John the Baptist: "He that cometh after me was before me," it was hence that he took it by the illumination of the Spirit. But we have another proof still, the words which Luke puts into the mouth of the angel when he announces to Zacharias the birth of John the Baptist (Luke i. 16, 17): "He (John) will turn many of the children of Israel to the *Lord their God*: and he shall go *before Him* in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children" . . . He shall go before Him . . . Before whom? The preceding words expressly tell us: "before the *Lord their God*." And if we could doubt whether this saying were a reproduction of that of Malachi, the doubt would be dissipated by the words following: "in the spirit and power of Elias," which are literally taken from the following chapter of the same prophet (iv. 5 and 6). No man in Israel, therefore, to whom the prophecies were familiar, could refuse to ascribe a superhuman nature to the person of the Messiah. There would consequently, even from the natural point of view, be nothing extraordinary in the fact that Jesus, who proclaimed Himself the Messiah, should have at the same time affirmed His divine pre-existence.

A second instructive fact is presented to us in the New Testament. The pre-existence of Christ is not only taught in the discourses of John, it is so in the Epistles of Paul. According to 1 Cor. viii. 6, as well as according to John's prologue, it was Christ who *created* all things. According to the same Epistle, x. 4, the invisible rock which led Israel in the desert and delivered them, was Christ. According to Col. i. 15-17, He

is "the first-born of every creature;" He is "before all things;" it is "by Him that all things are created that are in heaven and that are on earth; all is by Him and for Him, in Him all subsists." And it is not only St. Paul who expresses this idea. The Epistle to the Hebrews, which by its very destination testifies to the faith of the primitive Palestinian Church,<sup>1</sup> declares that it was Christ who made the world, that the angels worship Him, that He founded the earth and the heavens, that He is always the same, and so much the more raised above Moses, as he who built the house is greater than the house (i. 2, 6, 10, 12, iii. 3). More than that; the same view meets us in the Apocalypse, that alleged Judaizing book. In it Jesus, like Jehovah Himself in Isaiah, is named: *the first and the last*; that is to say, as the author himself explains, the *principle* and the *end* (*ἀρχὴ καὶ τέλος*) of all creation;<sup>2</sup> all creatures fall down before the Lamb seated on the throne, as well as before the Father.—Thus the doctrine of the divinity and pre-existence of the Christ does not belong either to an individual (whether the true or pseudo John), or to a school (that of Ephesus), or to any semi-Gnostic party, or to any church of Asia Minor; it belongs to the church, represented in all its parts by the authors and readers of the writings which we have just quoted.<sup>3</sup> If it is so, this the generally received notion of the person of Christ must have rested on positive testimonies that issued from the mouth of Jesus, such as those we find in the fourth Gospel.

The first three Gospels themselves, far from contradicting, confirm this result. We have already shown that these

<sup>1</sup> We cannot allow any critical probability to the opinion which seeks those to whom this Epistle was addressed in Italy or in any other country than Palestine.

<sup>2</sup> i. 17, ii. 8, xxii. 13. Hilgenfeld asserts that the Jesus of the Apocalypse is only the first created of the *angels* (iii. 14). But compare xxii. 9, 16, which positively excludes this idea; xxii. 11 proves that *ἀρχή*, iii. 14, signifies not beginning, but principle, unless *-ίλος* is to signify that Jesus is the *end* of the existence of the universe, in the sense of de Hartmann!

<sup>3</sup> The following are the words of Weizsäcker himself (p. 222): "At the time when the primitive apostolic tradition was yet represented by a whole series of witnesses, the Apostle Paul taught a doctrine regarding the person of Jesus, according to which He was the Son of God come from heaven to renew humanity, the Being whom God used as His instrument in the creation of the world. And we find no trace of any opposition encountered by this doctrine in primitive apostolic circles, and which might give it the character of a particular view."

writings ascribe to the person of Christ in relation to the human soul absolutely the same central position as the Old Testament ascribes to God. For whom were absolute confidence and love reserved by Moses and the prophets? Jesus claims them for Himself in the Synoptics, and that in the name of our eternal salvation. Would Jewish Monotheism, so strict and so jealous of God's rights, have permitted Jesus to take such a position, had He not had the distinct consciousness that in the background of His human existence there was a divine personality? He cannot as a faithful Jew desire to be to us what He asks to be in the Synoptics, unless He is what He claims to be in John.<sup>1</sup>

This general conclusion is reinforced by a large number of particular facts in the same writings. We have just seen how, in Luke, He who comes after the forerunner is called in the preceding words *the Lord their God*. In Mark, the person of the Son is placed above even the most exalted creatures: "But of that day knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son [during the time of His humiliation], but the Father" (xiii. 32). In Matthew, the Son is placed between the Father and the Holy Spirit, the breath of God: "Baptize all nations in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" (xxviii. 19). In the parable of the husbandmen, Jesus represents Himself, in contrast to the *servants* sent before Him, as the son and heir of the master of the vineyard (Matt. xxi. 37, 38). It will be vain to subject the question of Jesus in Matt. xxii. 45: "If David, then, call Christ *his Lord*, how is He *his son*?" to every imaginable sort of manipulation; the thought of Jesus will always come out simple and clear to the man who does not seek mid-day at dawn: If, on the one hand, Christ is David's son by His earthly origin, on the other, He is nevertheless his Lord in virtue of His divine personality. So Micah had already said, v. 2. And how, if Jesus had not the consciousness of His divinity, could He speak of *His* angels (Matt. xiii. 41), of *His* glory (xxv. 31), finally, of *His* name, under the invocation of

<sup>1</sup> Schultz writes these words in his recent work on the divinity of Jesus-Christ: "The sentiment of religious dependence is not allowable except towards the one true God. . . . We ought to bow religiously only before that which is really divine" (*die Lehre von der Gottheit Christi*, pp. 540 and 541).

which the faithful are gathered together? The Old Testament did not authorize any creature thus to appropriate the attributes of Jehovah. Now the notion of His pre-existence was in the mind of Jesus implicitly contained in that of His divinity.

Undoubtedly we do not find in the Synoptics any declaration so precise as those we have just quoted from the Johannine discourses. But do we not learn from Luke's Gospel the enormous mass of materials which would be wholly wanting if we had only those of Matthew and Mark; for example, the three parables of grace (Luke xv.: the lost sheep, the lost drachma, the prodigal son), those of the faithless steward, the wicked rich man (Luke xvi.), those of the unjust judge, the Pharisee and the publican (Luke xviii.), the narrative of Zacchæus, the incident of the converted thief, and so many other treasures which Luke has rescued from the oblivion in which the other published traditions had left them, and which he alone has preserved to the church? How, then, could we make the omission of these few sayings in our first three Gospels an argument against their authenticity? If delineations so impressive and narratives so popular as those just referred to had not passed into the matter of oral evangelization or into any of its written compilations, how much more easily might three or four sayings of a very elevated and profoundly mysterious character have been effaced from tradition, to reappear later as the reminiscences of a hearer who paid special attention to everything in the teaching of Jesus which concerned His person! The dogmatic interest which those declarations have for us did not exist to the same degree then; for the impression of the person of Jesus, daily contemplated in its living fulness, filled the hearts of the believing and made up for all particular blanks. Besides, let us not forget that of those three sayings one occurred in the discourse following the multiplication of the loaves, a discourse which is wholly omitted by the Synoptics; the second, in a discourse delivered at Jerusalem, and which is also omitted in them, along with the whole visit of which it forms part; the third, in the high-priestly prayer which they have left equally unreported. As to John, according to his plan he must necessarily cite them if, as appears from xx 30 and 31, he

wished to give account of the signs by which he had recognised in Jesus the Christ, *the Son of God*, and which might contribute to produce in his readers the same assurance of faith. Those culminating points of the testimony of Jesus regarding His person could not be wanting in such a representation.

There remains the difference in *eschatological views*. In the Synoptics, a visible return of the Lord, an external final judgment, a bodily resurrection of the faithful, a reign of glory; in John, no other return of Christ than His coming into the heart in the form of the Holy Spirit; no other resurrection than that of the soul by regeneration; no other judgment than the division which takes place between believers and unbelievers through the preaching of the Gospel; no other reign than the life of the believer in Christ and in God. "The whole of this Gospel is planned," says Hilgenfeld, "so as to present the historical coming of Christ as His one appearance on the earth."<sup>1</sup>—But is this exclusive spiritualism which is ascribed to the fourth Gospel a reality? John certainly emphasizes the return of Jesus in spirit. But is it entirely to displace and deny His visible return? No; according to him, the first is the preparation for the second: "I shall come again;" such is the spiritual return. Then he adds: "And I shall take you to be with me, that where I am (in the Father's house, where there are many mansions, and where Jesus Himself is now going) ye may be with me also" (xiv. 3); such is a consummation in some sense or other. "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" (xxi. 23). And in the first Epistle: "My little children, abide in Him, that *when He shall appear* we may have confidence" (ii. 28). "We know that, *when He shall appear*, we shall be like Him" (iii. 2).—The spiritual judgment which John teaches is also, according to him, a preparation for the external judgment in which the dispensation of grace shall issue. "Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father; there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust." "The hour is coming in which all that are in the graves shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall come forth; they that have done good, to the resurrection of life; they that have done evil, to

<sup>1</sup> *Einl.* p. 728.

the resurrection of judgment" (v. 45 and 28, 29). Here, certainly, are an external judgment and a bodily resurrection duly proclaimed. True, Scholten thinks these verses must be an interpolation. For what reason? They are not wanting in any manuscript or version. No; but the critic has decreed *à priori* what the fourth Gospel must be to be the antipodes of the other three. And as these verses form an obstacle to this supreme decision of *his* criticism, he takes his scissors and cuts. This is what people in our day call *science*. As to the rest, there is little gained by such violent procedure. Four times successively, indeed, in ch. vi. Jesus reverts to those inconvenient facts of the last day and of the resurrection of the dead: "That of all which the Father hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day" (ver. 39); "That every one which seeth the Son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day" (ver. 40); "No man can come to me except the Father draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day" (ver. 44); "Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, . . . I will raise him up at the last day" (ver. 54). It will be confessed that it requires some hardihood to maintain that a book in which such a series of affirmations is found teaches neither a last judgment nor a resurrection of the body. But a public is reckoned on, and unfortunately with good right, which raises no challenge.

The truth is, that agreeably to his custom the author of the fourth Gospel speaks less of external results than of spiritual preparations, because popular evangelization, and consequently the Synoptics, did exactly the opposite. Without omitting the coming of the Holy Spirit and His working in the heart (Luke xxiv. 48, 49; Matt. xxviii. 19; Luke xii. 11, 12, etc.), the first Gospels had transmitted to the church in all its details the teaching of Jesus regarding the destruction of Jerusalem, and His visible return at the end of the ages (Matt. xxiv.; Mark xiii.; Luke xxi. and xvii.). John had nothing to add on these different points. As for us, on reading the consequences which our critics draw from his silence, we cannot dissemble our astonishment: here are men who allege that the great discourse of Jesus regarding the end of the ages, contained in the Synoptics, was never uttered by

Him ; that it is nothing but a composition of some Jewish or Judeo-Christian author of the year 67 or 68 ; and the same men dare to adduce the absence of this unauthentic discourse from John as a reason against the trustworthiness of this Gospel ! Is criticism to become a scheme of jugglery ?

It is impossible, therefore, to detect an *essential* difference, that is to say, one bearing on the matter of doctrine, between the Synoptics and the fourth Gospel.

But what are we to think of the entirely different *form* in which Jesus expresses Himself in the Johannine discourses and the Synoptic teachings ? Here, brief moral maxims of a strongly marked stamp, popular, easy to retain ; there, discourses of elevated scope and of a theological kind. Here, as Keim says, "the germ of the parable ;" there, not a single picture of this kind. In a word, there, a simple practical spirit ; here, a mystical, lofty, dreamy cast.

As to the *parable*, it is wanting undoubtedly in John, at least in the form in which we find it in the first Gospels ; but it must be remembered that nothing was better fitted than this kind of discourse to be the vehicle of popular evangelization in the first times of the Church. All that could be recalled of such teachings was therefore put successively in circulation in tradition, and passed thence into the first evangelic writings. What could have been the object of the author of the fourth Gospel in suppressing those teachings which he must have known, and which would have given credit to his book, supposing that his narrative was a fiction ? But if he simply related history, what good would it serve to repeat what every one could read in writings which were already within his reach ? He could only have been led to do otherwise if the parables had been a necessary waymark in the history of apostolical faith, which he was minded to describe ; but evidently this was not the case. Besides, if we do not find the parable in the fourth Gospel in the form of complete *narrative*, we find it there in a very closely related form, that of *allegory*. This is the analogue of what in the Synoptics is called the *parables* of the leaven or of the grain of mustard seed ; witness the descriptions of the Shepherd, of the Door, and of the Good Shepherd (ch. x.) ; or that of the woman who passes suddenly from excess of grief to excess of joy (xvi. 21) ;



or, again, that of the vine and the branches (xv. 1 ff.). It is ever the figurative and picturesque language of Him who in the first Gospels spoke to the people in terms like these: "What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken with the wind?" . . . (Matt. xi. 7). This question very nearly recalls the saying of Jesus in our Gospel (v. 35): "John was a burning and shining light; and ye were willing for a season to rejoice in his light." Compare also the following figures: The Spirit is like the wind, which bloweth where it listeth, and the presence of which is not known except by the sound heard (iii. 8). The unbeliever is like the evil-doer, who seeks the night to accomplish his evil deeds (vv. 19 and 20). Spiritual emancipation is the formula of manumission which the son of the house pronounces over slaves (viii. 36, etc.). Each of these figures is a parable in germ, which the author could have developed as such if he had wished it ever so little.

As to the lofty *mystical* character of the discourses of Jesus, the language contrasts, it is true, with the simple, lively, piquant style of the synoptical discourses. But let us remark, in the first place, that this contrast has been singularly exaggerated. Sabatier himself acknowledges this: "A comparison of these discourses with those of the Synoptics proves that at bottom the divergence is not so great as it appears at first sight." How can we fail to recognise the voice which strikes us so forcibly in the Synoptics in those brief and powerful sayings of the Johannine Christ, which seemed to spring from the depths of another world? "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up." "Without me ye can do nothing." "Except the seed fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "The prince of this world cometh, but he hath nothing in me." There is an indisputable fact: we find at least twenty-seven sayings of Jesus occurring in John which appear almost identically the same in the Synoptics (see the list in the note).<sup>1</sup> Now then!

<sup>1</sup> JOHN.

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ii. 19: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."

Matt. xxvi. 61 (xxvii. 40): "This fellow said, I am able to destroy the

it is impossible for any one to maintain that these sayings break either the connection of John's text in the least or that of the synoptic text. The fact proves that the difference referred to has been singularly exaggerated. If, indeed, say-

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iii. 18: "He that believeth on Him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already."

iv. 44: "For Jesus Himself testified, that a prophet hath no honour in his own country."

v. 8: "Jesus saith unto Him, Rise, take up thy bed and walk."

vi. 20: "It is I; be not afraid."

vi. 35: "He that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

vi. 37: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

vi. 46: "Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of God, He hath seen the Father." Compare i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

xii. 8: "For the poor always ye have with you; but me ye have not always."

xii. 25: "He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal."

xii. 27: "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour; but for this cause came I unto this hour."

xiii. 3: "Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands."

xiii. 16: "Verily, verily, I say unto

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temple of God, and to build it in three days" (Mark xiv. 58 and xv. 29).

Mark xvi. 16: "He that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned."

Matt. xiii. 57: "Jesus said unto them, A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house" (Mark vi. 4 and Luke iv. 24).

Matt. ix. 6: "Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house" (Mark ii. 9; Luke v. 24).

Matt. xiv. 27: "It is I; be not afraid" (Mark vi. 50).

Matt. v. 6, Luke vi. 21: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst for they shall be filled."

Matt. xi. 28, 29: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden . . . and ye shall find rest unto your souls."

Matt. xi. 27: "No man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him" (Luke x. 22).

Matt. xxvi. 11: "For ye have the poor always with you; but me ye have not always" (Mark xiv. 7).

Matt. x. 39: "He that findeth his life shall lose it; and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it" (xvi. 25; Mark viii. 35; Luke ix. 24, xvii. 33).

Matt. xxvi. 38: "Then saith He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death" (Mark xiv. 34 and following).

Matt. xi. 27: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father."

Matt. x. 24: "The disciple is not

ings so original in style as those of Jesus can simultaneously and without startling in the least occupy a place in the

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you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him."

xiii. 20: "He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me."

xiii. 21: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me."

xiii. 38: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice."

xiv. 18: "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you;" and 23: "We will make our abode with him."

xiv. 28: "My Father is greater than I."

xiv. 31: "Arise, let us go hence."

xv. 20: "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you."

xv. 21: "But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake."

xvi. 32: "Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered, every one to his own, and shall leave me alone."

xvii. 2: "As Thou hast given Him power over all flesh."

xviii. 11: "Put up thy sword into the sheath."

xviii. 20: "I ever taught in the synagogue, and in the temple."

xviii. 37: "Pilate therefore said unto Him: Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born."

xx. 23: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted . . ." etc.

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above his master, nor the servant above his lord."

Matt. x. 40: "He that receiveth you, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth Him that sent me" (Luke x. 16).

Matt. xxvi. 21: "Verily I say unto you, That one of you shall betray me" (Mark xiv. 18).

Matt. xxvi. 34: "Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice" (Mark xiv. 30; Luke xxii. 34).

Matt. xxviii. 20: "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

Mark xiii. 32: "That day knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father."

Matt. xxvi. 46: "Rise, let us be going."

Matt. x. 25: "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of His household."

Matt. x. 22: "Ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake."

Matt. xxvi. 31: "For it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad."

Matt. xxviii. 18: "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."

Matt. xxvi. 52: "Put up thy sword again into his place."

Matt. xxvi. 55: "I sat daily with you teaching in the temple."

Matt. xxvii. 11: "And the governor asked Him, saying, Art thou the king of the Jews? And Jesus said unto him, Thou sayest."

Matt. xviii. 18 (xvi. 19): "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven . . ." etc.

two sorts of documents, it proves that these are radically homogeneous.

There are especially alleged several expressions peculiar to John's style, and which are foreign to the Synoptics, for example the terms *light* and *darkness*, or expressions in use among these and which are wanting in him, such as the terms *kingdom of heaven* (or *of God*), for which John substitutes the less Jewish and more mystical term *eternal life*. But the contrast *light* and *darkness* occurs also in the Synoptics, witness Luke xi. 34-36 and Matt. vi. 22, 23. Is it not already very common in the Old Testament? And as to the Johannine expression *eternal life*, it is found used in the Synoptics as equivalent to *kingdom of God*, absolutely as in John. We take to witness the examples quoted in a note, which Beyschlag has very happily provided.<sup>1</sup> John, besides, uses twice in the conversation with Nicodemus (iii. 3, 5), the term *kingdom of God* (or *of heaven* in the *Sinaiticus*).

After all this, what is there remaining which could establish in the matter of form an insoluble contrast between the sayings of Jesus in John and His language in the Synoptics? A certain difference remains, I do not deny. It consists of that altogether peculiar tone of holy solemnity, and, if I may so speak, of heavenly suavity, which distinguishes not only our Gospel, but also the First Epistle of John, from all other productions of human thought, and which makes these writings a literature by itself; with this difference, however, already remarked, that while the course of thought is firm, and possessed of a rigorous logical tenor in the Gospel, the subjects are treated in the Epistle in a manner more soft, hesitating, and diffuse.—To explain the real contrast between the fourth Gospel and the preceding ones, we must above all take account

<sup>1</sup> The two verses put as parallels are taken in each case from the same Gospel and the same narrative.

Matt. xviii. 3: "Ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

Matt. xix. 17: "If thou wilt enter into life."

Matt. xxv. 34: "Inherit the kingdom prepared for you."

Mark ix. 45: "It is better for thee to enter into life."

*Ibid.* ver. 8: "It is better for thee to enter into life."

*Ibid.* ver. 23: "A rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven."

*Ibid.* ver. 46: "But the righteous into life eternal."

*Ibid.* ver. 47: "It is better for thee to enter into the kingdom of God."

of the influence exercised on the form of the discourses by the style peculiar to the translator, and by the work of condensation, which was the condition of reproduction. But that done, there is still a certain apparently irreducible *remnant* which demands separate study. It has been said that *unexplained remains* are in science the cause of great discoveries. We are not ambitious of making a great discovery, but we would like, nevertheless, to succeed in accounting, somewhat more clearly than has yet been done, for the difference before us.

The question is, whether that particular tone, which might be called the Johannine *timbre*, was foreign to Jesus, so that our evangelist was its real creator, and put it in the mouth of the Saviour; or if it belonged to the language of Jesus Himself, at least at certain particular times of His life. This we have seen: the scenes related in our Gospel represent only a score of days, or even of points of time, distributed over an activity of two years and a half. And it is consequently allowable to ask whether the scenes, evidently chosen with a purpose, had not an exceptional character which marked them out for the author's choice. He made a selection of the deeds, that is certain, and he says so himself (xx. 30, 31). Why should he not also have done the same with his discourses? The choice in this case must have been in relation to the object of his writing, which was to show that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God." If it is so, he must naturally have chosen, from among the many discourses of Jesus, the few sayings of particular elevation which had above all contributed in his own experience to make him understand the sublime riches of the Being whom he had the blessedness to see and hear.

We have a phrase which the author puts into the mouth of Jesus, according to which the latter himself distinguished between two kinds of discourses embraced by His teaching. He says to Nicodemus (iii. 12): "If I have told you *earthly things* (*τὰ ἐπιγεια*) and ye believed not, how will ye believe if I tell you of *heavenly things* (*τὰ ἐπουράνια*)?" In expressing Himself thus, Jesus reminded Nicodemus of the teachings He had given since His arrival at Jerusalem. What proved that His auditors had not been taken hold of by them (*had not believed*), is the fact that Nicodemus himself could advance in proof of the divine superiority of the Lord's teaching, only His miracles

(v. 2). What were those teachings of Jesus in which He spoke of earthly things? His discourses in Galilee, as we find them in the Synoptics, may give us an idea. It was the earth, that is to say, human life, with all its different obligations and relations, considered from the viewpoint of heaven. It was, for example, that sublime morality which we find developed in the Sermon on the Mount: human life in its relation to God. But from this elementary moral teaching, Jesus expressly distinguishes what He calls the teaching of *heavenly things*. The object of the latter is no longer the earth estimated from the heavenly viewpoint; it is heaven itself with its infinite riches. In this heaven Jesus lived incessantly while acting on the earth. He says so Himself in the following verse: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, the Son of man *which is in heaven*" (ver. 13). In the intimate and uninterrupted relation which He maintained with His Father, He had access from this world below to the divine thoughts, the eternal purposes, the plan of salvation, and He could at certain times, as He does in the course of this nocturnal conversation with the pious senator, unveil to those about Him, whether friends or adversaries, facts belonging to this higher domain of *heavenly things*. He would not have accomplished His mission fully if He had absolutely concealed from the world what He Himself was to the heart of His Father, and what His Father was to Him. How could men have understood the infinite love of which they were the objects on the part of heaven, if Jesus had not explained to them the infinite value of the gift which God gave them in His person? Is not love measured by the price of its gift, the greatness of its sacrifice? On the other hand, this revelation of heavenly things could not be the *habitual* object of the Lord's teachings. There were hardly one or two disciples who would have followed Him if He had kept on those celestial heights; the yet gross-minded multitude, who asked only for a Messiah after their carnal heart, a king capable of giving them bread daily, in the literal sense of the word (vi. 15, 34), would have remained strangers to His influence, and soon left Him alone with His two or three initiated.

It is doubtless for the same reason that those teachings

regarding heavenly things remained in general outside of the first apostolic preachings and of oral evangelization.

And yet, even if things happened as we have said, it is improbable that every trace of this mode of teaching, more elevated in matter and tone, should have completely disappeared from the synoptic record. And, indeed, two of our evangelists, those who, along with John, have endeavoured most to transmit the teachings of Jesus, Matthew and Luke, have preserved to us the account of a time of extraordinary emotion in our Lord's life, which furnishes us with the example we naturally expect. It is in Luke especially that we have to seek its faithful delineation (ch. x.). Jesus sent into the country-parts and villages of Galilee seventy of His disciples, weak spiritual children, to whom He confided the task of rousing the population to understand the importance of the work which was then going forward, and the nearness of the kingdom. They return to Him overwhelmed with joy, and communicate to Him the full success of their mission. In that hour, the evangelist tells us, "Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said: 'I thank Thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that Thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes; even so, Father; for so it seemed good in Thy sight. All things are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal Him.'" In reading these words, we ask ourselves if it is really from St. Luke or St. Matthew we are reading, and not from St. John. What does the fact prove? That, according to the Synoptics themselves, at certain exceptional moments of elevation, the language of Jesus really took that gentle tone, that *mystical*—would it not be truer to say heavenly?—style of which we find in them only one example, and the stamp of which is borne more or less distinctly by six or seven discourses in John. This passage, found in Luke and Matthew, has been called an erratic block of Johannine rock, which has strayed into the synoptic region. The figure is correct enough; what does it prove? The least fragment of granite deposited on the limestone slopes of the Jura, is an undeniable proof to the geologist that somewhere in the lofty Alpine heights the entire rock has its place. Otherwise the block would be

in the view of science a monstrosity. It is the same with this fragment of Johannine discourse in the synoptic Gospels. It is fully sufficient to attest the existence, at certain moments, of this so-called Johannine language in the teaching of Jesus. The real difference between John and the Synoptics, on this the most decisive point, amounts to this: while the latter have transmitted to us only one example of this style of language, John has preserved several, chosen with a particular view.

As, on the one hand, it is certain from the very nature of things that the style peculiar to the translator has coloured that of the preacher while reproducing his discourses; on the other hand, the passage of the Synoptics which we have just quoted puts it beyond doubt that the Lord's own language had graven itself deeply on the soul of the evangelist, and exercised a decisive and permanent influence on his style. There was therefore here, if I may so express myself, a reflex action, the secret of which no one certainly will ever completely unveil.

Moreover, the discourses of Jesus in the fourth Gospel bear in themselves, for every one that has eyes to see, the seal of their true origin, and despite all the affirmations of critics, the church will ever know what to think of them. An intimate, filial, unbroken communion with the God of heaven and earth, such as is revealed by the mouth of Jesus, must be lived to be so expressed; what do I say? to be so much as caught in glimpses. The *inventor* of such discourses would be more than a genius of the first order; he would himself require to be Son of God, a Jesus equal to the true Jesus. Criticism only gains an embarrassment more by such a supposition.

### C. *The Johannine Notion of the Person of Jesus.*

Is it possible for us to ascend to the one source, whence, like two divergent streams, flow the two forms of Jesus' teaching which we have just remarked?—First of all, let us set aside the opinion, widely enough spread in our day, which thinks it can discern a dualism in the very teaching of our Gospel. Two critics, Baur and Reuss, have alleged that the author of this book did not hold a real incarnation of the Logos; that, according to him, the divine being continued in Jesus to possess and exercise His heavenly attributes, so that



His humanity was only a transitory and superficial wrapping, which did not in the least modify the state He had possessed before coming to the earth. Starting from this point of view, Reuss finds in our Gospel a series of contradictions between certain sayings of Jesus he thinks authentic, and the conception set forth in the amplifications due to the pen of the evangelist. While, in the former, Jesus distinctly affirms His inferiority to the Father, the author of our Gospel, filled with his notion of the Logos, represents Him as equal to God.—It is difficult to conceive a more complete travesty of the Johannine narrative. We have already shown that no Gospel brings out in more pronounced features than this does the real humanity of Jesus, body, soul, and spirit. The body is *exhausted* (iv. 6); the soul is overwhelmed *with trouble* (xii. 27); the spirit itself is *vehemently disturbed* (xiii. 21), and *groans* (xi. 33). What place remains in such a being for the presence of an *impassive* Logos? Nay more; according to the prologue, which is surely the work of the evangelist, the Logos Himself in His state of divine pre-existence tends to God as His centre (i. 1); He abides in God as a first-born Son *in the bosom* of His Father (i. 18). Where in this picture is the place for a being *equal* to God? No; the subordination of the Son to the Father is affirmed by the evangelist as distinctly as it could be by Jesus speaking of Himself; and as to His real humanity, it is emphasized more forcibly by this same evangelist than by any of the Synoptics.

There is not a trace, therefore, of a contradictory double theology in our Gospel.<sup>1</sup> This supposition is, from its very nature, the most improbable possible. It involves a fact very difficult to admit; the fact, namely, that a thinker so profound as the author of this book, the most powerful mind of his time, could, without the faintest suspicion of it, teach simultaneously two opposite conceptions on the subject which occupied the first place in his thoughts and heart.

The idea which the evangelist formed of Christ's person, and which is in perfect harmony with the minutest historical or didactic details of his entire narrative, is clearly expressed by the author in the prologue: "The Word was made flesh,"

<sup>1</sup> As is now maintained by Beyschlag; comp. also Jean Réville's thesis, *La Doctrine du Logos*, 1881

which evidently signifies that the being whom he calls the Word *stripped* Himself of His divine state, and of all the attributes which made it up, to exchange it for a completely human state, with all the characteristics of weakness, ignorance, sensibility to pleasure and pain, which make up our manner of life here below.<sup>1</sup> This mode of conceiving Christ's person during His sojourn on earth is not peculiar to John; it is also Paul's, who tells us in Philippians: "He being in the form of God . . . emptied Himself, having taken the form of a servant, and become like unto men" (ii. 6, 7); and again in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians: "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye, through His poverty, might be rich" (2 Cor. viii. 9). The same teaching in the Epistle to the Hebrews and in the Revelation, at too great length to be produced here.<sup>2</sup> Here is the key of all the Christological views in the New Testament. In particular, it is the explanation of that double form of teaching which we find in the mouth of Christ as given in John and the Synoptics.

Up to His baptism, Jesus had lived in filial communion with God; the proof of it is the saying of the child at the age of twelve: "Must I not be in what is my Father's?" (Luke ii. 49). But He had not yet the distinct consciousness of His essential eternal relation to the Father; His communion with Him was of a moral nature; it flowed from His pure conscience and His fervent love to Him. In this state He must have had a presentiment of His being the physician of sinful humanity, the Messiah. But an immediate divine testimony was necessary to enable Him to undertake the work of redemption. This testimony was given Him at His baptism; then the heavens were opened to Him; the heavenly things which He was to reveal to others were unveiled to Him. At the same time the mystery of His own person became clear to Him. He heard the Father's voice saying: "Thou art my well-beloved Son." From that day He knew Himself perfectly, and knowing Himself *as the only Son*, the object of the Father's full love, He knew also to what extent the Father loved the

<sup>1</sup> The same expression is used, ii. 9, to describe the change of water into wine: *one* and the same matter, but putting on different attributes.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Heb. i. 3, ii. 17, 18, v. 6-8; Rev. i. 1, 18, iii. 12, 21, v. 5.

world to which He gave Him. As man, He knew fully the Father Himself, *the Father* in all the wealth of the meaning of the word. And so from that day He carried heaven in His heart, while living on the earth. He had therefore, if one may so speak, two sources of information: the one, the experience of *earthly things* which He had acquired during the thirty years' life which He had just passed as a simple man here below; the other, the permanent view of *heavenly things* which had opened up before His sight at the hour of His baptism. What wonder, consequently, if Jesus spoke alternately of the one and the other according to the wants of His hearers, finding in the former the common ground He needed to excite their interest and gain their attention, drawing from the second the object of the new revelation whereby He was to transform the world? On the one hand were the moral obligations of man, his relations to mundane things, treated from the divine point of view, as we see particularly in the Synoptics; on the other was the higher mystery of the relation of love between the Father and the Son, and of the love of both to a world sunk in sin and death, a world to which the Father gives the Son and the Son gives Himself.

It seems to me that if we place ourselves at this point of view, we see spring up, as with a sort of moral necessity, the two modes of teaching which amaze science, but not the church. Do we not know of young people or grown men who, after leading a perfectly moral life, see all at once, through the mysterious act of the new birth, the sanctuary of communion with Christ open before them, the life of adoption, the intimate enjoyment of the fatherly love of God? Their language then takes a new character at certain times which astonishes those who hear them speak, and who ask themselves if it is really the same man. There is in their tone something elevated and sweet which was strange to them before. They are like words coming from a higher region. One might be tempted to exclaim with the poet:

Ah ! qui n'oublierait tout à cette voix celeste  
Ta parole est un chant . . .

but without adding with him :

. . . où rien d'humain ne reste.<sup>1</sup>

For this divine language is nevertheless the most human which can be spoken. Then, the time of elevation past, the ordinary life resuming its course, the ordinary language is resumed with it, though always grave, always holy, always controlled by the immediate relation to God which forms henceforth the background of the entire life. Such experiences are not rare; they serve to explain the mystery of the twofold teaching and the twofold language of the Word made flesh, from the time when Christ was revealed to Himself by the testimony of the Father.<sup>2</sup>

But even if we cannot by thought reach the sublime point, where in the person of Christ the two convergent lines of the humanity which rises highest, and of the divinity which abases itself most deeply, meet together, do we not know that in mathematics no one refuses to acknowledge the reality of the point where the two lines called asymptotes meet in infinity, and that mathematicians work on this point as on a positive quantity? Weiss rightly says:<sup>3</sup> "It must indeed be considered that the appearance of Jesus in itself, as the realization of a divinely human life, was far too rich, too grand, too manifold not to be differently presented according to the various individualities which received its rays, and according to the more or less ideal points of view from which those rays were reflected; without this difference, however, being able to injure the unity of the fundamental impression and of the essential character under which this personality made itself known. Criticism has frequently made use of the comparison between the discrepancy which we are considering, and that which the Socrates of Xenophon and of Plato present. At first the current of history flowed on the side of Xenophon, thinking it could recognise the true historical type in the simple, practical, varied, and popular Socrates of the *Memorabilia*. The Socrates of Plato was then regarded only as a

<sup>1</sup> Who would not all forget 'mid those celestial strains!  
Thy speaking is a song . . .

. . . where nought of man remains.

<sup>2</sup> Regarded from this point of view, the fact of the incarnation, while still presenting profound mysteries to reason, does not seem to us to contain insoluble contradictions.

<sup>3</sup> Introduction to his *Commentary on the Gospel of John*, p. 33.

mouthpiece chosen by this author to expound his own theory of ideas. Xenophon was the historian, Plato the philosopher. But criticism has changed its mind; Schleiermacher especially has shown that if the teaching of Socrates had not comprised speculative elements such as those attributed to him by Plato, and regarding which the other writer is entirely silent, it would have been impossible to account either for the relation which so closely unites the school of Plato to the person of Socrates, or for the extraordinary power of attraction exercised by the latter over the most eminent and speculative minds of his time, or for the profound revolution wrought by him on the progress of Greek thought."<sup>1</sup> With Xenophon only there is a blank remaining, a blank which we cannot fill in except with the help of Plato. This fact arises, on the one hand, from the special aim of Xenophon's book, which was to make a moral defence of his master; on the other, from the fact that Xenophon, a practical man, wanted the necessary philosophical grasp to seize the higher elements of the Socratic teaching. Zeller also admits that Xenophon did not understand the scientific value of Socrates; "that Socrates cannot have been the simple and non-scientific moralist for which he has been so long taken," when judgment proceeded solely on Xenophon's writings. "In the exposition of both writers," says he, "there is a *surplus* (*Ueberschuss*) which may easily be worked into the common portrait." Undoubtedly Plato has put into the mouth of Socrates his own theory of ideas. But it was only the development of Socrates' own teaching; and it must be confessed that whenever he puts the latter on the stage as a historical personage (in the *Apology* and the *Symposium*, for example), he does not use the same liberty.<sup>2</sup>

This parallel *mutatis mutandis* presents several remarkable analogies of detail. But it offers above all this fundamental analogy, that in the case of Socrates as in that of Jesus, we find ourselves confronted with two faithful portraits of a historical personage, whose perfect synthesis it is impossible to effect. Now, if philosophy still seeks the fusion of the two portraits of the wisest of the Greeks, will it be thought surprising if theology has not yet succeeded in combining in one

<sup>1</sup> Critics like Brandis and Ritter adhere to this judgment.

<sup>2</sup> *Philos. der Griechen*, 2d Part, 3rd ed., pp. 85 ff., 151, and 155

the two likenesses of Christ? Is the richness of the former, of the man whose influence on the moral history of his people was so considerable but so transitory, comparable to the richness of Him whose appearing renewed, and perpetually renews, the world? And if there was in the former enough to furnish matter for two portraits, both true and yet irreducible, what wonder if the same phenomenon recurs in regard to Him who could have exclaimed in Greece: A greater than Socrates is here, as He exclaimed in Judea: "A greater than Solomon is here"?

"No man knoweth *the Son*, save *the Father*," says Jesus in the Synoptics. The point in which the two pictures, the Johannine and synoptic, converge, is thus the self-consciousness of the Son. We shall certainly not succeed in reconstructing it perfectly here below.

We behold *one* sun in the vault of heaven; and yet what a difference between its glowing reflection on the brilliant slopes of the Alpine glaciers and its calm majestic image in the waves of the ocean! The source of light is one, but the two mirrors differ.

We conclude—

1. The leading idea of the Johannine writing has not necessarily impaired its historical character.

2. The trustworthiness of the narrative appears manifestly from the comparison of the work with that of the Synoptics, to which it is uniformly superior in the cases wherein they differ.

3. The trustworthiness of the report of the discourses, which has such strong positive reasons on its side, does not in fact encounter any insurmountable difficulty.

The fourth Gospel is therefore a truly historical writing

## § 2. THE RELATION OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL TO THE RELIGION OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

Modern criticism thinks it can prove a tendency decidedly hostile to Judaism. Baur thinks that the author wished to imbue the church with anti-Jewish Gnosticism; that he was a Docetist and dualist professing the non-reality of the body of Jesus and the eternal contrast between darkness and light.

Without going so far, Reuss says "that he speaks of the Jews as a class of foreigners with whom he had no bond of connection;" that "all that preceded Jesus belongs, according to him, to a past without value, and can only serve to lead men astray, and make them miss the door of salvation (x. 8)."<sup>1</sup> Renan also ascribes to the evangelist a "lively antipathy" to Judaism. Finally, Hilgenfeld is the author who has gone, and still goes, furthest in affirming this thesis. He originally ascribed our Gospel to some Gnostic of the second century; since then he has softened this assertion; he thinks that the author, while belonging to the church, "yet goes a long way with Gnosticism." According to the fourth Gospel, "Judaism belonged, quite as much as paganism, to the darkness which preceded the gospel;" the religion of the Old Testament possessed "only an imperfect and disturbed prefigurement of Christianity." The knowledge of the true God was as much wanting to it as to Samaritan paganism.<sup>2</sup>

What is advanced to justify such criticisms? First, a few particular *terms*, familiar to the evangelist, such as: *the Jews*, an expression he uses always in a sense hostile to the Jewish people; or this other: *your law*, a term which betrays a feeling of disdain for the Mosaic dispensation and for the whole of the Old Testament.—But the unfavourable meaning attached in our Gospel to the name: *the Jews*, to denote the enemies of the light, arises from no subjective feeling of the evangelist, but from the fact itself, that is to say, from the position taken up from the beginning (John ii.) toward Jesus by the mass of the nation and its rulers. The author also uses this term when there is occasion (which is rare) in a wholly neutral sense, as ii. 6 ("the purification of the Jews") and xix. 40 ("the manner of the Jews to bury"); or even in a favourable sense, as in the passages, iv. 22 ("salvation is of the Jews") and xi. 45 ("Many of the Jews who came to Mary believed on Him"). Here may also be cited the use of the name *Israelite*, applied as a title of honour to Nathanael (i. 48). In the Apocalypse, which is asserted to be an absolutely

<sup>1</sup> *Théol. johann.* pp. 82 and 19.

<sup>2</sup> *Das Evangelium und die Briefe Johannis*, 1849; compare with his more recent article in the *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 1865, and *Einleitung*, p. 722 ff.

Judaizing work, the Jews who have rejected the gospel are designated much more severely: "They who call themselves Jews and are not, but are of the *synagogue of Satan*" (ii. 9; comp. iii. 9).<sup>1</sup> The great crisis which had cast Israel out of the kingdom of God and made them thenceforth a strange and even hostile body to the church, had already commenced during the ministry of Jesus. This is what the author expresses by the term *the Jews*, opposed in his narrative to *the disciples*.—In making Jesus say *your law*, the evangelist cannot have had the intention of defaming the Mosaic dispensation, any more than he thought of depreciating the patriarch when he made Jesus say: "Abraham *your father*" (viii. 56). He exalts him, on the contrary, in this very verse by expressing the joyful sympathy which he feels toward Him and His work in a higher state of existence: "Abraham rejoiced in the hope of seeing my day, and he has seen it and is glad." Likewise x. 34, after having used the expression: *your law*, he immediately adds, in regard to the passage of the Old Testament which he has just quoted, the words: "and since the Scripture cannot be broken," thus making *the law* a divine and infallible revelation. Elsewhere he declares that "it is the Scriptures which testify of Him" (v. 39); that the sin of His hearers consists in "not having the word of God abiding in them" (ver. 38), and even that the real cause of their unbelief in Him is nothing else than their unbelief in regard to the *writings* of Moses (v. 46 and 47). The evangelist who makes Jesus speak thus evidently does not seek to defame the law; the contradiction would be too flagrant. Jesus therefore means, when using the expression *your law*, "the law which you *yourselves* acknowledge as the supreme authority," or "the law which you invoke against me, and in the name of which you seek to condemn me." It must be observed that He could not say "*our law*," because His personal relation to that institution differed too much from that of ordinary Jews to be comprehended under the same pronoun; no more than He could say, when speaking of God, "*our Father*," but only "*my Father*, and *your Father*" (xx. 17).

It has been remarked that Jesus never speaks in this

<sup>1</sup> Ewald (*Comment. in Apoc. Joh. ad h.l.*): "John piquantly calls the Jews an assembly, not of God, but of Satan, as Jesus Himself does" (John viii. 37-44).



Gospel of *the law* as the principle on which the life of the new community will rest. True; but this is because He assumes that the law has become the *inward* principle of the life of believers through the fact of their communion with Him.

Another ground of objection is the freedom with which Jesus by His cures violated the *Jewish Sabbath*. Hilgenfeld even discovers the intention of abrogating this institution in the words (v. 17): "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." — As to the Sabbath cures, they are found in the Synoptics as well as in John, and there, as here, it is those acts which begin to excite the mortal hatred of the Jews against Him (Luke vi. 11). But we formally deny that Jesus by these cures really infringed the tenor of the Mosaic commandment. He transgressed nothing but that *hedge* of arbitrary statutes with which the Pharisees had thought good to surround the fourth commandment. Jesus remained from the beginning to the end, in our Gospel as in the others, the servant of the circumcision (Rom. xv. 8), that is to say, the scrupulous observer of the law. As to the words v. 17, they are not contrary to the notion of the Sabbath rest; they signify only: "so long as the Father works at the task of man's salvation,—and that work evidently suffers no interruption at any moment whatever, and still less on the Sabbath day than on any other,—it is impossible for the Son to fold His arms and leave the Father to work alone." This declaration does not contradict the Sabbath rest when rightly understood.

Hilgenfeld further alleges the two following passages: iv. 21 and viii. 44. In the former, Jesus says to the Samaritan woman: "The hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father," which proves, according to him, that Jesus wished to put Himself in opposition to the Jews no less than to the Samaritans, and that consequently when He says in the following verse: "Ye worship ye know not what," this judgment applies to the former as well as to the latter. The Jewish religion would therefore be, according to this saying of Jesus, as erroneous as all the rest. But the following words: "for salvation is of the Jews," are enough to refute this explanation; for instead

of this *for*, the author would have required in that case to say *though*: "*Though* the Jews are as ignorant as you, and as all others, it has pleased God to make salvation proceed from them." The *for* (*ὅτι*) has no meaning unless in the preceding words Jesus had granted to the Jews a knowledge of God superior to that of the Samaritans. This fact demonstrates that the words: "We know what *we worship*," apply not only to Him, Jesus, personally, but to Him conjointly with all *Israel*.<sup>1</sup> The true meaning of the words of ver. 21 is explained by ver. 23 (which is the resuming of ver. 21): "Your worship, that of you Samaritans, will no longer be restricted to Mount Gerizim, and neither will it be transported and again localized at Jerusalem." In fact, this latter alternative must have appeared to the woman the only possible, once the former was set aside.

In the passage viii. 44, Jesus says to the Jews, according to the ordinary construction: "Ye are *of a father the devil*." Hilgenfeld translates, as is undoubtedly grammatically possible: 'Ye are of *the father of the devil*.' This father of the devil, according to him, is the God of the Jews, the creator of the material world, who in some Gnostic systems (Ophites, Valentinians) was really represented as the father of the demon. This is not all; Jesus says at the end of the same verse: "When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, *and his father*," which is usually understood in the sense: for he is a liar, and the father of the liar (or of the lie). But Hilgenfeld explains: because he (the devil) is a liar, *and his father also* (is a liar). And here a second time he finds the father of the devil, who is called "a liar as well as his son," because throughout the whole of the Old Testament the God of the Jews passed Himself off as the supreme God, while He was only an inferior divinity. The author of this explanation is amazed that it could have been thought monstrous, and maintains "that not one reasonable word has yet been advanced against it." He should, however, recognise the following facts: 1. The father of the devil is a personage quite unknown within the biblical sphere, and the author of our Gospel would have seriously compromised the success of

<sup>1</sup> It was only when contrasting Himself with a foreign people (the Samaritans) that He could say *we* speaking of Himself and the other Jews, as He does here.

his fraud by introducing him on the stage. 2. The notion of two opposed personal gods, the second of them another than the devil, is so opposed to the Israelitish and Christian Monotheism professed by the author (v. 44), that it is impossible here to admit such teaching. 3. What Jesus, according to the whole context, wishes to demonstrate to the Jews, is that they are the *children* of the devil, but not his *brethren*, as would follow from Hilgenfeld's translation: "Ye are the issue of the father of the devil." In this whole passage the object is to oppose sonship to sonship, father to father. "Ye do what ye have seen with your father," said Jesus (ver. 38). The Jews answered: "We have one father, God" (ver. 41). And the answer of Jesus is the echo of theirs: "Ye are the issue of a father [who is] the devil." The first Epistle offers a decisive parallel (iii. 10): "In this the *children of God* are manifest, and the *children of the devil*." 4. Finally, let us remark, that if the first words of the verse be applied to the *father of the devil*, the whole series of the following propositions to the last inclusively must necessarily be applied to the same personage. The words: "Because he is a liar as well as his father," would therefore signify (according to Hilgenfeld's explanation) that: the father of the devil is a liar, and his father as well. After having witnessed the appearance of the devil's father, we should here find ourselves face to face with his grandfather! This whole phantasmagoria vanishes before a simple comma introduced between the two genitives *πατρός* (*of a father*) and *τοῦ διαβόλου* (*the devil*), which puts the second substantive in apposition to the first, not in the place of its complement. The necessity of this explanation from the grammatical point of view follows from the contrast to ver. 41: "We have a father [who is] God;" and religiously from ii. 16, where the temple of the God of the Jews at Jerusalem (which, according to Hilgenfeld, should be the house of the devil's father) is called by Jesus "my Father's house." It is certainly therefore, according to our Gospel, the *only true God* (xvii. 3) who is worshipped at Jerusalem.

Hilgenfeld and Reuss rest their position on another saying, x. 8: "All that came before me are thieves and robbers;" they think that Jesus intended by these two terms to describe

all the eminent men of the Old Testament. Who then? the patriarchs and Moses, the psalmists and prophets? And that in a book in which the author makes Jesus say that to believe Moses is implicitly to believe in Him (ch. v. 46, 47), in which he himself declares that Isaiah in a vision beheld the glory of the Logos before His incarnation, and announced the unbelief of the people in regard to the Messiah (xii. 38, 41); in which the saying of a psalmist is quoted as a word of God which cannot be broken (x. 34, 35); in which Abraham is represented as rejoicing at the sight of the advent of Christ (viii. 56)! No; the language quoted applies simply to the actual rulers of the nation, who were now for a time in possession of power when Jesus was carrying through His work in Israel. This is clearly brought out by the verb in the present: *εἰσὶ, are*, and not: *were*, as the word is sometimes rather stupidly translated: "They that came before me *are* thieves and robbers."

Reuss alleges that in general not a word in this book connects the church in a more particular way with Judaism; and Hilgenfeld affirms that this book "breaks every bond between Christianity and its Jewish roots." And yet the latter of these critics cannot help admitting what the former vainly seeks to deny: that in the saying (i. 11): "He came to His own, and His own received Him not," the author really speaks of *the Jews*, considering them, he adds himself, "as the people of God or of the Logos."<sup>1</sup> No doubt he seeks afterwards to evade the consequences of this conclusive fact, but by means of subterfuges which do not deserve even to be mentioned. Besides, let the following facts be weighed: the temple of Jerusalem is *the house of the Father* of Jesus Christ (ii. 16); salvation is *of the Jews* (iv. 22); the sheep whom Jesus brings from the theocracy constitute the nucleus of the true Messianic flock (x. 16); the paschal lamb slain at Jerusalem prefigures the sacrifice of the Messiah even to this slight detail, that the bones of both must be preserved unbroken (xix. 36); the most striking testimony of the Father in favour of Jesus is that rendered to Him by the Scriptures of the Old Testament (v. 39). Finally, the author himself declares that he wrote his book to prove that Jesus is not

<sup>1</sup> *Einleitung*, p. 723.

only the *Son of God*, as He is made to say so often, but first of all *the Christ*, the Messiah promised to the Jews (xx. 30, 31).<sup>1</sup> The *Messianic* character of Jesus is expressly exhibited before His *divine* character. From one end to the other, our Gospel makes the appearance and work of Jesus the last evolution, the consummation of the Old Testament.

As to all the passages advanced by Hilgenfeld with the view of proving that Jesus denies to Judaism all true knowledge of God (vii. 28, viii. 19, xv. 21, xvi. 25, etc.), they prove nothing whatever; it is not the Jewish religion as such, it is the carnal and proud Jews who surround Him who are addressed with the often-repeated charge of not knowing God, the God who notwithstanding had revealed Himself to them. The prophets had all spoken in the same way, and distinguished from the mass of the people (*this people*, Isa. vi. 10) the elect, "the holy remnant" (vi. 13). Surely they were not on that account *anti-Jewish*.

The charge of *dualism*, brought against our Gospel particularly by Hilgenfeld, falls to the ground before this simple remark of Hase:<sup>2</sup> "Hereby a *moral* relation is falsely translated into a *metaphysical* relation." Must we see a dualistic notion in this saying of Jesus: "Unto *you* it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom; but *unto them* it is not given"? (Matt. xiii. 11), or in this other (Matt. xiii. 38): "The good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one"? or yet again in the contrast established by St. Paul, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15, between the *psychical* man who cannot understand spiritual things, and the *pneumatical* man who judges all things? Who ever dreamt, on account of such sayings, of imputing to Jesus and Paul the idea of two human *races*, the one proceeding from God, the other from the devil? Scripture teaches throughout that a holy power and an evil power act simultaneously on man's heart, and that he can give himself up freely to either. The more the choice is confirmed in the one direction or the other, the more does

<sup>1</sup> It is curious to observe how, in the quotation of this passage, our critics sometimes render themselves guilty of a thoughtless inaccuracy by rejecting the term: *the Christ*; comp. Sabatier, *Encyclop.* p. 184. There are other examples of the same.

<sup>2</sup> *Geschichte Jesu*, p. 44.

the man find himself given over to the moral current which bears him along, and thus it may happen that in the way of evil one may become incapable of any longer discerning and feeling the attraction of goodness. Such is the *incapacity* with which Jesus so often charges the Jews; it is their own doing; otherwise why reproach them with it, and to what purpose would it be to call them again to repentance and renewal by faith? This hardening is only relative, because it is voluntary; so Jesus declares most expressly in His profound explanation of Jewish unbelief (v. 44): "How can ye believe who take honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only?" If, therefore, they *cannot* believe, it is because they *will* not, because they have made themselves the slaves of an interest opposed to the advantages procured by faith, that of *human glory*. Such dualism is moral, the effect of will, not metaphysical or founded on nature. If he taught otherwise, the author would contradict himself; for has he not said in the prologue that "all things were made by the Logos, and without Him was not anything made that was made"? Hilgenfeld no doubt alleges that the existence of darkness (i. 5) not having been accounted for by anything, supposes the eternity of the evil principle; but after what precedes (the creation, the primitive state) it is quite natural to find there the appearance of evil in humanity, the fall as it is related after the creation in the account of Genesis, which the author follows as it were step by step.

Baur found in our Gospel the spirit of Gnostic *Docetism*, which, no less than dualism, would be in contradiction to the spirit of the Old Testament. But every one seems now to have abandoned this opinion, and we think we can leave with exegesis the care of demonstrating its groundlessness.<sup>1</sup> To support it one must torture the meaning of the word in which the whole writing is summed up: "The Word *was made flesh*," and reduce its force to this idea: The Word was *clothed* with a *bodily appearance*. The whole of the fourth Gospel rejects this mode of explaining the incarnation, which is also, up to a certain point, that which Reuss ascribes to it. A being who is wearied, who thirsts, whose soul is troubled at the approach of suffering, and who must be preserved by

<sup>1</sup> See on the passages vii. 10 and viii. 59.

extraordinary circumstances from the breaking of His bones; a being who rises again, and who says: "Touch me not," or also: "Reach hither thy finger," has certainly a real and material body, or the author does not know what he is saying.

Finally, in the opposition of our Gospel to *Chiliasm*, Hilgenfeld discovers a proof of its anti-Jewish spirit. "The whole Gospel," says this writer, "is so planned as to present the historical advent of Christ as His only appearance on the earth." But, in the first place, it is false to regard Chiliasm, the waiting for a final reign of Christ among mankind, as the evidence of a Judaizing tendency. Hase rightly says: "This was the faith of almost the whole church in the second century, and even till far on in the third." But, moreover, as the same author adds, "our Gospel, while turning away the expectations of men from all that flatters the senses, does not contradict this hope." We have seen this indeed; mention is made again and again of a glorious resurrection of *the body* which is promised to believers, and of a *last day*. But here, as in everything, John has set himself to bring out the spiritual preparation on which the Synoptics had not rested, rather than the external results, so vividly and strikingly described by the latter.

In this chapter we have developed only the points relating to the characterization of our Gospel, without touching on what enters into the question of its origin, of its composition by this author or that. In studying this latter subject we shall examine the origin of the notion and of the term *Logos*. What concerned us here was to establish the relation between our Gospel and the Old Testament. This relation we have found is twofold: on the one hand, the Johannine Gospel fully recognises the divinity of the Old Testament law and prophets; on the other, it sees in Christ's work and teaching a decided superiority over the old revelations. The God of Israel is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, but the patriarchal and prophetic revelations made Him known only imperfectly. It is the only-begotten Son, abiding in His bosom, who has come to reveal Him to us. "The law was given by Moses;" it prepared its faithful subjects to receive Jesus Christ, but it is only in Him that there is granted to the believer a divine "fulness of grace and truth" (i. 16-18).

In Israel the word had its *home*, early prepared on the earth; but the new birth by which a man obtains the life of God is only possible through faith in the Word manifest in the flesh (i. 12, 13).

The evangelist began by recognising in Jesus the promised Christ; thence he rose to the knowledge of the Son of God (i. 41, vi. 69, xvi. 28, 29). The words xx. 31 sum up this development.

### § 3. THE STYLE OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

It now remains for us to consider our Gospel from a literary point of view. Tholuck, in the introduction to his brief commentary, has well brought out the unique character of the evangelist's language. There is nothing analogous to it in the whole of sacred or profane literature. Childlike simplicity and transparent depth, a holy melancholy, and a vivacity not less holy; above all, the sweetness of a pure and gentle love,—such a style can only emanate, says Hase, from a life which rests in God, and in which all opposition between the present and the future, between the divine and the human, has entirely come to an end.

Let us seek to state precisely the peculiarities of this style.<sup>1</sup>

1. The vocabulary, in its sum total, is *poor*. It is, in general, the same expressions which are reproduced from one end to the other: *light* (φῶς), 23 times; *glory, to be glorified* (δόξα, δοξάζεσθαι), 42 times; *life, to live* (ζωή, ζῆν), 52 times; *to testify, testimony* (μαρτυρεῖν, μαρτυρία), 47 times; *to know* (γινώσκειν), 55 times; *world* (κόσμος), 78 times; *to believe* (πιστεύειν), 98 times; *work* (ἔργον), 23 times; *name* (ὄνομα), and *truth* (ἀληθεία), each 25 times; *sign* (σημεῖον), 17 times. Not only is the author not afraid to repeat these words in his writing, but he does so, and repeatedly, in sentences very closely resembling each other. At the first glance, this gives a character of monotony to his style; but only at the first glance. These expressions very soon make amends to the reader for their small number by their intrinsic wealth. They

<sup>1</sup> It is impossible to treat this subject with more acuteness and delicacy than Luthardt has done in the introduction to his commentary, 2d ed. 1875, 1st vol. pp. 14-62.



are not purely abstract notions, as is thought at first sight, but powerful spiritual realities, which may be studied under a multitude of aspects. If the author has only a few terms in his vocabulary, these terms may be compared to the pieces of gold with which great lords make payment. This feature is in keeping with the Eastern mind, which loves to lose itself in the infinite. The Old Testament already knows these so rich expressions, and their profound meaning: *light, darkness, truth, lie, glory, name, life, death.*

2. Certain favourite forms which, without exactly coming into collision with the laws of the Greek language, are nevertheless foreign to that language, and betray a Hebrew turn of thought. Thus, to designate the closest spiritual union, the use of the term *know*; to indicate moral dependence in regard to another being, the terms *be in* (*εἶναι ἐν*), *dwell in* (*μένειν ἐν*); to characterize the relation between a spiritual principle and the person in whom it becomes incarnate, the expression "*son*" (*the son of perdition, υἱὸς τῆς ἀπωλείας*); certain forms of purely Hebraic origin; to rejoice with joy (*χαρᾷ χαίρειν*), for ever (*εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*); finally, Hebrew words changed into Greek words, as in the formula: Amen, amen (*ἀμήν, ἀμήν*), which is only found in John.

3. The construction is *simple*; the ideas are rather placed in juxtaposition, than organically fitted in according to the arts of Greek construction. This distinctive feature is especially observable in some striking instances (i. 10, ii. 9, iii. 19, vi. 22-24, viii. 32, xvii. 25), where it would not have been difficult to compose a truly syntactic sentence, as a Greek writer would certainly have done. With this altogether Hebraic form are in like manner connected those frequent *anacolutha*, according to which the dominant idea is first of all placed at the beginning, by means of an absolute substantive, then repeated afterwards by a pronoun regularly construed; comp. vi. 39, vii. 38, xvii. 2. We know that such instances are still more frequent in the Apocalypse.

4. Notwithstanding the wealth of particles characteristic of the Greek language, the author makes use only of the *now* (*δέ*), more frequently of the *and* (*καί*), the *then* (*οὖν*), and the *as* (*ὡς* or *καθώς*). The *μέν*, so common in Greek, is somewhat rare (8 times) in his writing. The *and* and the *then*

replace the *Vav* conversive, which is almost the only Hebrew particle. The "*then*" brings out the providential necessity which, in the eyes of the author, unites the facts; the "*and*" is often employed in those cases where the particle of opposition, "*but*," might be expected; for instance: "The light shineth in darkness, *and* the darkness comprehended it not" (i. 5); or: "But now have they both seen *and* hated both me and my Father" (xv. 24); "We speak that we do know, *and* ye receive not our witness" (iii. 11). Luthardt acutely observes that such a form emanates from a mind which has overcome the first emotion of surprise or indignation produced by an unforeseen result, and which henceforth contemplates it with the calmness of indifference, or with a grief without bitterness. The use of the particle "*as*" (comp. for instance, ch. xvii.) is inspired by the necessity of drawing out the analogies; this is one of the most characteristic features of the mind which has created this style. This tendency goes even so far as to identify the earthly symbols of divine things with the latter: "I *am* the true vine;" "I *am* the good shepherd." The reality is not, in the eyes of him who thus writes, the earthly phenomenon, but the divine invisible fact, of which the sensible phenomenon is only the copy.

The author likewise very frequently employs the conjunction "*in order that*" (*iva*) in a weakened sense, and one which would seem to reduce it to the mere idea of the Latin *ita ut*: "*so that*;" but we think, with Meyer, that this is only in appearance. In those cases it is a *divine* object which is in question. And here again a feature of his turn of mind reveals itself: the teleological tendency which belongs to the spirit of sacred historiography. What, in the eyes of men, seems only a historical *result*, appears, from a loftier point of view, as the realization of the purpose of God.

5. A strange contrast has been observed in the narrative forms. On the one hand, something *slow*, diffuse, for instance, that form so frequent in the dialogues: "He answered and said;" or the repetition of proper names, John, Jesus, in those places where a Greek writer would have employed the pronoun (which also belongs to the Oriental stamp of style; Winer, *Grammar of New Testament*, sec. 65 [E. T. p. 752 ff.] );

or, again, that dragging construction, in virtue of which, after the statement of a fact, there comes a participle with its dependence, intended to throw a clearer light on one of the sides of the fact mentioned (comp. i. 12, iii. 13, v. 18, vi. 71, vii. 50); or, finally, instead of the finite verb, the heavier form of the verb *to be*, with the participle,—a form for which in certain cases there may be a reason, as in classic writers, but which is too often employed here not to be, as Thiersch observes, a reproduction of the analogous form peculiar to Aramaic;—and, on the other hand, the frequent appearance of short propositions, which break up the sentence as by an abrupt interruption: “Now Barabbas was a robber” (xviii. 40); “And it was night” (xiii. 30); “It was the tenth hour” (i. 40); “And on the same day was the Sabbath” (v. 9); “Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister” (xi. 5); “Jesus wept” (xi. 35). These are the jets of an internal fire which, by its sudden explosions, breaks the habitual calm of serene contemplation. Such really is the Semite; an exciting recollection is enough to drag him all at once from the calm majesty with which he usually thinks fit to surround himself.

6. In regard to the way in which the ideas are connected, we remark three characteristic features: Either, as we have seen, a brief, summary word is laid down as a centre, and around it there is unfolded a series of cycles, exhausting more and more, down to its most concrete applications, the primary idea. Or else it is a whole series of propositions without external connection, as in the first twenty verses of ch. xv., which follow one another by *asyndeton*; it seems as if each thought had all its force in itself, and deserved to be studied apart. Or else, finally, it is a connection of a particular nature, which results from the repetition, in the following proposition, of one of the principal words of the preceding.—for instance, x. 11, xiii. 20, xvii. 2, 3, 9, 11, 15, 16, and, above all, i. 1–5. Each proposition is thus like a ring linked with the preceding ring. The first two forms are repugnant to the Greek genius, the third is borrowed from the Old Testament (Ps. cxxi. and Gen. i. 1 ff.).

7. We have already pointed out the figurative character of the style; let us here add its profoundly *symbolical* character; thus the expressions *to draw*, *to teach*, in speaking of God; *see*,

*hear*, in speaking of the relation of Christ to the invisible world; *to hunger, thirst*, in a spiritual sense. Such is ever the Oriental and specially the Hebraic stamp.

8. We shall merely cite two features more: the *parallelism* of the propositions, which is known to be the distinctive sign of the poetical style among the Hebrews, and the *refrain*, which is in like manner employed by them. On all the occasions when the feeling of the speaker is elevated, or his soul greatly moved, by the contemplation of a lofty truth, to which he is bearing witness, these two forms appear in the Old Testament. It is exactly the same in John. For the parallelism, comp. iii. 11, v. 37, vi. 35, 55, 56, xii. 44, 45, xiii. 16, xv. 20, xvi. 28; for the refrain, iii. 15, 16, vi. 39, 40, 44; comp. Gen. i: "And the evening was," etc.; Amos i. and ii.; and elsewhere, especially in the Psalms.

What judgment, then, are we to pass on the style and literary character of this work? On the one hand, Renan tells us: "The style contains nothing that is Hebraic, Jewish, or Talmudic." And he is right, if by style we simply understand the wholly external forms of the language. There is not to be found in the fourth Gospel, as in certain parts of Luke (the first two chapters, from the 5th verse), for example, Hebraisms properly so called, imported just as they are into the Greek text, the *Vav* conversive, for example, nor, as in the translation of the LXX., Hebrew terms of expression clumsily Hellenized. On the other hand, a scholar, who has not less profoundly studied the spirit of the Semitic languages, Ewald, thus expresses himself: "No language can be, in respect of the spirit and breath which animate it, more purely Hebraic than that of our author." And he is equally right, if we consider the internal qualities of the style; the whole of our preceding study has sufficiently demonstrated this.

In John's language, the clothing alone is Greek, the body is Hebrew; or, as Luthardt says, there is a Hebrew soul in the Greek language of the evangelist. Keim has devoted to the style of the fourth Gospel a beautiful page; he sees in it "the ease and flexibility of the purest Hellenism adapted to the Hebrew mode of expression, with all its candour, simplicity, profusion of imagery, and sometimes also its

awkwardness. No research, no pathos: all in it is simple and flowing as in life; but everywhere, at the same time, acuteness, variety, progress, — features scarcely indicated, which form themselves into a picture in the mind of the reflective reader. Everywhere are mysteries which surround you and are on the watch for you; signs and symbols which could not be taken literally, if the author had not affirmed their reality; accidents and minute details, which are found to be, all at once, full of meaning; cordiality, calmness, harmony; in the midst of struggles, grief, zeal, anger, irony; finally, at the end, at the farewell meal, on the cross, and in the resurrection, peace, victory, grandeur.”

From this study of the Historiographic, Theological, and Literary characteristics of our Gospel, it appears:

1. That the narrative of the fourth Gospel, both as to its facts and discourses, bears the seal of historical truthfulness.

2. That, while indicating the progress of the Gospel beyond the religion of the Old Testament, it asserts the complete harmony of the two Testaments.

3. That the style, while Greek in its forms, is yet Hebrew in essence.

## BOOK THIRD.

### THE ORIGIN OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

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WE come to the principal subject of this investigation—the mode in which the work before us was composed. This subject embraces the four following points: 1st, The *epoch* at which this book was composed; 2d, The *author* to whom it is to be ascribed; 3d, The *place* where it was produced; 4th, The *aim* which presided over its composition.

The means at our disposal for resolving these different questions are, besides the indications contained in the book itself, the information we derive from the remains of the religious literature of the second century, from the canonical collections of the churches of that period, and from the facts of the primitive history of Christianity.

The remains of the literature of the second century are far from numerous; they are like the fragments of a wreck. They are, first, the letter of *Clement* of Rome to the church of Corinth, about the end of the first century, or at the beginning of the second, and the so-called Epistle of *Barnabas*, belonging to the same epoch. Thereafter come the letters of *Ignatius*, belonging to the first years of the second century, the whole or partial authenticity of which is admitted, and the letter of *Polycarp* to the Philippians, of a somewhat later date, but with the same reserve. Next come the *Pastor of Hermas*, the letter of *Diognetus*, and a homily which bears the name of the Second Epistle of *Clement*. The date of all these writings is variously fixed. We next come to the writings of the Apologists about the middle of the century: *Justin Martyr* with his three principal writings; *Tatian* his disciple; *Athenagoras* with his apology addressed to Marcus Aurelius;

*Theophilus* and his writing addressed to Autolyceus; *Melito* and *Apollinaris* with the few fragments which remain of their writings; finally, *Irenæus* of Lyons, *Clement* of Alexandria, and *Tertullian* of Carthage, who form the transition to the third century.

All these writers belong to the orthodox line. Parallel to them in the heretical line we find *Basilides* and his school; *Marcion*; then *Valentinus* with his four principal disciples, *Ptolemæus*, *Heracleon*, *Marcus*, and *Theodotus*, all authors of many works, some fragments of which we read in *Irenæus*, *Tertullian*, *Clement*, and *Hippolytus*; the work of the last mentioned recently recovered, and entitled *Philosophumena*, is particularly important. Let us mention, finally, the Judeo-Christian romance called *Clementine Homilies*.

The canonical collections of this period known to us are three in number: that of the Syriac church in the translation called *Peschito*; that of the Latin church in the translation which bears the name *Itala*, and the so-called *Fragment of Muratori*, which represents the canon of some Italian or African church towards the middle of the second century.

It is by means of all these documents, as well as of the indications contained in the Gospel itself, that we shall have to choose between the four following principal dates assigned by criticism at the present day to the composition of our Gospel.

## CHAPTER I

### THE TIME.

The traditional opinion, by ascribing this book to the Apostle John, thereby places its composition in the first century, towards the end of the apostolic age.

At the opposite extreme from this traditional date, is that for which Baur, the head of the Tübingen school, has given his voice. According to him, our work was composed between 160 and 170; he connects its origin particularly with the Paschal dispute which broke out at that period.

Baur's disciples gradually moved the date of composition backwards to the period 130-155: Volkmar, about 155;

Zeller and Scholten, 150; Hilgenfeld, 130-140; thus nearly a quarter of a century earlier than Baur thought. This arises from the fact that several of those writers connect the composition of our Gospel with the efflorescence of Gnosticism, about 140.

Many critics now make a new step backwards. Holtzmann considers our Gospel as contemporaneous with the Epistle of Barnabas; Schenkel speaks of 115-120; Nicolas, Renan, Weizsäcker, Reuss, Sabatier, all regard the fourth Gospel as a production of the school in which the Johannine traditions were preserved at Ephesus, and fix its composition in the first quarter of the second century. This was also Keim's opinion, when in 1867 he published his great work, *History of Jesus of Nazara*; he indicated as the date the years 100-120 (p. 146), and more precisely, from 110-115 (p. 155). Since then, in his popular editions, he has returned to Hilgenfeld's date (130).

Such are the four situations proposed which we must now submit to the test of facts. Shall we begin with the most advanced or with the earliest? In our previous edition, we adopted the former of these two courses. Here we have been charged with a defect of logic, since the facts which speak against the older dates are proofs, *à fortiori*, against the most recent, and yet are not mentioned till after the discussion of the latter has taken place.<sup>1</sup> True; but we have confidence enough in the logic of our readers to hope that they will themselves make this calculation, and that when, for example, in discussing the date 140, they come on a fact which demonstrates it to be too late, they will not fail to add this fact to those by which the more recent dates had already been refuted. We continue to prefer the chronologically retrogressive course, because, as Weizsäcker has been pleased to acknowledge, it gives more interest to the exposition of the facts. In the progressive order, every fact testifying in favour of an older date renders the discussion of the later dates superfluous.

#### 160-170.—BAUR.

Eusebius declared, in the first part of the fourth century (*H. E.* iii. 24), "that the Gospel according to John, known in

<sup>1</sup> Review in the *Chrétien évangélique*, by Professor Ch. Porret.



all churches which are under heaven, should be admitted into the first rank," and he placed it accordingly among the writings which he calls *Homologoumena*, that is to say, universally accepted by the churches and their teachers. When he thus spoke, he had before him the entire literature of the preceding centuries collected in the libraries of his predecessor Pamphilus at Cæsarea, and of the bishop Alexander at Jerusalem. His declaration proves that, in studying those writings, he had found no blank in the testimonies proving the use of our Gospel by the Fathers and the churches of the first three centuries. It must be remembered here with what precision and frankness Eusebius mentions the slightest traces of vacillation of opinion in regard to the biblical books,—for instance, he does not fail to indicate the omission of any quotation from the Epistle to the Hebrews in the great work of Irenæus (an omission which we can still prove ourselves), though this Epistle takes rank, according to him, among the fourteen Epistles of St. Paul. Suppose he had found in the patristic literature, to the date of 160–170, a complete blank with regard to the existence and use of our Gospel, could he at all in good faith have expressed himself as he does in the passage quoted?

Origen, about 220, includes our Gospel in the number of the four "which alone are received without dispute in the church of God which is under heaven" (in Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 25). Would this place have been so unanimously accorded to it if it had only been known from 170?

No doubt, Eusebius and Origen are not the bearers of the tradition; but they are the founders of criticism who grouped the notices of the preceding centuries, and made out from them the foregoing result.

Clement of Alexandria, the master of Origen, is already in a somewhat different position; he drew his information from the presbyters, the series of whom goes back to the apostles (*ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνέκαθεν πρεσβυτέρων*). In thus speaking, he has especially in view Pantæus, a missionary in India, and who died in 189. The following is the information which reached him through those venerable witnesses: "John received the first three Gospels, and observing that they comprised the bodily things [the external facts] in the life of

the Lord, he, at the instance of eminent men in the church, wrote a spiritual Gospel" (Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 14). Could Clement, who wrote about 190, have thus spoken of a work which had only been from twenty to twenty-five years in existence? He must himself have invented the tradition. Let us add that in another passage (*Strom.* iii. p. 465), when, quoting a saying of Jesus contained in a non-canonical Gospel called the Gospel of the Egyptians, he makes this reservation: "That we do not find this saying *in the four Gospels which have been transmitted to us*" (ἐν τοῖς παραδεδομένοις ἡμῶν τέτταρσιν εὐαγγελίοις). The contrast which Clement lays down here clearly shows that from the point of view of tradition, there was an entire difference between the Gospel of John and a Gospel such as that of the Egyptians.

Tertullian, born about 160, brings forward numerous quotations from our Gospel as forming an authority throughout the whole church. Would that be possible if this Father and this book were born in the same year, the one in Asia, the other in Africa? Let us observe that he quotes it from a Latin translation, of which he says (*Adv. Prax.*): "It is in use among ours" (*In usu est nostrorum*). And not only was it in use and so respected, that Tertullian did not feel himself at liberty to deviate from it even when he does not agree with it,<sup>1</sup> but, moreover, this Latin translation had already replaced another and older one, of which Tertullian says (*De Monogam.* c. 11): "That it has fallen into disuse" (*In usum exiit*). And all this could have taken place between this Father's birth and the time when he wrote!

Irenæus wrote his great work, *Against Heresies*, in Gaul about 185. In it he quotes our Gospel more than sixty times, with the entire conviction of its apostolic origin. He who does so was born in Asia Minor about the year 130, and passed his youth there at the school of Polycarp, the friend and disciple of St. John. How could he, without bad faith, date from the apostolic age a Gospel which had not been in existence more than 15–20 years at the time he wrote, and of which he had never heard in the churches where he had passed his youth, and which must have been the cradle of the

<sup>1</sup> Rönseh, *Das Sprachidiom der wchristlichen Itala und der katholischen Vulgata*, 1869, pp. 2–4.

work in question?—In 177, Irenæus composed a letter on the part of *the churches of Vienne and Lyons* to those of Asia and Phrygia, for the purpose of relating to them the persecution to which they had recently been subjected under Marcus Aurelius. This letter has been preserved to us by Eusebius (*H. E.* v. 1). It says, speaking of one of the martyrs: “Having the Paraclete within him,” and in another passage: “Thus were fulfilled the words spoken by our Lord, that ‘the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service.’” These are two quotations from John (xiv. 26 and xvi. 2). Thus, in Gaul, ten years after the date assigned to it by Baur, our Gospel was quoted as a writing possessing canonical authority!

About 180, Theophilus, bishop of Antioch, addressed to his heathen friend Autolytus an apology for Christianity. He quotes in it John’s prologue in these words (ii. 22): “That is what we learn from the *sacred writings*, and from all men animated by the Spirit, *amongst whom John says*” (there follows John i. 1). Is it to be supposed that fifteen to twenty years only after the appearance of our Gospel, the Bishop of Antioch spoke of it thus? He ranked it so thoroughly with the three others, received everywhere from the first, that he had published a *Harmony of the Gospels*, which Jerome describes to us (*De Vir.* 25) as “collecting into one single writing the words of the four Gospels” (*Quatuor evangeliorum in unum opus dicta compingens*). True, the adversaries of the authenticity make capital of the circumstance, that this is the first time that the author of our Gospel is designated by name. But what is proved by a circumstance so purely accidental? Irenæus is the first ecclesiastical writer who names St. Paul as the author of the Epistle to the Romans. Must we conclude from this that the conviction of the apostolic origin of the Epistle to the Romans was only then in course of formation in the consciousness of the church? The habit of quoting the author by name was as unusual up to that time as that of quoting textually.

Apollinaris, Bishop of Hierapolis, controverted, about 170, the opinion of those who, on the authority of Matthew’s Gospel, celebrated the Christian Passover on the evening of the 14th Nisan, at the same time that the Jews ate the

Paschal feast, as if Jesus had eaten the Passover on that evening with His disciples, and had not been crucified till the next day. To this the answer of Apollinaris was twofold:<sup>1</sup> 1. That this view "was in contradiction to the law," for, according to the law, the Paschal lamb was slain on the 14th, not the 15th,—on that day, consequently, Christ must have died; 2. That if this view were well founded, "the Gospels would contradict each other." This second remark can only refer to the narrative of John's Gospel, which places the death of Jesus on the 14th, not on the 15th, as the Synoptics seem to do. It was thus that in 170 Apollinaris relied on the fourth Gospel as a perfectly recognised authority, even by his adversaries, and it was at that same period that, according to Baur, it began to circulate as a wholly new work! This critic, no doubt, has sought to wrest this passage from its natural meaning, but the attempt has been unanimously set aside. The same Apollinaris, moreover, quotes the fourth Gospel in another passage. He calls Jesus, "He whose blessed side was pierced, and who poured forth from His side water and blood, the Word and the Spirit;"<sup>2</sup> comp. John xix. 34.

At the same period Melito, bishop of Sardis, also wrote on the same subject. Otto (in the *Corpus apologet.*, book ix.) published a fragment of this Father, in which it is said that "Jesus being, at the same time, perfect God and man, proved His divinity by His miracles *in the three years which followed His baptism, and His humanity during the thirty years which preceded it.*" The indication of the three years, as the duration of the ministry of Jesus, could only proceed from the Johannine narrative.

About the same time (in 176) Athenagoras thus expresses himself in his apology addressed to the Emperor Marcus Aurelius: "The Son of God," he says, "is the Word of the Father. By Him were all things made." Here is an undeniable quotation; Volkmar himself admits it.

The same use of the fourth Gospel by the *heretics* of this period, particularly by the disciples of Valentinus. One of

<sup>1</sup> *Chron. Paschale*, ed. Dindorf, i. p. 14: ὅθεν ἀσύμφωνός τε νόμος ἢ νόμοις αὐτῶν καὶ στασιάζειν δοκεῖ κατ' αὐτοὺς τὰ εὐαγγέλια.

<sup>2</sup> *Chron. Paschale*, p. 14.

them, Ptolemæus (in a fragment preserved by Irenæus), quoted the passage of John xii. 27 in these terms: "Then Jesus said, And what shall I say? I know not." He maintained (also according to Irenæus) that the Apostle John himself in the beginning of his Gospel taught the existence of the first ogdoad (the foundation of the doctrine of Valentinus). Irenæus and Epiphanius have preserved to us his letter to Flora, in which he quotes John i. 3 in these words: "The apostle declares that the creation of the world belongs to the Saviour, seeing that all things were made by Him, and that without Him was not anything made." In the fragments of Theodotus, which have been preserved to us in the works of Clement of Alexandria, are found seventy-eight quotations from the New Testament, of which twenty-six are taken from John's Gospel.<sup>1</sup> The most important fact to cite here is the commentary which Heracleon composed on the fourth Gospel. At what date? About the year 200, says Volkmar; but Origen, who refuted this work, calls its author an *acquaintance* of Valentinus (*Ὁὐαλεντίνου γνώριμος*); now the latter taught between 140 and 160. Yes, answers Volkmar, but Heracleon is never once mentioned by Irenæus, which proves that he lived after 185, the date at which the latter wrote against the heretics of his time. This assertion, as Tischendorf has shown, is an error of fact simply arising from the omission of the name of Heracleon from the indices of names given in the editions of Massuet and Stieren at the end of the work of Irenæus. In fact, this Father expressly says, ii. 4: "And all the other æons of Ptolemæus and Heracleon." The latter therefore lived and wrote before Irenæus, at the latest about 170 or even 160. And what did he write? A consecutive commentary on the Gospel of John. This fact implies that our fourth Gospel enjoyed long established and general authority in the church at that period. For a book is not commented on unless to a certain extent it forms a law for every one. How long, then, must it have been since that work was composed!—Besides, Irenæus (iii. 12, 12) attests that the Valentinians "used in full the Gospel of John (*eo quod est secundum Johannem plenissime utentes*)."

The *Clementine Homilies*, which are placed about the year

<sup>1</sup> Holstede de Groot, *Basilides*, p. 102.

160,<sup>1</sup> speak as follows: "This is why the true prophet said, I am the door of life (ἡ πύλη τῆς ζωῆς); he who enters by me enters into life . . . My sheep hear my voice (τὰ ἐμὰ πρόβατα ἀκούει τῆς ἐμῆς φωνῆς)" (*Hom. Clem.* iii. 52). Here is an evident quotation from John x. 3, 9, 27; but it was not enough to bring Baur, Scholten, Volkmar, Hilgenfeld, etc., to admit the use of the Johannine Gospel by the fiery Judaizing writer who composed this pamphlet against the doctrine and person of St. Paul. There was needed the discovery made by Dressel in 1853 of the previously unknown conclusion of that book to cut short all critical subterfuges. In the 19th homily, ch. 22, there is found this indisputable quotation from the history of the man who was born blind (John ix.). "It is for this reason also that our Lord replied to those who questioned Him, and who asked Him: Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind? Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that by him the power of God should be made manifest, curing the faults of ignorance." The slight modification which the author of the *Homilies* makes in the last words of this Johannine saying, is in connection with the particular idea which he seeks to bring out in this passage. If Volkmar finds here a reason for still holding out notwithstanding such a quotation, Hilgenfeld, on the contrary, frankly says (*Einl.* p. 734): "John's Gospel is made use of without scruple, even by the opponents of the divinity of Christ, such as the author of the *Clementines*." What authority, then, should belong to a book which was thus used by the very opponents of the teaching contained in it! Such was the state of things in 160, and Baur attempts to make out that this work was composed between 160 and 170!

A pagan philosopher, Celsus, wrote a book, entitled *The True Doctrine* (λόγος ἀληθῆς), to combat Christianity; he wished, he said, "to slay the Christians with their own sword,"—that is to say, to refute Christianity by the writings of the disciples of its founder. He therefore set out in his work from the universally acknowledged authenticity of our Gospels. Did he also make use of the fourth Gospel for this purpose? Certainly; he recalls the passage in John

<sup>1</sup> Keim himself, vol. i. p. 187.

ii. 18, where the Jews in the temple asked Jesus to prove, by some sign, that He was the Son of God (John ii. 18). He compares the water and the blood, issuing from the body of Jesus on the cross (John xix. 34), to the sacred blood which the mythological accounts made to flow from the body of the blessed gods. He speaks of the appearance to Mary Magdalene (that half-witted woman [*πάρουιστρος*]) beside the sepulchre. He advances this contradiction between our Gospel narratives, that, according to some (*οἱ μὲν*), two angels appeared at the tomb of Jesus; according to others (*οἱ δέ*), on the contrary, only one. And, in fact, Matthew and Mark speak only of one angel. Luke and John mention two. The use of John in this passage, which Zeller still dared to deny, is now acknowledged by Volkmar himself; but the avowal, as usual, ends in an evasion: "And who tells us that Celsus wrote before the beginning of the third century?" And by means of a passage of Origen, which is incorrectly rendered, it is sought to prove that this Father spoke of Celsus as a contemporary of his own.<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf has done justice on this procedure. It was enough for him to quote Origen correctly to show that he said nothing of the kind. He has, over and above, quoted another passage from this Father, in which he expressly describes Celsus as "a man already dead, and that long since" (*ἤδη καὶ πάλαι νεκροῦ*).<sup>2</sup> If we admit the latest date of the work of Celsus, that of Keim (in 178), it still remains an impossibility that a pagan should have admitted as a composition of one of the disciples of Jesus a writing published only eight years before. And what if Celsus lived much earlier?

There remain to us three documents of the canonical collections of apostolical writings already existing in the churches of the second century.—In Syria, there was read about the end of this century a translation of the New Testament in Syriac, and our fourth Gospel certainly formed part of it, for the only books of the New Testament wanting in this collection were, according to undoubted statements, four of the catholic Epistles and the Apocalypse. It even appears from several fragments in the Syriac tongue,

<sup>1</sup> *Ursprung unserer Evangelien*, p. 80.

<sup>2</sup> *Wann wurden unsere Evangelien verfasst*, pp. 73 and 74.

published by Cureton, that this translation called *Peschito*, and which included the Old Testament as well as the New, had already been preceded by a still older one.<sup>1</sup>—At the same time, at the opposite extremity of the church, in Italy, Gaul, and the province of Africa, there already existed the Latin translation of which we have spoken in connection with Tertullian. In this canonical collection, which embraced also the Old Testament, the writings of the New Testament seem to have been divided into five groups: (1) the body of the four Gospels, *the evangelic instrument* (or case); then the *apostolic instruments*, to wit: (2) that of the Acts; (3) that of Paul; (4) that of John (Apocalypse and 1st John); (5) a group of disputed writings (1 Peter, Hebrews, Jude). Is it possible to suppose that in the last quarter of the second century, a writing which had not appeared until between 160 and 170 had already been translated into Syriac and Latin, and had gained canonical dignity in countries which formed, so to speak, the antipodes of the church?

Then comes, between 160 and 170, the famous document recovered in the last century by Muratori in the library of Milan, and which bears the name of that savant. It is a treatise on the writings which purport to have been publicly used in the churches. The author shows the custom of the church of Italy or Africa to which he belongs. The Gospel of John is mentioned as the fourth. The author gives some details respecting the way in which it was composed by the Apostle John, and states some of its peculiarities. And this was written in Italy or Africa at the very date which Baur assigns to the composition of the Gospel!

After the enumeration of these facts, no one will be surprised that the so-called *critical* school has judged it impossible to hold the position chosen by the master. It has made a retreat along its whole line, and sought a more tenable situation by moving backwards in the second century. Before following it, let us make it clear that between 160 and 170 the fourth Gospel existed in Greek, Latin, and Syriac, and that it was read publicly in all the churches, from Mesopotamia to Gaul. Such facts imply, not two or three

<sup>1</sup> *Remains of a very Ancient Recension*, etc. London 1853.



decades of years only, but existence at least for half a century.

130-155.—VOLKMAR, 155; ZELLER, SCHOLTEN, 150; HILGENFELD, 130-140; KEIM (SINCE 1875), 130.

Instead of the fifty years, which we claim to explain the facts we have just mentioned, we are allowed only from twenty to thirty. Let us see whether this concession will suffice to account for the facts which we have yet to mention. For the examination of this new date the guiding documents at our disposal are Justin Martyr, Montanism, and the two great Gnostic systems of Valentinus and Marcion.

Justin, born in Samaria, had traversed the East, then he came to Rome to found a school of Christian instruction, about 140. There remain to us three works of his generally acknowledged: the *great* and the *small Apology*, which, since the time of Volkmar's works, are usually regarded as dating, the former from the year 147, the latter, which is a supplement of the former, from one of the subsequent years; they are addressed to the Emperor and the senate. The third writing is the *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*; it is the account of a public discussion held at Ephesus. It is a little posterior to the *Apologies*. Justin perished in 166.

In these three writings the author quotes seventeen times, as the source of the facts of the history of Jesus stated by him, writings entitled: *Memoirs of the Apostles* (*ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν ἀποστόλων*),<sup>1</sup> and the decisive question on the subject before us will be whether the fourth Gospel was among the number of the writings comprised in this collection.

To understand the importance of the question here put, it must be remembered that the writings quoted by Justin as his authorities were not merely his private property. According to the famous passage of the first *Apology* (i. 67), in which Justin describes the worship of the Christians in the first half of the second century, the *Memoirs of the apostles* were read every Sunday in the public assemblies of the

<sup>1</sup> *Apol.* i. 33, 66, 67; *Dial.* 88, 100, 101, 102, 103 (twice), 104, 105 (three times), 106 (three times).

church, along with the books of the prophets;<sup>1</sup> and it is quite evident that this description does not apply only, in the writer's intention, to the worship celebrated by the Church of Rome, but to that of Christendom in general; this appears from the expressions used by him: "*All who live in the towns and in the country meet together in one place.*" Justin had visited Asia Minor and Egypt; he knew therefore how the worship was celebrated as well in the East as in the West. Besides, he defended not only the Christians of Rome, but the church in general. Consequently what he says in this passage of the celebration of public worship, and in many others of that of baptism (*Apol.* i. 61) and of the Holy Supper (*Apol.* i. 66), must be applied to all Christendom of that period.

What, then, were those apostolical Memoirs, venerated by the churches of the second century to the extent of being publicly read in their worship equally with the book which, according to the example of Jesus and the apostles, the church regarded as the divine Word, the Old Testament? Justin does not state the particular titles of those writings, it is our task to determine them.

1. First of all, let us state a probability which rises almost to a certainty. We have seen above that Irenæus, who wrote about thirty years after Justin (180-185), spoke, in Gaul, of our four canonical Gospels as the only ones received in the church. This usage was already so fixed in his time that he calls our gospel collection the *quadriform Gospel* (*τετράμορφον εὐαγγέλιον*), and that he compares these four writings to the four cherubim of the Old Testament and the four quarters of the horizon. They form in his view an indivisible unity. At the same time nearly, Clement, in Egypt, as we have seen, likewise calls our Gospels "*the four* which alone have been transmitted to us" (p. 187). Theophilus, in Syria, at the same period, composes a Harmony of the four narratives (p. 188). Finally, a little earlier still (about 160), the Fragment of Muratori, enumerating the Gospels which are used in public reading, speaks thus: "*Thirdly, the Book of*

<sup>1</sup> "On the day called that of the Sun, all those who dwell in the towns and in the country meet together, and read as much as time permits of the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets; thereafter" . . .

the Gospel according to Luke . . . ; *fourthly*, the Gospel of John" . . . Then, without saying more of writings of this kind, he passes to the Acts and the Epistles. Is it conceivable that the apostolical Memoirs, which Justin tells us were generally read in Christian worship twenty to thirty years before, were *different writings* from those which these Fathers and the churches themselves thus distinguished from all other writings of the same kind, or that at least these formed no part of the collection to which the martyr already ascribed a place in worship side by side with the prophetic writings of the Old Testament? To make such a thing possible, there must have been wrought during this short space of time a revolution in Christian worship, a substitution of sacred writings for sacred writings of which history offers not the slightest trace, and which is rendered absolutely impossible by the universality and publicity of the use of the Memoirs of which Justin speaks, and the stability of apostolic usages at that period. Fathers, like Irenæus, were on the watch, and would not have allowed a change of those documents, from which the Church drew her knowledge of the life of Jesus, to be carried out without remarking it.

2. A special fact establishes a still more direct link between Justin on the one hand, and the Fathers of a somewhat later date (Irenæus, etc.) on the other. Justin had a disciple named Tatian, who before Theophilus had already composed a work similar to his. Eusebius tells us (*H. E.* iv. 19) that this book was entitled *Diatessaron*—that is to say, *composed by means of the four*.<sup>1</sup> Now, according to the report of the Syrian bishop Bar-Salibi (twelfth century), who knew this work, for he quotes it in his commentary on the Gospels, this book began with these words of John's prologue (i. 1): "In the beginning was the Word." According to the same author, the well-known deacon of Edessa, Ephrem (who died in 373), had composed a commentary on this same work of Tatian of which an Armenian translation has recently been discovered and published (Venice 1876). This translation confirms all the Fathers have said regarding the Harmony of Tatian. In a book of an apocryphal character, the *Doctrine of Addæus* (of the middle of the third century), where the

<sup>1</sup> See also Epiphanius, *Hæc.* xlvi. 1. and Theodoret. *Hæc. Fab.* i. 20.

history of the establishment of Christianity at Edessa is related, it is said: "The people assemble for the service of prayer and for [the reading of] the Old Testament and [for that of the] New in the *Diatessaron*."<sup>1</sup> This writing of Tatian was therefore widely spread in the East, for it was read there even in public worship in room and place of the four Gospels. This is confirmed by the report of the Bishop of Cyrus, in Cilicia, Theodoret (about 420). He relates "that he had found two hundred copies of Tatian's book in the churches of his diocese, and that he had substituted for that, on some points, heterodox harmony, *the Gospels of the four evangelists* (τὰ τῶν τεττάρων εὐαγγελιστῶν ἀντεισηγήρατον εὐαγγέλια)," thus our four separate Gospels, those which Tatian had combined in one. If we remember the relation in which Tatian stood to Justin, the identity of the apostolical Memoirs of the master with the *four* combined in one by the disciple will not admit of doubt. Besides, in his *Discourse to the Greeks*, Tatian himself quotes Matthew, Luke, and John; of the last, i. 3: "All things were made by Him (the Logos);" iv. 24: "God is a Spirit;" finally, i. 5 with this formula indicating a sacred authority: "This is what is said (τοῦτο ἐστὶ τὸ εἰρημένον): The darkness comprehended not the light; . . . now the light of God is the Word."

3. But why, if it is so, does Justin designate these books by the unusual name of *Memoirs*, instead of simply calling them Gospels? Because he is addressing, not Christians, but the Emperor and the senate, who would not have understood the Christian name Gospels, a designation unexampled in profane literature. Every one, on the contrary, knew the ἀπομνημονεύματα (*Memoirs*) of Xenophon. To this customary designation Justin has recourse, exactly as he substitutes for the Christian terms *baptism* and *Sabbath* those of *bath* and *Sunday*. Finally, Justin himself, in one of the passages in which he quotes the *Memoirs* (*Apol.* i. 4. 66), expressly

<sup>1</sup> In the catena of Victor of Capua (545), the work of Tatian is called *Diapente*, "composed by means of the five." But immediately before the same author has described it as *num ex quatuor*. There is therefore here an oversight of the author, or perhaps an allusion to the quotations of Justin foreign to our four Gospels, which seemed to him to imply the use of a fifth source.

adds: "*which are composed by the apostles and called Gospels* (*ἃ καλεῖται εὐαγγέλια*);" and in another passage (*Dial.* 103) he thus expresses himself: "*The Memoirs which I say were composed by the apostles and by those who accompanied them,*" which, whatever some critics may say, can only apply to our four Gospels, two of which were composed by apostles and two by *apostolic helpers*. All the subtleties of critics will not change the evidence in the least.

4. But, finally, let us consult the quotations taken by Justin from the Memoirs themselves. Nobody any longer denies the use of the three Synoptics by this Father. In 1848, Zeller admitted the use of Luke; in 1850, Hilgenfeld that of Matthew; then in 1854, that of Mark; Credner in 1860, Volkmar in 1866, and Scholten in 1867, acknowledged that of the three. There remains the Gospel of John. Keim already wrote in 1867 (vol. i. p. 138): "It is easy to show that the Martyr had before his eyes a whole series of Johannine passages;" and Hilgenfeld, in his *Introduction*, in 1875 (p. 734) says: "We find the first trace of John's Gospel in Justin Martyr." Mangold thus sums up, in this very year, the result of all the discussions which have recently taken place on this point: "That Justin knew and used the fourth Gospel is certain, and it is also undoubted that he makes use of it as a writing proceeding from the Apostle John."<sup>1</sup> And, in fact, John's doctrine of the Logos appears in all Justin's writings; it is their fundamental characteristic. Let us quote a single example from each of his writings: "His Son, the only one who may be properly called Son, the Logos who was begotten with Him before created things, when He created all things by Him . . . is called Christ" (*Apol.* ii. 6). "The first power, after God, the Father and the Master of all, is the Son, the Word, who, having been made flesh in a certain way, became man (*ὅς τίνα τρόπον σαρκοποιηθεὶς ἄνθρωπος γέγονεν*)" (*Apol.* i. 32). *Dial.* c. 105: "Because He was the only Son of the Father of all things (*μονογενῆς ὅτι ἦν τῷ πατρὶ τῶν ὅλων*)." The relation between Justin and John on this fundamental point is so evident that Volkmar has been forced in the end to admit it; but he gets out of it by an expedient which is not a bad

<sup>1</sup> *Gött. gelehrte Anzeigen*, 5 und 12 Jan. 1881

imitation of a clown's trick. According to him, it was not Justin who copied John; it was pseudo-John who, writing about 155, copied Justin, whose writings were in circulation from 147–150. Justin gave the first outlines of the theory of the Logos; the false John developed and perfected it. "But," says Keim in answer to this supposition, "who can seriously think of making the gifted and original author of the fourth Gospel the disciple of a mind so mediocre, dependent, given to compilation, poor in style, as the Martyr?" We shall say: The theology of the former is the simple expression of his religious consciousness of the immediate impression produced by the person of Jesus; while, as Weizsäcker has shown,<sup>1</sup> the characteristic feature of Justin is to serve as a connecting link between Christian thought, and speculations current outside of Christianity in his day. Justin informs us that the Logos proceeds from the Father, as one fire is kindled by another, without the latter being thereby diminished; he explains to us that He differs from the Father *in number* but not in *thought*, etc. etc. How dare it be affirmed that Justin surpasses John in simplicity? The truth is, that John is the witness and Justin the theologian. John's prologue—there only is there any question of the Logos in our Gospel—is the primordial revelation in its simple and apostolical form; Justin's writings represent the first effort to appropriate this revelation rationally.

Moreover, let us hear Justin himself, *Dial.* 105: "I have previously shown that He was the only Son of the Father of all things, His Logos and His power, born of Him and afterwards made man by means of the Virgin, *as we have learned from the Memoirs.*" Justin himself here tells us from what source he drew his doctrine of the Logos; it was from his apostolical Memoirs. Hilgenfeld has alleged that Justin appealed to the Memoirs only for the second of the two facts mentioned in this passage: the miraculous birth; but the two facts mentioned depend equally through one and the same conjunction (*ὅτι, that*) on the verbal ideas: *I have shown*, and *as we have learned*. Besides, the principal notion, according to the whole context, is that of the *only Son* (*μονογενής*) which belongs to the former of the two dependent

<sup>1</sup> *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* 1867.

propositions.<sup>1</sup> Our conclusion is expressly confirmed by what Justin says (*Dial.* 48): he speaks of certain Christians who were not agreed with him on this point, and he declares that if he does not think like them, it is not merely because they form only a minority in the church, but because it is not by human teachings that we have been led to believe [thus] in Christ, but by the teachings of the holy prophets and those of Christ Himself (“*τοῖς διὰ τῶν προφητῶν κηρυχθείσι καὶ δι’ αὐτοῦ διδαχθείσι*”). Now, where else than in the Gospel of John can we find the teachings of Christ regarding His pre-existence? Comp. also *Apol.* i. 46: “That Christ is God’s first-begotten, being the Logos of whom the whole human race is made partaker, this is *what has been taught us* (*ἐδιδάχθημεν*)” It is evident from the *us*, which applies to Christians in general, and from the term *taught*, that Justin was in no wise the author of the doctrine of the incarnation of the Logos, but that in calling Jesus by this name he felt himself carried by the great current of doctrine given in the church, and the source of which must necessarily be found in the writings, or at least in one of the apostolical writings of which he made use.

5. The use of our Gospel by Justin appears, finally, from several particular quotations. *Dial.* 88: “And as men thought that he (John the Baptist) was the Christ, he himself cried: ‘I am not the Christ, but the voice of him that crieth (*οὐκ εἰμὶ ὁ Χριστὸς, ἀλλὰ φωνὴ βοῶντος*).’” Comp. John i. 20 and 23. Hilgenfeld admits this quotation.—*Dial.* 69, Justin says that Jesus healed the blind *from their birth* (*τοὺς ἐκ γενετῆς*); the Gospel of John alone (ix. 1) ascribes to Him a cure of this kind; the same expression *ἐκ γενετῆς* is used by John.—Another interesting passage occurs, *Dial.* 88: “The apostles wrote that when Jesus went up from the water, the Holy Spirit shone above Him like a dove.” It is the only case in which Justin uses the expression: *the apostles wrote*. It evidently applies to the two Gospels of Matthew and *John*.—In *Dial.* 29, Justin demonstrates that Christians

<sup>1</sup> This has been clearly brought out by Mr. Drummond, *Theological Review* (vol. xiv. pp. 178-182; comp. Ezra Abbot, p. 43), who refers to the fact that this whole explanation is occasioned by the term *μοιολογῆς* in Ps. xxii. which Justin is here explaining.

are no longer subject to the Jewish Sabbath, and he does so by appealing to the fact that God governs the world on that day as well as on others. In c. 27 he also remarks the fact that children are circumcised on the eighth day, though it should fall on a Sabbath day (*κὰν ἡ ἡμέρα τῶν σαββάτων*). Here it is easy to see the connection with John v. 17 and vii. 22, 23.—*Apol.* i. 52, Justin quotes the saying of Zech. xii. 10: "They will look on Him whom they have pierced (*καὶ τότε ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν*)." In this form it differs both from the words of the Hebrew text ("they will look on *me* whom" . . .) and from that of the LXX.: *καὶ ἐπιβλέψονται πρὸς με ἀνθ' ὃν κατωρχήσαντο*: "They will look on me in return for the dishonour they have done me." Now we read this same passage in the fourth Gospel exactly in the form in which Justin quotes it (John xix.): *ὄψονται εἰς ὃν ἐξεκέντησαν*. Many think, no doubt, that Justin may have taken this passage from the Book of Revelation, where it is also quoted, i. 7: "And every eye shall see Him, and they also that pierced Him." But Justin's text is more nearly one with that of the Gospel. Other reasons, it is true, are alleged, such as the possibility of an ancient variant in the copies of the LXX.;<sup>1</sup> we shall not therefore insist much on this fact.

The following, on the contrary, is an important and even decisive passage. In *Apol.* i. 61, Justin relates to the senate that when a man has been convinced of the truth of the Gospel, "he is led to a place where there is water, to be regenerated like the believers who preceded him; and that he is bathed in water in the name of God the Father and Lord of all things, and of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit; for Christ said: '*Except ye be born anew (ἀν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῆτε), ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*' Now," Justin continues, "it is evident to every one that it is impossible that those who are once born can re-enter into the womb of those who gave birth to them." The connection with John iii. 3-5 is manifest; it appears especially from the last words, which reproduce, without any sort of necessity and in the most awkward manner, the meaning of the objection of Nicodemus in John's narrative (ver. 4). Many, however, deny

<sup>1</sup> See Abbot himself, p. 46.



that Justin wrote thus under the influence of John's narrative. They allege these two differences: instead of the expression used by John, ἀνωθεν γεννηθῆναι (to be born from above, or anew), Justin says: ἀναγεννηθῆναι (to be born again); then, for the expression, *kingdom of God*, he substitutes *kingdom of heaven*. But these two changes have not the importance which some critics ascribe to them. As to the former, Abbot proves that it occurs in Irenæus, Eusebius, Athanasius, Basil, Ephrem, Chrysostom, Cyril of Al., Anastasius Sin., as well as in most of the Latin authorities (*renasci*), who all used the Gospel of John, and nevertheless quote this passage like Justin. This is undoubtedly because the term ἀνωθεν γεννηθῆναι was obscure and matter of discussion, and because it is read only this once in Scripture, while the other is clearer and more common (1 Pet. i. 3, 23, ii. 2). As to the expression, *kingdom of heaven*, it is evidently taken by Justin from the Gospel of Matthew, which, according to a host of testimonies, was by far the most read in the earliest times of the Church, and in which this term is habitually employed. Abbot demonstrates that this same change occurs in the quotation of the passage by the Greek and Latin Fathers, all of whom had John in their hands. But a graver objection is made, that this same saying of Jesus is found as a quotation in the *Clementine Homilies* (ix. 26), exactly with the same changes as in Justin, which seems to prove that the two authors took it from a common source other than John, for example, the Gospel to the Hebrews. Here is the passage from the *Clementines*, the reader will judge for himself: "This is what the true prophet declared unto us with an oath: Verily I say unto you, Unless ye are born again of living water (ἐὰν μὴ ἀναγεννηθῆτε ἕδατι ζῶντι), in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." It is clear that, as Abbot says, the difference between Justin and the *Clementines* is much greater than that between these two writings and John. This is because the text of the *Clementines* is influenced, not only like that of Justin, by Matt. xviii. 3, but especially by Matt. xxviii. 19 (the formula of baptism).<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The author of the *Recognitions* quotes thus: "*Amen dico vobis, nisi quis denuo renatus fuerit ex aqua, non introibit in regna colorum.*" He quotes, combining verses 3 and 5 of John, he only rejects the expression: *and of the*

Let us finally refer to a quotation from the First Epistle of John, which occurs in Justin. In *Dial.* ch. 123, he says: "All at once we are called to become sons of God; and we are so," which goes back to 1 John iii. 1 (according to the reading now adopted by many critics): "Behold what love God has had for us, that we should be called sons of God; and we are so." Hilgenfeld admits this quotation.

How is it conceivable that in the face of all these facts Reuss can thus express himself (p. 94): "We conclude that Justin did not embrace the fourth Gospel among those which he generally quotes under the name of Memoirs of the apostles." What argument, then, is powerful enough to neutralize in his view the force of the numerous quotations which we have just produced? "Justin," says he, "has not had recourse, as one would have expected, to our Gospel when he wished to establish the historical facts which he was concerned to make good." But is it not well known that there is nothing more misleading in criticism than arguments taken from what a writer should have said or done, and did not do or say? Abbot quotes curious examples taken from contemporary history. We have already referred to the fact that the Gospel of Matthew was the most generally used source in the first days of the church. This is also the case with Justin, who uses Luke much less frequently than Matthew, and Mark much less still than Luke. John is more used than Mark.<sup>1</sup>

As to us, we think we have proved: 1. That the fourth Gospel existed at the time of Justin and formed part of his apostolical Memoirs; 2. That it was publicly read in the churches of East and West as one of the authentic documents of the history and doctrine of Jesus; 3. That it consequently

*Spiri*, in order the more to glorify baptism with water in conformity with the ritual tendency of the time.

<sup>1</sup> The other general objections raised by A. Thoma, in Hilgenfeld's *Zeitschrift* (1875), and by the work, *Supernatural Religion*, are refuted by Abbot, pp. 61-76. They do not concern us here, for Thoma himself admits that Justin knew and used almost in every chapter "the Gospel of the Logos;" he alleges only that he did not recognise it as apostolical and truly historical. This matters little to us, for here we are only concerned with the question whether the Gospel existed in the time of Justin and was used by him.—As to the question whether the few facts of the evangelic history quoted by Justin, which are not found in our Gospels, are borrowed from oral tradition or from some lost writing, the Gospel of the Hebrews, for example, we have no reason to occupy ourselves with it here.

possessed, even at that period, conjointly with the other three, a very ancient notoriety and general authority, equal to that of the Old Testament. Now it is impossible that a writing which occupied such a place in the church in 140, should have been composed only about the year 130.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year, 140, when Justin came to settle at Rome, there arrived also one of the most illustrious representatives of the Gnostic doctrines, Valentinus. After having had a school in the capital for some time, he went to close his career in Cyprus about 160. We already know some of his principal disciples, Ptolemy, Heracleon, Theodotus, and we know how much in favour the fourth Gospel was in their schools; history confirms the saying of Irenæus in regard to them: "Availing themselves in the most complete manner of the Gospel of John." It is therefore very probable that their master had set them the example on this point. Tertullian contrasts Valentinus with another Gnostic, Marcion, observing that the former accepted the sacred collection in its entirety, not composing Scriptures according to his doctrine, but rather adapting his doctrine to the Scriptures.<sup>2</sup> His system is well known; he represented as emanating successively from the eternal and divine abyss pairs of æons (principles of things), the first four of which formed what he called the *ogdoad* (the sacred *eight*). The names of those æons were: Logos, Light, Truth, Grace, Life, Only Son, Paraclete. Here it is easy to recognise the influence of John's prologue, for all these names are found together in this passage, with the exception of the last, which does not appear till later in the Gospel, and which is used in the Epistle. It has been asked, it is true, whether it might not be the evangelist who composed his prologue under the influence of the Valentinian Gnosis, and Hilgenfeld thought that his aim was to insinuate this new doctrine in a mitigated form into the Church. We have already seen to

<sup>1</sup> The *Letter to Diognetus*, on which the fourth Gospel has left a profound impression, is sometimes ascribed to Justin. In our view, as in that of Reuss, this letter must date from about the year 130. But, independently of those who, like Overbeck, bring it down to the fourth century, others place it under Marcus Aurelius only, in the second half of the century. Comp. Dräseke, *Jahrb. für protest. Theol.*, 2d num. 1881. In these circumstances we abstain from adducing the passages or expressions borrowed from John.

<sup>2</sup> *De Præscr. Hæret.* c. 38.

what forced interpretations (of John viii. 44, for example, and other passages) this critic has been led by his point of view. Let us add that the terms by which Valentinus designates his æons, receive in his system an artificial, stilted, mythological sense, while in the prologue of John they are taken in their simple, natural, and, moreover, biblical sense; for they all belong to the language of the Old Testament. It was not certainly John who transformed the divine actors of the Gnostic drama into simple religious notions; it was very evidently the opposite which took place: "Everything leads us to hold," says Bleek, "that the Gnostics made use of those expressions, which they met with in a valued work, as points of support, intended to sustain their speculative system." "John," says Keim to the same effect, "knows nothing of those æons, of that pleroma, of those masculine and feminine pairs, and of that entire long machinery provided to convey God into the finite; therefore it is undoubtedly he who is the oldest, and who, as Irenæus points out, laid the foundation of the edifice." Hilgenfeld alleges that John's Logos is merely a concentration of the series of Valentinus' æons. Hase replies that one may maintain, with at least equal right, that it is the one Logos of John which was divided by the Gnostics into their series of æons. In the *Philosophumena* (vi. 35), Hippolytus relates of Valentinus as follows: "He says ( $\phi\eta\lambda$ ) all the prophets and the law spoke according to the Demiurge, the senseless God, and it is on this account that the Saviour says: 'All those who came before me are thieves and robbers.'" It is an express quotation from John x. 8. Criticism answers: Perhaps it was not Valentinus himself who spoke thus, but one of his successors. Let us admit this, notwithstanding the very positive: *He says* of Hippolytus. The ogdoad, with its Johannine names forming the basis of the whole Valentinian system, nevertheless remains; and it would be very strange if it was not the head of the school who laid the foundation of the system. We do not think, therefore, that an impartial criticism can deny that Valentinus himself used the fourth Gospel.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The following are the words of Heinrici in his well-known work, *Die Valentinianische Gnosis und die heilige Schrift*: "The Valentinians thus used Scripture as a universally recognised authority; it consequently possessed that authority

Two years before Valentinus, in 138, Marcion arrived at Rome; he came from Pontus, where his father was bishop, and where he had been brought up in the Christian faith. Tertullian makes allusion to his Christian past, apostrophizing him thus (*De carne Christi*, c. ii.): "Thou who, when thou wast a Christian, didst fall, rejecting *what thou hadst previously believed*, as thou confessest in a certain letter." To what did this rejection (*rescindendo*) refer, with which Tertullian upbraids him, and which had accompanied his spiritual fall? The answer is given us by two other passages of the same Father. In the work specially intended to refute Marcion's doctrines, Tertullian relates (*Adv. Marc.* iv. 3) that Marcion, "in studying the Epistle to the Galatians, found that Paul rebuked the apostles for not *walking in the truth*, and that he took advantage of this rebuke to destroy the confidence which was put in the Gospels published under the name of the apostles and of apostolic men, and to demand faith for his own Gospel, which he substituted for those." We know, in fact, that Marcion had chosen by preference the Gospel of Luke, and that after mutilating it, to adapt it to his system, he gave it to his churches as the rule of their faith. Now, what is proved by the inference which he drew from Galatians ii.? The apostles mentioned in this chapter are Peter and John. If Marcion concluded from this passage to the rejection of *their* Gospels, he must have had in his hands a Gospel of Peter—was it Mark?—and a Gospel of John. He rejected from that time those books of the Canon which had been transmitted to him by his father, the Bishop of Sinope. In the *De carne Christi*, c. iii., we read a second sentence which leads to the same result as the foregoing: "If thou hadst not *rejected* the writings opposed to thy system, the Gospel of John would be there to convince thee." That Marcion might *reject* this book, it must have been in existence, and Marcion must have possessed it previously. And let us observe that he rejected it, not because it was not apostolical, but, on the contrary, because it was so. For in his view the twelve apostles,

previous to the appearance of the system. . . . The use which the Valentinians made of the Gospel of John, and of the Epistles to the Colossians and to the Ephesians, proves that these books were acknowledged and already used as apostolic writings in the first half of the second century.\*

imbued with Jewish prejudices, had not understood Jesus; so their Gospels (Matthew, Mark, John) must be set aside. Paul alone had understood the Master, and the Gospel of Luke, his companion, must alone be an authority.—Volkmar has made the author of the fourth Gospel an adherent of Marcion, who sought to introduce his doctrines into the Church. But what is there in common between Marcion's violent hatred to the Jewish law and the God of the Jews, and a Gospel in which the Logos, coming to Israel, comes to *His own*, and entering the temple of Jerusalem, declares that He is in *His Father's* house? And how can it be reasonably maintained that a writer whose thought strikes its roots in the soil of the Old Testament, is the disciple of a master who rejected from the New all that implied the divinity of the Old? In saying this, we have answered the question of the same author when he asks why, if John existed before Marcion, the latter did not choose him rather than Luke, to make of it the Gospel of his sect. The ancient heretic was more clear-sighted than the modern critic; he understood that, in order to use John, he must mutilate in some way, from one end to the other, and he preferred to cut it off at a stroke, *rescindendo*, as Tertullian says.

At the same period when Justin, Valentinus, Marcion met at Rome, a fanatical sect arose in Asia Minor, Montanism. Its founder wished to produce a reaction against the looseness of Christendom and the mechanical character of the official clergy. Montanus announced the near coming of Christ, and affected to bring down on the church the Spirit promised for the last days, and whom he called the *Paraclete*, evidently after the promise of Jesus, John xiv. 16, 26, etc. He even identified himself with this Spirit, if it is true, as Theodoret affirms, that Montanus called himself *Paraclete, Logos, Bridegroom*. But it is not these expressions only, borrowed from John, it is this whole spiritualistic movement, it is this energetic reaction against a more and more prevailing ritualism, which supposes the existence in the Church of a writing forming an authority, and capable of serving as a point of support to so energetic a movement.

Thus then, in 140, Justin, the martyr belonging to the orthodox church, Valentinus, the Egyptian Gnostic, Marcion

from Pontus, Montanus in Phrygia, know, and, excepting Marcion, use with one accord John's Gospel to found on it their doctrine and their churches; would all this be possible if the work had only existed for a decade of years? The date 130-140 falls before these facts, as that of 160-170 vanished before those facts which were previously alleged.

Let us come to the third position attempted in our day by criticism.

110-125.—REUSS, NICOLAS, RENAN, SABATIER, WEIZSÄCKER,  
HASE.

History here furnishes us with four guiding points: the Gnostic Basilides and the three apostolical Fathers, Papias, Polycarp, and Ignatius. Last of all, we shall interrogate the appendix to our Gospel, ch. xxi., which, though joined to the book, does not properly form part of it.

Basilides flourished at Alexandria about 120-125; he died shortly after 132. Before teaching in Egypt, he is said to have laboured in Persia and Syria. In the work *Archelaï et Manetis disputatio*, it is said: "A certain Basilides, more anciently still, was a preacher among the Persians, *shortly after the time of the apostles.*" According to Epiphanius (*Hær.* xxiii. 1-7, xxiv. 1), he had also laboured at Antioch. His activity consequently goes back to the first years of the second century. He himself pretended to teach only what had been taught him by the Apostle Matthias from the secret instructions which he had received from the Lord. That this assertion might have a shadow of probability, it must have been *possible* for him to meet with Matthias somewhere; which makes us go back for the period of his birth to a somewhat early time in the first century.<sup>1</sup>

In a homily on Luke, ascribed to Origen, it is said that "Basilides already took the liberty of writing a Gospel according to Basilides."<sup>2</sup> The word *already* proves that Basilides was regarded as belonging to the first times of Gnosticism. As to the phrase: *a Gospel according to Basilides*, it is very doubtful whether we should understand thereby a gospel narrative intended to form a rival to our Gospels. By this term,

<sup>1</sup> See Hofstede de Groot, *Basilides und seine Zeit.*

<sup>2</sup> Ambrose and Jerome have repeated this fact.

indeed, Basilides himself understood, not a simple narrative, but "the knowledge of supersensible things (*ἡ τῶν ὑπερκοσμίων γνώσις*)" (*Philos.* of Hippolytus, vii. 27). It is told us, also, that his narrative of the birth of Jesus harmonized completely with that of our Gospels (*Philos.*, *ibid.*), and history does not present the slightest trace of an apocryphal Gospel of Basilides. But we know from Eusebius (*H. E.* iv. 7. 7) that this Gnostic wrote *twenty-four books on the Gospel* (*εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον*), which were ably refuted by a Christian writer named Agrippa Castor, whose work was still in the hands of Eusebius.<sup>1</sup> The true nature of this work of Basilides appears from a quotation made from it by Clement of Alexandria in the *Stromata* (Book iv.), where he thus expresses himself: "Basilides says in the twenty-third book of his *exegetical treatises*" . . .<sup>2</sup> It was therefore a work of expositions; but on what text? The answer appears—1st, from the phrase of Eusebius: "twenty-four books *on* (*εἰς*) *the Gospel*;" and 2d, from the passage of the *Philosophumena* (vii. 22), according to which Basilides is said to have expressed himself thus: "Here is what is said in the Gospels (*τὸ λεγόμενον ἐν τοῖς εὐαγγέλοις*)."  
 From all this we conclude that this Gnostic had expounded his theory regarding the origin of things in the form of exegetical expositions, founded on the text of the Gospels received in his time in the churches. But the question for us is, whether he laboured also on the fourth Gospel. Now we have two texts which seem to leave no doubt on this head: the one, which we have just mentioned (*Philos.* vii. 22): "And here is, says he (Basilides), what is said in the Gospels: 'It was the true light which lighteth every man coming into the world;' the other, a little further, ch. 27: 'Let everything have its proper time,' says he (Basilides), is what the Saviour sufficiently declares in these words: 'My hour is not yet come.'" These two quotations evidently refer to John i. 8 and ii. 4.

The criticism which is opposed to the authenticity of our Gospel was bound to do everything to evade the consequences of these Johannine quotations in Basilides; for they amount to nothing less than throwing back the composition of the

<sup>1</sup> "There has come down even to us a work by Agrippa Castor," etc.

<sup>2</sup> *Ἐν τῷ εἰκοστέῳ βιβλίῳ τῶν ἐξηγητικῶν.*



fourth Gospel into the first century. In fact, no book is quoted thus except one which has already acknowledged authority. It has therefore been alleged that, in giving these quotations from Basilides, Hippolytus did not distinguish the writings of the master from those of his later disciples. The expression: *he says*, is applied by him simply to the adversary, whoever he may be, Basilides or the Basilidians, Valentinus or the Valentinians; and in favour of this supposition the alleged fact has been urged that Hippolytus expounds the Basilidian system under a form posterior to that in which it was known to Irenæus. According to the latter, indeed, this was a dualistic system; it was the oldest form; according to Hippolytus, on the contrary, it is rather Pantheistic; here, therefore, we have a more recent form. It is possible to discuss this difference to weariness. For our part, we are disposed to accept the explanation given by Dr. Charteris (*Canonicity*, p. lxiii.), according to which Irenæus in his exposition of the system did not go back to its first principles. There was a concealed Pantheism at the source of its apparent dualism, and Hippolytus, who had studied it in the master's own books, apprehended and expounded its first principles more completely than Irenæus. However it may be with this explanation, it seems to us impossible that a serious writer should quote a whole series of texts which he ascribes to a previous writer, incessantly repeating the formula, *he says*, and even frequently mentioning the author by name, without having his work before him. Renan says without the least hesitation (*L'Eglise chrétienne*, p. 158): "The author of the *Philosophumena* undoubtedly made this analysis with the original works of Basilides before him." And Weizsäcker a few years ago expressed himself to the same effect (*Unters.* p. 233): "It cannot be doubted that we have here quotations from a writing of Basilides, in which the Johannine Gospel was employed." Now he has changed his view.<sup>1</sup> Why? Because these quotations ascribed to Basilides referred to biblical books, the composition of which is posterior to the epoch of Basilides himself. And what are those writings? They can only be the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians, frequently quoted by this Gnostic in the extracts of the

<sup>1</sup> *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.* 1868, p. 525.

*Philosophumena*, and perhaps the Gospel of John itself. Need we point out to this critic that he falls here into a vicious circle? For he grounds his argument precisely on what is in question. If Weizsäcker reasons thus: The Basilides of Hippolytus quotes the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians; therefore he is a pseudo-Basilides, for those letters were not yet in existence at the time of the true Basilides,—are we not entitled, we who believe in the authenticity of those Epistles, to reason in an opposite way and say: Basilides quotes those writings; therefore in his time they were in existence and were acknowledged in the Church. This conclusion, valid for Colossians and Ephesians, is so also for the Gospel of John.

Keim has made another discovery which is said to prove that our Gospel is posterior to Basilides. This Gnostic gave out that the Jews had crucified Simon of Cyrene by mistake instead of Jesus, who was all the time laughing at them. There, says the author of the *Life of Jesus*, we have what explains the omission of the narrative of Simon bearing the cross, in the fourth Gospel. Pseudo-John had remarked the abuse which Basilides made of this fact, and therefore suppressed it. Such an argument needs no long discussion. We have treated of John's omissions in detail, and shown that they are to be explained simply by the needlessness of such repetitions. When two or three widely-spread writings have already related it sufficiently, what purpose would it serve to narrate it anew? It would certainly be curious to see one of our critics undertaking the task of explaining all the gaps in the fourth Gospel by allusions to the Gnostic systems!

Papias was a contemporary of Basilides. We have already seen (p. 52) that by the words: "What Aristion and the Presbyter John say," he clearly means that these two men, immediate disciples of Jesus, were yet alive at the time when he wrote. The years 110–120 are therefore the most advanced period which we can assign to the composition of his work. Then already there was rising a whole literature which laboured to falsify the meaning of the Gospel narratives. Papias even declares "that he has no pleasure in those books in which many things are related, and in which men seek to impose on the church alien commandments different from those which

were given by the Truth itself?"<sup>1</sup> It seems to me probable that in speaking thus he was alluding to the first appearance of the Gnostic writings, such as those of Cerinthus, of the Ophites, and the Sethites, of Saturninus, perhaps Basilides himself.

It is pretty generally affirmed in our day that no trace of the fourth Gospel is to be found in Papias, and this fact is regarded as the most decisive proof of the later composition of John's Gospel. We ask the impartial reader's careful consideration of the following facts:—

Of the work of Papias, entitled *Explanations of the Words of the Lord* (in five books), only about thirty lines remain to us, which have been preserved by Eusebius; they belonged undoubtedly to the preface. Papias explains the preference which he thought himself bound, for the object he had in view, to give to the text of Matthew over that of Mark; such at least is the meaning which we ascribe to his words. He gives account of the sources from which he had drawn the anecdotes regarding the life of Jesus, which were not contained in our Gospels, and by means of which he sought to explain His sayings. Those sources, as we have seen, were of two kinds: they were first the accounts which had formerly been made to him by the elders (our Lord's immediate disciples); next, the reports which he had collected from the mouth of visitors who had also had the advantage of conversing with apostles and disciples of Jesus. He asked them "what had been told them by Andrew, or Peter, or Philip, or Thomas, or James, or John, or Matthew, or any other of the Lord's disciples, and what Aristion and the Presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord, are saying." This enumeration gives occasion for reflection. Why *Andrew* named at the head, and before Peter even? This order is contrary to the constant and almost stereotyped usage of the Synoptics; see all the catalogues of the apostles (Matt. x.; Mark iii.; Luke vi.). The first chapter of John alone answers the question: Andrew (with John himself, who remains unnamed) was the first who came to the Saviour; he figures as the first personage in the Gospel history. After Andrew, Papias says: *Peter*. According to John i., Andrew his brother brought him the same day, in fact, to Jesus. Then Papias says: *Philip*.

<sup>1</sup> See the entire passage, pp. 52, 53.

it is exactly he who follows Andrew and Peter immediately in the Johannine narrative (i. 43 ff.). Besides, Andrew and Philip are the two most frequently named apostles in the later part of our Gospel (vi. 5-9, xii. 20-22). Then comes *Thomas*. Nathanael is here omitted (John i. 46 ff.), we know not why; he is embraced in the sort of *et cætera* in which this incomplete list terminates: "or any other of the Lord's disciples." As to Thomas, it is he of all the other disciples who with the preceding plays the most prominent part in the fourth Gospel (xi. 16, xiv. 5, xx. 24 ff.). Afterwards come *James* and *John*. Why so late, they who are always named immediately after and with Peter in the Synoptics? Again, it is in the fourth Gospel that the explanation of this phenomenon must be sought. The two sons of Zebedee are not once named throughout the whole narrative; they are expressly designated only in the appendix, xxi. 2, where their names occur, as here, at the end of the list of the apostles mentioned in that passage. Of all the other apostles, *Matthew* alone is named by Papias; and it has been supposed, undoubtedly with reason, that it is the mention of the fourth evangelist which has led here to that of the first. It may also be presumed that the three names, James, John, and Matthew, occupy this secondary place because the passage was dealing with the apostles as having furnished to Papias the oral traditions which he used. Now James died too early to have been able to give much information, and John and Matthew had consigned the greater part of theirs to their writings.—Finally, Papias names two personages yet alive, *Aristion* and the *Presbyter John*, whom he calls "the Lord's disciples." It is exactly in the same way that the Johannine enumeration closes, xxi. 2: "And two other of His disciples" [not apostles]. If to these striking similarities we add the fact that none of those disciples named by Papias (except Peter, James, and John) play any part whatever in the synoptic narrative, we shall be forced to the conclusion that the view which this Father had of the Gospel history was formed on the narrative of the fourth Gospel still more than on that of the three others. Lüdemann, in his articles on the fragment of Papias,<sup>1</sup> does not dispute the similarity which

<sup>1</sup> *Jahrb. für protest. Theol.* 1879, 3d number.

we have just established. "It is a fact," says he, "that the fragment of Papias is in connection with the Johannine mode of speaking, both by the phrases *ἐντολαί*, *commandments*, and *ἀλήθεια*, *truth* (see the fragment, pp. 52, 53), and by its beginning of the list of apostolic names. . . . The abrupt appearance of Thomas, in Papias, leaves us also to think only of the fourth Gospel." But after this frank declaration there come the expedients which never fail: "There existed in the circle whence the Johannine writings proceeded in Asia a mode of speaking and thinking which, on the one hand, has left certain elements in the writings of Papias (between 120-140), and which, on the other, has found its full bloom in the writings of pseudo-John, composed nearly at the same time." This explanation would be admissible, at the utmost, if the matter in question were some fact of the Gospel history related simultaneously by the two authors, or, indeed, of the use of some common terms like *commandment* and *truth*. But it cannot account for an enumeration of proper names, such as those mentioned in the passage of Papias, and in which the whole of this Gospel history is reflected. Holtzmann has felt that there was something compromising in the admissions of his colleague; he has sought to parry the blow in another way.<sup>1</sup> He explains the order of the apostles in the fragment of Papias by the geographical situation of the countries in which they are judged to have propagated the gospel. This solution will remain the exclusive property of its author.

Two other facts seem to us to attest the existence of the fourth Gospel previously to the time of Papias. Eusebius attests that this Father quoted as proof, in his work, passages from the First Epistle of John as well as from the First Epistle of Peter. Now we have shown that this letter of John is by the *same* author as the fourth Gospel, and that it was composed *after* the latter. If, then, Papias knew and employed the Epistle, how should he not have known and employed the Gospel composed by the same author?—In the Vatican library there has been found a Latin manuscript of the Gospels of the ninth century, in which that of John is preceded by a preface, wherein it is said: "John's Gospel was

<sup>1</sup> "Papias und Johannes," in the *Zeitschr. für wissenschaftl. Theol.* 1880, 1st number.

published and sent to the churches by John during his lifetime, as Papias of Hierapolis, the beloved disciple of John, has related in his five exoteric, that is to say, last books." These last words evidently proceed from an incorrect copy, like so large a number of sentences in Muratori's Fragment. Instead of exoteric we must in any case read *exegetic*; comp. the title of the book of Papias: "*Expositions (ἐξηγήσεις) of the Words of the Lord.*" Moreover, this statement is followed by some legendary details,<sup>1</sup> which, however, are not attributed to Papias himself. Notwithstanding all this, the fact that Papias spoke in his five books of the Gospel of John is attested by this passage.<sup>2</sup>

Irenæus sometimes quotes the presbyters who lived with John in Asia Minor down to the time of Trajan. They were therefore the contemporaries of Papias and Polycarp. Here is an exposition which he ascribes to them (v. 36): "As the presbyters say, They who shall be judged worthy of dwelling in heaven shall find their place there, while the rest shall inhabit the city [the earthly Jerusalem]; and therefore it is that the Lord said,<sup>3</sup> In my Father's house are many mansions." If it is the saying of Jesus, reported John xiv. 2, which the presbyters thus interpreted, as seems evident, then John's Gospel was already in their hands. The same appears also from the passage of Irenæus (ii. 22), in which he ascribes to them the idea that Jesus had reached the age of 40 or 50, which can only be explained by a misconception arising from those words of the Jews in our Gospel (viii. 57): "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham?"

Polycarp wrote, according to Irenæus, a very large number of letters, of which only one remains to us, and that of only thirteen short chapters. The fourth Gospel is not quoted in it; but we can prove, on the other hand, the truth of what Eusebius reports, when he declares that Polycarp, as well as Papias, borrowed proofs from the First Epistle of Peter and the First of John; this is what induced him to place those

<sup>1</sup> Like the following, for example: that it was Papias who wrote the Gospel to John's dictation.

<sup>2</sup> Comp. Tischendorf, *Wann wurden unsere Evangelien verfasst?* pp. 118 and 119.

<sup>3</sup> Literally: "And therefore the Lord to have said (ειπείναι)." The infinitive serves to show that here we have the saying of the presbyters themselves.

writings among the *homologoumena*. Indeed, in Polycarp's letter to the Philippians (ch. 7) we read these words: "Whoever does not confess that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is an antichrist." This is the principle laid down by John, first Epistle, iv. 3: "Every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist." The coincidence of these two sentences cannot be accidental. The expedient imagined by Baur and Zeller, who would have us see here only a maxim which was in circulation in the church at that period, and that of Volkmar, who alleges that it is John who copies Polycarp, and not the reverse, are without probability. Ten lines of John read side by side with ten lines of Polycarp show on which side are the originality and priority. It must therefore be concluded that if the letter of Polycarp is authentic, as Zahn<sup>1</sup> has so learnedly demonstrated, and if it dates, as appears from its contents, from the time immediately following the martyrdom of Ignatius (in 110), the First Epistle of John, and consequently the Gospel, were already in existence at that period.

But, it is asked, how in that case does it come about that Papias and Polycarp did not use such a work more copiously? Above all, the contrast is noted between the silence of Eusebius as to any quotation whatever of our Gospel by these two Fathers, and the very express mention which he makes of the use of the first Epistle by both.—If Eusebius has expressly stated this latter fact, it is because the two Epistles of Peter and John formed part of the collection of catholic Epistles which, with the exception of these two, were all disputed writings. He was therefore concerned to point out their exceptional character as *homologoumena* in this collection, a character appearing from the use which had been made of them by two such men as Papias and Polycarp. It was quite otherwise with the Gospel, which belonged without dispute to the class of universally received books. The employment which might have been made of them by those two apostolical Fathers came under the general usage. Eusebius himself has explained his method (*H. E.* iii. 3. 3): "He wishes to point out," he says, "what ecclesiastical writers made use

<sup>1</sup> In his *Ignatius von Antiochien*.

of the disputed books, and of which of them; then what things, or [some of the things which]<sup>1</sup> have been said about those writings of the New Testament which were universally received, and *all* that has been said (*ὅσα*) concerning those which are not so." To point out certain interesting details regarding the homologoumena (as we know he has done in regard to Matthew and Mark), then to relate all he could collect regarding the antilegomena, such was the end he had in view. It was therefore precisely because with the whole church he ranked John in the first class that he did not think himself called expressly to point out the use which those Fathers made of him. But, on the contrary, if he had found in such men a complete blank in regard to this writing, he could not have affirmed as he does the universal admission of it. Nay, more; a word in the discussion of Eusebius, regarding the fragment of Papias which he has preserved to us, shows clearly that he had found in this Father numerous passages referring to the fourth Gospel. On occasion of the name of *John*, in the enumeration of the apostles in Papias, he observes that this Father evidently means to designate thereby "the evangelist" (*σαφῶς δηλῶν τὸν εὐαγγελιστήν*). He might have said: *the apostle*, but he enters into the mind of Papias himself, and says: *the evangelist*, which proves that he found in his writing the constant proof of the fact that John was the author of a Gospel. As to Polycarp, nothing obliged him to quote, in the eight pages which remain to us, the Gospel of John. What preacher quotes in each of his sermons all the writings of the New Testament which he holds to be authentic?

Everybody knows the interminable discussions raised by the letters of Ignatius, bishop of Antioch at the beginning of the second century. An almost unanimous tradition, confirmed by the testimony of authors who wrote at Antioch itself, such as Chrysostom and Evagrius, bears that he perished at Rome, devoured by wild beasts in the circus, in virtue of a sentence passed by the Emperor Trajan.<sup>2</sup> It was while repairing as a

<sup>1</sup> The two translations are possible, according as we accent the Greek pronoun *τινά* (*what things*) or *τινά* (*some of the things*).

<sup>2</sup> The chronicler John Malalas (eighth century) places the martyrdom of Ignatius at Antioch itself. In that case Ignatius could never have made the journey to



condemned man to this capital (between 107 and 116) that he is said to have written the seven letters which alone can pretend to authenticity.<sup>1</sup> These letters exist in a double form, the one longer, the other simpler and more concise. Zahn, in his work on *Ignatius of Antioch*, has clearly demonstrated that the former of these two texts is the result of a deliberate work of interpolation; he has even pointed with great probability to the author of this fraud.<sup>2</sup> He has at the same time demonstrated the authenticity of the seven letters, as they have been preserved in the briefer form. The historian Eusebius already knew only these seven, and in this text. It is true that three of the seven have recently been recovered in Syriac in a briefer form still;<sup>3</sup> and at first the learned world inclined to regard this text as the sole faithful reproduction of the works of Ignatius. Zahn appears to us to have combated this opinion triumphantly, and to have proved that this text is only an extract made by some Syrian monk from an older translation into that language. Only one alternative remains: the authenticity of the seven letters, as they were known to Eusebius, or their entire spuriousness. There are two main reasons alleged in favour of the latter opinion: (1) The constitution of the episcopate, such as it is represented in these letters, is that of a much more advanced period of the second century than the time of Ignatius; (2) the Gnosticism which is combated in them likewise betrays a period posterior to the death of Ignatius. These reasons do not appear to us decisive. The episcopate, such as these letters suppose it, is still a purely *parochial* ministry, as in the apostolic times; it is not the later *provincial* episcopate. The only thing which distinguishes it from the ministry of this name in the time of the apostles is, that it appears to be concentrated in a single person. But this is already the case in the Apocalypse, where the *angel* of the church denotes precisely the man who concentrates in himself the power of the presbytery; and long before then we

Rome to which these letters refer. But how, then, explain so general a tradition? Would the church of Antioch have so easily yielded up in favour of Rome the honour of seeing such a martyrdom take place within it?

<sup>1</sup> There exist eight others, which are decidedly fictitious.

<sup>2</sup> One of the least honourable representatives of the semi-Arian party, Acacius the successor of Eusebius at Cæsarea.

<sup>3</sup> They were published for the first time by Cureton (1845).

already meet with men like James the brother of the Lord at Jerusalem, then his cousin and successor Siméon, Anianus at Alexandria, Evagrius at Antioch, Linus at Rome, who occupy a position absolutely similar to that which Ignatius ascribes to the bishop of his time. As to the supposed heresy in the letters, it had already all its premises in the first century, as may be seen in the Second Epistle to the Corinthians (xi. 3, 4), in the Epistle to the Colossians, and in the Apocalypse, where a form of Gnosticism is already clearly pointed out (ii. 20, 24). The germs of heresy were plentifully sown in the East at the time of Ignatius. What in our view renders the hypothesis of the spuriousness of the letters inadmissible is, that it seems impossible to invent not only so original a style and so strange a mode of thought, but especially such a character. There is in these letters a man, and a man such as is not fabricated.

The following are a few quotations from our Gospel contained in the seven letters the text of which can lay claim to authenticity. *Romans* (c. vii.): "The living water speaking within me says to me, Come to the Father. I take no pleasure either in corruptible food or in the joys of this life; I want the bread of God, which is in the flesh of Jesus Christ. I want for drink His blood, which is incorruptible love." The whole Gospel of John is, as it were, contained in this cry of the martyr; but comp. more particularly the sayings iv. 14, xiv. 6, vi. 27, 32, 51, 55, 56.—*Philad.* (c. vii.): "The Spirit does not deceive, He who comes from God; for He knows whence He comes, and whither He goes, and He condemns secret things" (John iii. 8 and 20).—In the same Epistle, c. ix.: "He who is the door of the Father (*θύρα τοῦ πατρὸς*), by which Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the prophets, the apostles, the church, enter in" (John x. 7–9).—In the letter to the *Ephesians* (c. vii.) Jesus is called "God come in the flesh" (*ἐν σαρκὶ γενόμενος Θεός*); and in that to the *Magnesians* (ch. viii.) He is called "His eternal word" (*αὐτοῦ λόγος αἰδίου*). The idea of spiritual *communion* (*ἔνωσις*), which forms the basis of these letters, as of that of Polycarp, rests on John xvii., as Riggenbach has remarked.

Hilgenfeld, who places the composition of these letters in 166, makes no difficulty of recognising that our Gospel (published, according to him, in 130) is really employed in the

passages quoted from the letters to the Romans and to the Philadelphians; he even affirms that "the whole theology of the letters of Ignatius rests on John's Gospel." We accept this declaration, and conclude that, however little of authentic matter there may be in the letters of this martyr, the existence and use of John's Gospel are attested from the beginning of the second century.<sup>1</sup>

It remains to examine a last witness, the appendix placed at the end of the fourth Gospel, as ch. xxi., particularly ver. 24, the authenticity of which cannot be disputed.<sup>2</sup> At the end of this narrative of one of the last appearances of the risen Jesus, there is restored the exact form of a saying which Jesus had addressed to Peter in regard to John, and which circulated in the church in an incorrect form. Jesus was made to say that John should not die. The author of the appendix, who is either John himself or one of those about him, and who had heard him relate this scene (see p. 81), relates that Jesus had not expressed Himself so, but had simply said: "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" At what time can we suppose this rectification to have been judged necessary? At the end of the second century, where Keim places the composition of this passage? But by that time, either the saying of Jesus was forgotten, or, if it was still repeated, the date was somewhat late to remove the scandal which it might cause. No, certainly; there was only one point of time when this rectification was in place. It was when men saw the aged apostle becoming feeble, that they asked: Is he then going to die, notwithstanding the Lord's promise? Or when he had just died, and the scandal was really produced? This piece therefore bears its date in itself. It belongs either to the days which preceded or to those which immediately followed John's death. The contrast between the *present* participle: "This is the disciple that testifieth (ὁ μαρτυρῶν) of these things," and the *past* participle: "and that wrote" (καὶ γράψας), seems to me

<sup>1</sup> We do not mention here either the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*, because of their numerous interpolations, nor the *Pastor of Hermas* and the *Epistle of Barnabas*, whose borrowings from our Gospel seem to us by no means evident.

<sup>2</sup> It is well known that it is not so with ver. 25, which is wanting in the *Sinaiticus*.

to decide in favour of the former alternative. The disciple whom Jesus loved was yet living and testifying when this passage was written. However that may be, as this ch. xxi. is necessarily posterior to the Gospel, it follows that this writing dates from the very time of John's life.

We think we have thus demonstrated that the third place attempted by criticism, that of 110-125, is as irreconcilable with the facts as the other two, and that we are forced to take a new step backwards, and to assign the composition of the book to the last times of the first century. But we do not think it possible to go back to an earlier date. Some writers, for example Wittichen, Lange, have attempted so do so. The former dates our Gospel from 70-80 (see p. 28); the latter places it before the destruction of Jerusalem. So early a date is incompatible with the knowledge of our three synoptic Gospels, which the author not only possesses himself, but supposes from one end to the other to be in the possession of his readers. The dissemination of those three writings, whether published a little before or a little after the destruction of Jerusalem, requires a considerable interval of time between their composition and that of our Gospel. The date of this latter must therefore probably be placed, according to the facts which we have just expounded, between 80 and 90.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE AUTHOR.

Mangold expresses his judgment on the external testimonies relating to the fourth Gospel in the following terms: "The external attestation is scarcely less strong than that of the synoptic Gospels;" then he adds: "It would suffice to establish it, if internal reasons did not oppose to the admission of its authenticity reasons which, to me at least, remain hitherto insurmountable."<sup>1</sup> It is this second order of considerations which is now chiefly to occupy us. We are coming to the central and decisive question, for the solution of which all that goes before has served only to prepare the way. It has

<sup>1</sup> Bleek-Mangold's *Einl.* p. 281.

sometimes been alleged that our Gospel remains what it is, let the author be who he may. Those who maintain this thesis do not themselves seriously believe what they assert, otherwise they would not put forth so much zeal in combating the Johannine origin of the work. And when Keim thus expresses himself: "The beauty of the book, its power to edify, its saintliness . . . none of all this depends on a name," it will be allowed us to answer: You are deceiving others, or you are deceiving yourself; for you cannot conceal from yourself that the discourses put into the mouth of Jesus, and the conception of His person expounded in this book, have a wholly different value for the church, according as it is the beloved apostle of the Lord who is giving us an account of what he saw and heard, or a thinker of the second century who is composing it all after his own fancy.

We have here four subjects to study: 1. The *ecclesiastical testimonies*, bearing more particularly on the author's person; 2. The *objections* raised by modern criticism against the result of this tradition; 3. The *internal proof* drawn from the study of the book itself; 4. The examination of the principal *hypotheses* which are set up in our day in opposition to the traditional opinion of the Johannine origin.

### § 1. THE TRADITIONAL TESTIMONIES.

Our starting-point is the time when the general conviction of the church is expressed by an assemblage of indisputable testimonies, in the last third of the second century.

Here we find Clement of Alexandria, who relates the origin of the fourth Gospel in the following manner: "John, the last, observing that bodily things (*τὰ σωματικά*, the external facts) were narrated in the Gospels . . . composed a spiritual Gospel" (Eus. *H. E.* vi. 14).

Polycrates of Ephesus, at the same time, thus expresses himself: "Illustrious men are buried in Asia; Philip . . . at Hierapolis; and, moreover, *John*, who reclined on the Lord's bosom, and who is buried at Ephesus" (Eus. v. 31). This testimony proves that at Ephesus John was regarded as the author of the Gospel, for no one doubted that he was the beloved disciple mentioned John xiii. 25.

Irenæus thus closes his account of the composition of the Gospels: "Thereafter *John*, the disciple of the Lord, he who rested on His bosom, also published the Gospel, whilst he dwelt at Ephesus in Asia" (*Adv. Hæc.* iii. 1).

We have already quoted the testimony of Theophilus: "All inspired men, of whom *John* says, In the beginning was the Word."

Here is how the Fragment of Muratori relates the origin of our Gospel: "The author of the fourth of the Gospels is *John*, one of the disciples.<sup>1</sup> When his fellow-disciples and the bishops exhorted him [to write], he said to them: 'Fast with me these three days, and we shall relate to one another what shall be revealed to each.' During that same night, it was revealed to Andrew, one of the apostles, that *John* should publish everything in his own name, all the rest checking [his narrative]. . . . What is there, then, surprising in this, that *John* has set forth in detail those things in his letters, saying, in reference to himself: What we have seen with our eyes, what we have heard with our ears, and our hands have handled, write we unto you? Thus he declares himself successively eye-witness and ear-witness, and, moreover, redactor of the wonderful things of God." Hilgenfeld affects to find in this narrative an allusion to doubts which then existed, he says, regarding the Johannine origin of our Gospel. Hesse, in his excellent work on the Fragment of Muratori, has shown that this piece betrays no such intention. The phrase: "What is there astonishing?" applies not to the Gospel, but to the Epistle.

Starting from this point, let us attempt to ascend the stream of tradition to apostolic times, and to seek the oldest traces of that conviction which appears universally at the end of the second century. Between 140 and 150, it is expressed, as it appears to us, indubitably.

We have seen that Justin, according to the almost universal confession of our day, places our Gospel in the number of those memoirs on the life of Jesus which he habitually used.

<sup>1</sup> This term is not put in opposition to that of *apostle*, as Reuss thinks. It is the translation of the term *μαθητής τοῦ κυρίου*, which is applied by Papias to all the apostles, and again and again by Irenæus to *John* himself (iii. 1. 3. 4, etc.).

He calls these writings *Memoirs of the Apostles*, and declares that some were composed by apostles, the others by apostolic helpers. If, consequently, the fourth Gospel formed part of them, Justin could only attribute it to an apostle, and that apostle could be no other than John, for never was it attempted to ascribe the book to any other apostolical personage than to him. And as, according to Justin, the Memoirs of the apostles already formed a collection, which was conjoined with that of the prophets, and read along with the latter in the public worship of the Christians, it must have been at that period when the four identically expressed titles were placed over the Gospels: "according to Matthew . . . according to John." This titling, the work of the church, accompanied their gathering into a canonical collection. The title: *according to John*, is therefore the expression of the general conviction of the churches regarding this book in the middle of the second century.

And it was not merely the orthodox churches which at that early period thought so, but also the sects separate from the Catholic Church; witness, on the one hand, Marcion, who rejected our Gospel, not because it was not by an apostle of Jesus, but, on the contrary, as a writing composed by one of them, that is to say, by John (see p. 206); witness also the most illustrious disciple of Valentinus, Ptolemæus, who, in his letter to Flora, quoted our Gospel with the words: "The *apostle* declares" (p. 190). According to Irenæus, Ptolemæus even went the length of affirming, on the ground of the prologue of the Gospel, that the true author of the Valentinian Ogdoad was *John* (p. 190).

Going back still further, to a period of which only sparse monuments remain to us, we find constantly the same conviction.

We have already seen that, in the view of Papias, John was not only an apostle, but an *evangelist*, and that it is this character belonging to him as author of a Gospel which most naturally explains the position he assigns to him in his famous list of apostles beside Matthew (see pp. 52 and 213).

If we have no special testimony from Polycarp, there is a fact of much greater value than would have belonged to any declaration whatever. Polycarp lived till the middle of

the second century ; it was therefore during the time of his activity as bishop of Smyrna that our Gospel began to circulate, and that it spread throughout the whole church as a writing of John. If he had not believed in the Johannine origin of the book, he would not have failed to give it the lie ; for the advantage which the Gnostics took of it rendered it very compromising for the church, of which Polycarp was the most venerable leader ; and the slightest denial on the part of such a man would have profoundly shaken the conviction of the church. But nothing of the kind happened. History shows not the least trace of hesitation either in Polycarp himself or within the church. None of the presbyters of whom Irenæus speaks, and "who lived with John in Asia even to the time of Trajan," uttered a doubt, so that our Gospel was received without dispute from one end of the world to the other as the work of John. This absence of protestation is a negative fact of very positive value. It must not be confounded with a simple literary silence which may be explained by accidental circumstances.

But from the period, and from the very surroundings in which John lived, a positive testimony makes itself heard : "That disciple [he whom Jesus loved] is he who beareth witness of these things and wrote them ; and we know that his witness is true." Such are the words we read, John xxi. 24. Who are they who thus speak to us and attest the composition of the fourth Gospel by the disciple whom Jesus loved ? They know him personally, for, in consequence of the knowledge they have of him, they think themselves able to certify the truth of his testimony. They do so in his lifetime ; for they say of him, "who *bearth witness* and who *wrote*" (p. 220). They live around him, then, and it was no doubt into their hands that he delivered his book ; and before giving it to the public, they furnish it with this postscript, feeling that, on account of the differences which exist between this writing and its predecessors, it will have some difficulty in making its way. How is it possible to evade the force of such a testimony ? Reuss imagines that those who gave it were *bona fide* deceived, and that, living a considerable time after John's death, they confounded with him the anonymous writer, who had by means of his narra-



tives composed the Gospel. But we have already seen that this ch. xxi. can only have been written at a period very near the death of John, when such an error was impossible. The use of the present: "he who *beareth witness*," confirms this observation. Only one supposition would be possible, That the pseudo-John, in the course of the second century, had himself appended this attestation. After having taken the mask of St. John, he tried to support his first fraud by adding a second. He imagined a circle of friends round the apostle, and himself composed in their name the postscript which we have just read. It has often been sought to excuse the composers of apocryphal books by speaking of pious fraud. But here we should evidently have something more; we should have reached the limits of knavery. And he who imagined such a procedure would be the man to whom we must ascribe the qualities of moral purity, profound holiness, and intimate communion with God, which were necessary to compose such a Gospel! The psychological and moral sense protests.

In the whole course of the second century there exists, so far as we know, only one contradiction of the Johannine origin of the fourth Gospel. A party, to which Epiphanius has given the name of *Alogi* (*ἄλογοι*, those who deny the Logos), maintained that the author of this book was not the Apostle John, but the heretic Cerinthus, his adversary at Ephesus. Their rejection was not founded on any traditional testimony. "The grounds on which they rested," says Zeller himself, "were, as far as we know, derived from internal criticism" . . . What follows from the fact, the only one which the adversaries of the authenticity can allege? Two things: the former, that the *Alogi* were destitute of all support in tradition; the latter, that there did not exist the shadow of a doubt as to the fact that our Gospel was composed at Ephesus in the time of St. John, for Cerinthus, to whom they ascribed it, was the apostle's contemporary and rival. The only opponents are thus transformed into witnesses and defenders.

## § 2. THE OBJECTIONS.

It is in contradiction of this result of a tradition which may be called unanimous, that many critics of the present

day raise their voices, and we have now to examine their arguments.

Hase, in his *History of Jesus*, enumerates eight objections to the authenticity; after setting them aside successively, he raises a ninth himself, which he does not succeed in solving, and which determines his vote in the negative. We shall follow him in his lucid exposition. Only of those nine objections, we shall detach some which he combines with the rest, and which it seems to us preferable to treat separately. The first seven, as we shall see, have already found their solution implicitly in the foregoing pages.

I. The *silence* of the oldest Fathers, particularly of those of Asia Minor, regarding the fourth Gospel.—It seems to us that the two preceding chapters have resolved this objection. Hase justly observes that “nothing is more uncertain than the assertion: a writer must have spoken of a certain thing or a certain person.” The synoptic Gospels had been for a long time in circulation; for a generation they had formed the basis of the knowledge which the church possessed of the history of Jesus. The quite recent Gospel of John had not yet made way for itself, nor exercised its proper influence; it needed time to take its place, ere one could appeal to its records as to those of the oldest Gospels. We do not find this till after the time of Justin.

II. John, *Judaizer* as he was, cannot be the author of so spiritual a Gospel as that which bears his name. This, it appears, is the strongest objection in the eyes of Schürer: “It is psychologically inconceivable that an apostle, who in mature years was yet discussing with Paul the permanent obligation of the law, afterwards wrote a Gospel the anti-Judaism of which surpasses even that of Paul.”<sup>1</sup>—We think we have shown that this estimate of John’s point of view according to Gal. ii. is ill founded. The apostles personally kept the law, but not at all with the idea of its permanent obligation for salvation; otherwise they must have imposed it on the Gentiles; and instead of giving the right hand of fellowship to Paul and Barnabas, they would have broken with them

<sup>1</sup> *Studien und Kritiken*, 1876, 4th number, p. 774.

conclusively. The difference being a matter of *practice*, not of principle, the destruction of Jerusalem must have issued in bringing it to an end by breaking the last remnant of solidarity between the apostles and their people. Hase rightly remarks that John's sojourn in Asia Minor, his labours in the field sown by Paul, and the immense influence which he notoriously exercised in that country of Greek culture, prove with what width, adaptation, and freedom of mind he accommodated himself to his new surroundings, and knew how to become a Greek to the Greeks.

III. The Christianity of the churches of Asia Minor had a *legal* character. Now, if John was the author of such teaching, he cannot have been the writer of our Gospel.—But on what ground does this affirmation of the Judaizing character of the churches of Asia Minor rest? On their gross Chiliasm, it is said. We have already seen that almost the whole church of the second, and of the greater part of the third century was attached to millenarianism; it was not Judaizing for all that. The Paschal rite of those churches is further alleged, in which they betray their Judaizing sympathies. The churches of Asia celebrated the Holy Supper of the Paschal feast on the evening of the 14th Nisan, independently of the day of the week on which this monthly date fell, while the other churches, and Rome in particular, celebrated the holy Paschal feast on the Sunday morning which followed Good Friday, whatever might be the monthly date of that Sunday. What reasons had determined the rite which the churches of Asia had adopted? Either they wished thus to celebrate the evening of the day on which, according to the fourth Gospel, Christ died in the afternoon (the 14th Nisan, the eve of the Passover); in that case, whatever Baur may say, the Asiatic rite rests on the narrative of the Passion given in the fourth Gospel, and thereby testifies to the authenticity of that book; the rite is therefore entirely independent of Jewish legality. Or the churches of Asia celebrated the Supper on the evening of the 14th, because it was on that evening that the Jews celebrated the Paschal feast,—and this is the explanation which certain sayings of the Fathers render most probable. Would that be a symptom of Jewish legality? But St. Paul

himself saw a symbol of Christ in the Paschal lamb (1 Cor. v. 7); he kept the Jewish feasts with great care, especially that of the Passover, as is proved by Acts xx. 6: "After the days of unleavened bread, we sailed away from Philippi;" and 1 Cor. v. 8, where, at the very time of the feast of Passover (comp. xvi. 8), he represents the Christian life as a permanent feast of unleavened bread. It is therefore probable that Paul, and not John, had originally introduced this Paschal rite at Ephesus, and that John had merely continued it. We find here that same symbolism, in virtue of which Jesus, in the institution of the Holy Supper, had transformed the memorial of the deliverance from Egypt into a memorial of eternal redemption.

IV. The *divergences from the Synoptics*.—We have already treated this subject, and demonstrated in detail that they are all to the advantage of the fourth Gospel, and clearly prove its historical superiority, so that far from forming an argument against the authenticity of this work, they are one of its most decisive proofs.

V. The elevated and, often for the multitude, *incomprehensible* matter of the discourses of Jesus. This subject has been treated at length; there is no occasion to return to it.

VI. How could a Galilean fisherman have risen to a *wisdom so profound* as that which is conspicuous in many parts of our Gospel?—But, we shall ask in turn, how are we to calculate what intimate and prolonged contact with the Lord might have produced in an ardent and profound soul, such as John's must have been? "If," says Hase admirably, "the highest human wisdom has gone forth from Christianity, must it not be granted that in the proximity of such a being as Jesus, a young man of rich and profound soul might have developed, and, as it were, been set on fire? A mind so powerful as that of Jesus in any case was, does not only attach itself to a faithful and loyal heart, but also to a mind which aims and aspires high. Most certainly, if John, when he taught in Asia, had possessed only the apostolic simplicity and culture of the Galilean fisherman, he would not have produced in that

country the durable impression of admiration and veneration which he left there."

VII. The author of the fourth Gospel proceeded from the *Gnostic* circles of the second century, not from the apostolic college.—We have weighed this thesis, and it is found wanting. There was certainly an elementary Gnosticism dating from apostolic times, and already combated by the Epistles of Paul and the letters of the Apocalypse; and against it the First Epistle of John was directed. It has nothing in common with the great Gnostic systems of the second century, except the general tendency; and the fourth evangelist, far from being formed under their influence, furnished in his book part of the materials by means of which the chiefs of those schools constructed their edifices on the very ground of Christianity.

VIII. We come to the decisive point, *the doctrine of the Logos*. The Judeo-Alexandrine origin of this notion and term is historically proved; and this alone suffices to prove that an apostle of Jesus cannot have written a book which rests wholly upon it. It must therefore be admitted that as Philo, the principal representative of Alexandrinism at this period, made use of the views of Greek philosophy to account rationally for the religious contents of his Jewish beliefs, so the author of the fourth Gospel in his turn made use of Philo to appropriate speculatively the contents of his Christian beliefs.<sup>1</sup>

Two facts give an apparent support to this explanation of the Johannine teaching: 1. The *term* Logos inscribed over our Gospel, which is precisely that whereby Philo expresses the fundamental notion of his philosophy; 2. The *idea* itself of an intermediate being between God and the world, by whom the absolute being communicates with finite beings. But to this the whole analogy is limited. And it remains to inquire whether all the two writers have in common in this respect is not explained by means of a higher source from which both drew, or whether the fourth evangelist was really formed in the school of the Alexandrine philosopher.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See *La doctrine du Logos dans le quatrième évangile*, etc., by Jean Réville, pp. 179 and 180.

<sup>2</sup> Let it be remembered that Philo lived in the first century of our era, and

In the latter case there may undoubtedly be differences of detail between them, but the same general tendency will necessarily appear in both. Now there is nothing of the kind. The notion of the Logos is in Philo's view a metaphysical theory; in John it is a fact of divine love. In the case of the former, God, being raised above all particular determinations, cannot be apprehended by human reason, and cannot communicate with matter except by means of that being in whom He manifests Himself; the Logos is the divine reason which conceives finite things, and realizes them in the material world. In John the notion of this being is, on the contrary, a postulate of eternal love. "For Thou lovedst me," says Jesus, "before the foundation of the world" (xvii. 24); and to this love of God for the Logos there corresponds that of the Logos for God Himself: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God;" literally, tended to God, moved toward God. This is no secondary difference; we are face to face with two different tendencies: on the one side, that of philosophical speculation, the need of knowing; on the other, that of piety, the need of salvation. Not that I mean that all piety is wanting to Philo, and all need of knowing to John. But the matter in question here is the point of support for the two doctrines in the souls of the two writers.

Related to this fundamental difference is the following fact. The doctrine of the Logos in Philo has its value in itself, as a notion indispensable to human speculation; in John the notion is solely at the service of a historical fact, a means of explaining what of divine the author perceived in the person of Jesus Christ. Réville complains again and again that the speculative statements regarding the nature and activity of the Logos "are extremely restricted in the prologue of John. . . . A little more speculation, for the clearness of the narrative, would not have been out of place" (pp. 37 and 38). There is a simplicity in this charge; the young writer demands of the fourth Gospel that it be what assuredly it

that he was a member of a rich Jewish family of Alexandria. He wrote a large number of treatises on philosophical and religious subjects, in which he seeks to show the relation between Jewish beliefs and Greek philosophies, especially those of Plato and of the Stoics.

should have been, if it were what he would like it to be. He would make it a philosophical writing; and as it does not answer to this postulate, he censures it, instead of turning his criticism against his own theory. There is no philosophical speculation in the prologue, there is simply a conception of the person of Jesus expressed by means of a term which was then current in the language of philosophy.

And this term, besides, is taken in a wholly different sense from that belonging to it in speculation in general, and in that of Philo in particular. In the latter, the word *Logos* is used in the sense of *reason*; it denotes divine reason, whether as resident in God or as realized in the world of finite beings, in the sense in which the Stoics spoke of reason as diffused through all beings (*ὁ κοινὸς λόγος ὁ διὰ πάντων ἐρχόμενος*). Philo also calls it sometimes the idea of ideas (*ιδέα ιδεῶν*), or the metropolis of ideas. It is the ideal of the finite world, in its totality and details, as existing in the divine understanding. In John the term *Logos* is evidently taken in the sense of *word*; this is its constant meaning in the Gospel, where it denotes divine revelation, and even in the prologue, where the creative word of Genesis is personified under this name. When Philo would express this notion, he adds to the word *Logos* (reason) the term *ῥήμα* (*word*, in the special sense of the term). So in the passage: "God creates both (the heavens and the earth) *τῷ ἑαυτοῦ λόγῳ ῥήματι* (by His own *Logos-word*)." Or he employs only the second term: "The whole world was made *διὰ ῥήματος τοῦ αἰτίου* (by the *word*, the cause of things)." The difference arises from the fact that Philo moves in the sphere of speculation, John in that of divine action for the salvation of mankind.

Moreover, how different is the part played by the *Logos* in the two! The *Logos* of Philo is a universal principle, the general law of things; it is not put into any relation to the person of the Messiah; while in John the Messiah is Himself this word incarnate, the gift given by the Father to the world, and whereby He comes to save it. The mere supposition of the incarnation of the *Logos* would be, whatever Réville may say, an enormity in the eyes of Philo. Does not sin arise from matter, and does not the defilement of the human soul proceed from its connection

with a body? What a blasphemy, then, would it be to represent the Logos as having appeared in a human person with soul and body! Besides, Philo's Messiah is nothing but a mere man,<sup>1</sup> who will bring back the Jews from their dispersion, and restore to them the glorious state to which they are entitled.

Even in the spiritual world, the part played by the Logos differs entirely in Philo's view from what it is in that of John. In the latter, the Logos is the *light of men* (i. 4); and if there is *darkness* in the world, it is because the world has not known Him, Him who continues to act in His creation by *enlightening every man* (vv. 9 and 10). With Philo, the Logos is God's interpreter, no doubt, but not to men belonging to the order of the *perfect*. The true sage rises by the act of immediate contemplation to the knowledge of God without the mediation of the Logos. The Logos is the God of the imperfect, who, not being able to rise to the model, must be content to contemplate the portrait. Philo's Logos, says Gess, is a guide who does not conduct to the goal, God Himself; a God in whom one does not possess the true God. To speculate is to work on the Logos, on the divine reason manifested in the world; but in this way no one will ever come to God Himself; He is not reached except in the way of immediate intuition which puts the Logos aside. Such is not the Logos of that fourth Gospel in which Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life; no man cometh unto the Father but by me."

Finally, the intention of the theory of the Logos in Philo is to preserve God from all compromising contact with the material world. God is an absolutely transcendent being, who, without derogating from His glory, cannot connect Himself with the finite world. Réville, indeed, quotes a certain number of instances in which God seems endowed with goodness and grace, and acts by Himself in the finite world. They are a relic of the influence exercised on the thought of the Jewish philosopher by the living monotheism of the Old Testament. We might add such passages to the *numberless* proofs of inconsequence which are found in Philo's

<sup>1</sup> The heavenly apparition mentioned in *De Consecrationibus*, § 9, is human in its nature.



speculation; but it is also possible that he ascribes those divine communications to the action of God confounded with that of the Logos. The Divine Being in John, He whom he calls absolutely *God*, is not an indeterminable essence; He is a person full of will, action, and love; He is *the Father*, who not only loves the Son whom He sacrifices, but also the world to whom He gives Him; who by an inward teaching and a drawing exercised on individual men, *brings* them to the Son: "No man," says Jesus, "can come to me except the Father which hath sent me *draw him*. . . . All that the Father *giveth me* shall come to me" (John vi. 44 and 37). This Father "Himself bears witness to the Son" by acts wrought in the domain of matter—miracles (ver. 36). He even makes an outwardly audible voice resound in the temple in answer to a prayer of Jesus (xii. 28). Thus the conception of John is so thoroughly the opposite of Philo's, that it makes the Father an intermediate between Jesus and men, so that Jesus can pronounce the words, which would have been to Philo the height of absurdity: "Thine they were, and Thou gavest them me" (xvii. 6).<sup>1</sup>

The difference between John and Philo is so profound that Gess, one of those who has best studied both, has said: "The man who thinks he can unite the thought of John and that of Philo, understands nothing either in John or Philo."<sup>2</sup> It is not in certain details only, but in their very tendency that they differ.—And yet there are certain analogies between the two, as we have seen, whose cause it is necessary to find out. But is it so difficult to discover it? Are not Philo and John both of them Jews, trained in the school of the law and the prophets?

Three convergent lines in the Old Testament lead to one

<sup>1</sup> See Gess, ii. p. 642 ff.

<sup>2</sup> The defenders of the theory we are combating are so swayed by their preconceived idea, that without suspecting it they even fashion the texts they quote after their own taste. Thus we had exhibited this error of Colani, who, in quoting the prayer of Jesus (John xii. 28), makes Him say: Father, glorify *my* name, instead of "glorify *Thy* name" (see our 2d ed.). Réville falls into a similar mistake in quoting the same verse: "A voice came from heaven, and said, I have glorified *Thee*, and I will glorify *Thee* again [Thee-Jesus]," while the real voice says, "I have both glorified *it*, and I will glorify *it* again [my name]."

goal: 1. The notion of the *word* of God, as the manifestation of His all-powerful and creative will, in the finite world. Very often this principle of action in God is personified in the Old Testament. So when, in Ps. cvii. 20, it is said: "He sends His word, and it heals them;" or Ps. cxlvii. 15: "He sends His word on the earth, and it runs swiftly;" or Isa. lv. 11: "My word shall do all things whereto I sent it." Yet this is evidently only a poetical personification. 2. The notion of *Wisdom* in the Book of Proverbs, especially ch. viii. The author represents it as itself describing what it is to God: "He possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works. . . . I was His fellow-worker, and continually His delight." Still a simple poetical personification, undoubtedly. The word is a power of action; wisdom, an understanding and a conceived plan. 3. In several passages of Genesis there is mention of a being in whom Jehovah Himself appears in the sensible world. He is sometimes distinguished from Him by the name, *Angel of the Lord*, sometimes confounded with Him by the manner in which He expresses Himself, saying, *I*, while speaking of Jehovah Himself. Several theologians regard Him only as an ordinary angel, not always the same perhaps, carrying out each time a special mission. Others refuse Him even personality, and regard Him merely as a sensible form, the transitory mode of appearing adopted by Jehovah Himself. These two interpretations are disproved by the passage Ex. xxiii. 21, where God says, in speaking of that Angel of the Lord, "Beware! for He will not pardon your sin; *my name* is in Him." The name is the reflection of the essence. Here this name is the reflection of God's holy essence, inflexible towards the obstinate purpose of sinning. Such a quality implies personality. We have to do therefore with a real person, having a divine character, and in whom God manifests Himself (*my name—in Him*). Moreover, this angel is called by Isaiah (lxiii. 9) "*The angel of the face*" of Jehovah; and Malachi, at the close of the Old Testament, taking the last step, identifies Him with the Messiah: "Presently the Lord, whom ye seek, and the angel of the covenant, whom ye desire, shall enter into His temple; behold, He cometh, saith the Lord of Hosts." In this third view we find not merely divine

understanding or force personified, but a living Divine Being, Him who is to come to save His people as the Messiah.—These so remarkable indications did not remain unnoticed by ancient Jewish doctors. They seem to have endeavoured at an early period to make those three lines converge in a single idea: that of the Being of whom God makes use every time. He puts Himself into relation to the external world. They designated Him sometimes by the names *Shekinah* (*habitation*) or *Jekara* (*brightness*); sometimes, and most frequently, by the name *Memra* or *Memra di Jehovah* (*Word of the Lord*). The Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament, called *Targums*, constantly introduce this Being, where the Old Testament simply speaks of the Lord. These writings, it is true, date only perhaps from the third or fourth century of our era; but, as Schürer says, it is beyond doubt that these paraphrases rest on older works, and are the result of elaboration century after century. Fragments are preserved of similar writings dating from the second century *before* Christ, from the time of John Hyrcanus. Even before the destruction of Jerusalem, mention is made of a Targum on the Book of Job, and the *Mischna* (of the second century after Christ) speaks of translations of the Bible into Chaldee.<sup>1</sup> It is infinitely less probable, besides, that the Jewish theologians should have accepted from the Christians a notion so favourable to the religion of the latter. Now, the following are some examples of the manner in which those doctors paraphrase the Old Testament. It is said, Gen. xxi. 20, in speaking of Ishmael: "God was with the lad;" the paraphrase says: "The Word of Jehovah was with the lad." In xxviii. 21, where Jacob says: "Then shall the Lord be my God," the Targum makes him say: "The Word of Jehovah shall be my God." xxxix. 21, instead of: "The Lord was with Joseph" . . ., "The Memra (the Word) was with Joseph." Ex. xix. 17, instead of: "And Moses brought forth the people to meet with God" . . ., "And Moses brought forth the people to meet with the word of Jehovah." Num. xxii. 20, instead of: "God came to Balaam" . . ., "The Word of Jehovah came to Balaam." Deut. iv. 24, instead of: "God is a consuming fire" . . ., "The Word of Jehovah is a consuming fire." Isa. i. 14, instead of: "My soul hateth your new

<sup>1</sup> Schürer, *Lehrbuch der N. T. Zeitgeschichte*, p. 479.

moons" . . . , "My Word hateth" . . . xlii. 1, instead of: "My soul delighteth in Him" . . . , "My Word delighteth" . . . , etc. etc. It is therefore indisputable that at the time when John wrote, the Jewish theology had already marked by the special name of *Word* the idea of the God who enters into relation to the external world. The reader will have remarked that this form is particularly used in the passages where Scripture ascribes to God a human feeling such as repentance, dislike, complacency, hatred.

The question now is whether those doctors represented this manifested God as a real and distinct person from God Himself. It is possible on this point, as on the nature of the Logos of Philo, to adduce passages of opposite meaning. Gess things it incompatible with the notion of a real person when, in the passage 1 Kings viii. 15, the Targum substitutes for the expressions: *the mouth* and *the hand* of Jehovah, *the word* (*Memar*) and *the will* of Jehovah, the former as declaring, the latter as executing. So Jer. xxxii. 41, or again Gen. xxii. 16, where the Targum makes the Lord say: "I swear by my word," instead of: "I swear by myself." But in a domain so mysterious and obscure, is it necessary to suppose the paraphrasts systematically consequent with themselves? Besides, it seems to me much more difficult to explain how God should swear by His word, if it is not a person like Him, than if it is a personal being; and as to the former passage, the term *word* seems to recover its ordinary meaning, for the two terms "word" and "will" correspond to the two actions: speaking and acting. It is impossible not to find the notion of personality in all these passages: "My Word *hates*" . . . , "My Word *takes pleasure*" . . . , "The Word shall be *my God*," "the Word will fight for you," "the Brightness of Jehovah rose and said." All the more that in many passages, instead of the Word or the Brightness of Jehovah, it is the angel of the Lord who is substituted for the simple name of Jehovah, for example Ex. iv. 24 and Judg. iv. 14. Gess objects that if this theory of a second divine person called the Word of Jehovah had been received in Palestine at this period, it could not be altogether wanting in the writings of St. Paul. But this apostle's teaching is drawn from the revelation which he had received, and not from the lessons of his old masters

Paul possibly found no call in the circumstances, and at the time when he taught, to use the term; while in the great centre of Ephesus, at the end of the first century, John found himself in surroundings which attracted his particular attention to it. The passages 1 Cor. viii. 6, where creation is ascribed to Christ, and 1 Cor. x. 5, where Christ is represented as the guide of Israel in the wilderness, show in any case that the notion itself was as familiar to him as to John; and that is the essential point.

If the matter be well weighed, the paraphrasts, by refusing to God all human emotions to attribute them to the *Memar* (the Word), thereby give the seal of personality to this manifested God in a yet more pronounced way than to God Himself. But perhaps it is with them as with Philo, whose notion regarding the personality of the Logos seems somewhat fluctuating. Zeller has well shown the cause of this oscillation in the philosopher's mind. On the one hand, the Logos must belong to God's essence, which seems to make Him a simple divine attribute (divine reason or wisdom), and consequently to exclude personality; on the other hand, He must be in relation with matter, so as to penetrate it with the particular types on which finite things are formed, and this function supposes a being distinct from God and consequently personal. A similar observation may be made regarding the Oriental paraphrasts; and this resemblance would not be at all astonishing, if, as Schürer thinks, the philosophy of Philo exercised an influence on their exegesis.<sup>1</sup>

We can now conclude. Philo was formed above all in the school of the Old Testament; there he had learned, from all the facts we have mentioned above, the existence of a personal or impersonal Being, by means of whom God acted on the world when He put Himself in relation to it. And he thought he could interpret the idea of this Being, philosophically explaining it by means of the Logos, or divine reason, of the Greek philosophers. And hence he calls it sometimes *Logos* or *second God* (*δευτερος Θεός*), when he is speaking as a disciple of these schools, and sometimes *Archangel*, *High Priest*, *Son*, *First-born Son*, when he resumes Jewish language. So true is it that the porch and the academy furnished him with the

<sup>1</sup> Schürer, *Literatur-Zeitung*, 1878, No. 17.

key of his Judaism, that in one instance he goes the length of saying: "the immortal *ideas* (*ἀθάνατοι λόγοι*) which we [Jews] call *angels*."

John, on his side, was also in the school of the Old Testament; he also learned from this sacred book the existence of that Being, sometimes distinct from the Lord, sometimes confounded with Him, with whom God conversed when He said: "*Let us make man in our image;*" who participated, consequently, in the creative act; who communicates life to all things, but who has especially impressed every human soul with the impress of His light; who, finally, is the permanent agent of the theophanies of the Old Testament. John is so penetrated with this point of view, that in the person of Adonai, *the Lord*, who calls Isaiah (ch. vi.) to the prophetic ministry, he recognises that same Divine Being who in Jesus Christ afterwards manifested His glory in a human life (John xii. 41);<sup>1</sup> exactly as St. Paul recognises the Divine Being manifested in Christ, in the leader of Israel across the desert (1 Cor. x. 4); and as, finally, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews attributes to the Son the creation and preservation of all things, as well as the sacrifice of purification for our sins (Heb. i. 1-3).

But this is the difference between John and Philo: instead of going from the Old Testament to the schools of Plato and the Stoics, John passed to that of Jesus. And when he beheld in Him that unique glory, full of divine grace and truth, which he has described John i. 14; when he heard such declarations as these: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father" . . . ; "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world;" "Before Abraham was, I am,"—he understood who He was whom he had before him, and without difficulty achieved that fusion in his mind between the eternal agent of God and the Christ, which had not entered into the mind of the Alexandrine philosopher. Philo, is the Old Testament explained by Greek philosophy; John, is the Old Testament completed and explained by Jesus Christ.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Isaiah said these things when he saw His glory and spake of Him [Christ]."

<sup>2</sup> It is evident how many errors are contained in the opinion of Jean Réville, which may be thus expressed: "Alexandrine theology is the synthesis of Judaism and Greek philosophy, and the doctrine of John in turn is the

As to the *term* Logos on which John fixed to designate the Divine Being whom he had recognised in the person of Christ, it was furnished to him, as we have seen, by the Old Testament; the part which the Word of God plays in that book, particularly in the account of the creation, was enough to make him prefer this term to every other. That of *Son*, as Gess rightly says, expressed only the personal relation between God and the Divine Being whom John wished to characterize. The term *Word*, on the contrary, expressed His double relation on the one side to the God who is revealed in Him, and on the other to the world to which He manifests Himself. And if the name Word was already used in the Jewish schools (as seems evident from the paraphrases), it is all the more intelligible why it should have presented itself first to the mind of the apostle. It is remarkable that this title appears as a designation of Christ in the three Johannine writings (Gosp. i. 1; 1st Ep. i. 1-3; Rev. xix. 13), and in them only. It is like an indissoluble bond which unites them. The fact that this name occurs even in the Apocalypse, the author of which is certainly free from all suspicion of Alexandrinism, completes the proof that its source is Jewish, and not at all Philonic. Finally, being established at Ephesus, that focus of religious syncretism to which all philosophic doctrines flowed from Persia, Greece, and Egypt, John might often have heard in the religious and philosophical lectures or conversations, the term Word applied to the *manifested God*. In inscribing it over his narrative, it was therefore as if he had said: "That Logos, about which you speculate without really coming to know Him, we possess, we Christians. We have seen and heard Him, and it is He whose history we proceed to relate."<sup>1</sup>

It is thus clear that there is nothing to compromise the

synthesis of this Alexandrine theology with Christian tradition." We believe that Alexandrine theology is foreign to the teaching of John, and that his teaching, instead of resting on Christian tradition, is a personal testimony (John i. 14; 1 John i. 1-4).

<sup>1</sup> Neander, *Apost. Zeitalter*, ii. p. 549: "John wished to guide those who were much occupied with speculations about the Logos from their religious idealism to a religious realism. . . . Instead of trying to fathom what is hidden and cannot be reached, every one was called to come and behold Him who was manifested in a human nature;—to believe and make trial, as John himself testified of what he had seen and made trial."

Johannine origin of the fourth Gospel in this term Logos, on which criticism fastens with ferocity, and which it turns to account in a way which does but poor honour to its scientific impartiality.

IX. After setting aside all these arguments, Hase acknowledges himself overcome by a ninth and last, which is to this effect: Certain particulars in our fourth Gospel have a legendary stamp, and cannot have been related by an eye-witness; for example, the description of John the Baptist and the first disciples of Jesus, the change of water into wine and the multiplication of the loaves, finally, the appearances of Jesus raised from the dead. Hase long thought he could escape the force of this argument, by holding that John was not present when the facts which gave rise to those legends transpired. He now admits that that was a forced expedient, and lays down his arms.—The answer attempted by the theologian was in fact but a poor evasion, and he does well to give it up. But the argument before which the veteran of Jena yields, has not more value for all that; for it amounts simply, however Hase may think he can affirm to the contrary, to the question of the supernatural.

X. Baur has insisted mainly on the argument taken from the *Paschal controversy*, at the end of the second century, but from a different viewpoint from that from which we have already treated this question (p. 228). In fixing on the 14th Nisan as the day of Christ's death, which the Synoptics placed on the 15th, the author of the fourth Gospel sought, according to Baur, to root out the Paschal rite of the churches of Asia, which celebrated Easter on the evening of the 14th. In fact, he thus displaces the day of Christ's last meal, and throws it back to the evening of the 13th. Now, as it was at this meal that Jesus instituted Easter, the author thereby creates a conflict between the Gospel history and the Asiatic rite. And as John must have been the author of this rite, he cannot have composed a Gospel intended to combat it.—The argument rests on the idea that an annual commemorative festival is celebrated on the day when the festival was *instituted*, and not on the day on which the event giving rise to it



took place. Every one will immediately perceive the falsity in this point of view. Besides, we have already shown that the narrative of John on this point is historically justified, and that by the Synoptics themselves (p. 100). It is not therefore invented in the interest of ecclesiastical tactics. The rite of the churches of Asia probably depended, not on any date whatever in the history of the Passion, but on the day of the Paschal feast in the Old Testament. In any case, had the evangelist wished to favour the Roman church which celebrated the holy Paschal Supper on the Sunday of the resurrection, and to combat the Asiatic rite which placed it on the evening of the 14th, it served no purpose to place the institution of the Holy Supper on the evening of the 13th; to have been of any avail, it must have been placed on Sunday morning, and made the first act of Jesus after His resurrection! (For more details, see the commentary at the end of ch. xix.)

XI. The difference in matter and form between the Gospel and the *Apocalypse*. The impossibility of referring these two writings to the same author had become a sort of axiom in criticism. In consequence, it was judged that the *Apocalypse*, having older and more positive testimonies on its side than the Gospel, it was right to give it the preference, and to reject the Johannine origin of the latter. So even Baur, Hilgenfeld, and many others reason. But the dilemma on which this conclusion rests is now more and more disputed. It is positively set aside by Hase, who cites as an analogy the marked difference between the first and second parts of Goethe's *Faust*; nay more, he thinks that the *Apocalypse*, bearing testimony to John's sojourn in Asia, thereby rather confirms the tradition relative to the Gospel.<sup>1</sup> Weizsäcker cannot avoid acknowledging that, notwithstanding the difference of authorship, the *Apocalypse* is "in organic connection with the spirit of the Gospel."<sup>2</sup> Baur himself has borne testimony to the radical identity of the two writings, by calling the Johannine Gospel "a spiritualized *Apocalypse*." If, indeed, it can be demonstrated that we must interpret the poetical images and plastic forms of the *Apocalypse* spiritually, wherein does it still differ

<sup>1</sup> *Geschichte Jesu*, pp. 29-31.

<sup>2</sup> *Untersuch.* p. 295.

from the Gospel, according to this declaration of Baur himself? Let us add that the superiority which is attributed to the testimony of tradition relative to the Apocalypse, is a fiction, which becomes none the more true for being continually repeated.<sup>1</sup> Keim and Scholten find the Apocalypse as insufficiently attested as the Gospel, and reject them both.

In our eyes, a choice between the two writings is by no means necessary, for they distinctly bear the seal of their composition by one and the same author.

And in the outset (1) in respect of *style*. The charge brought against the author of the Apocalypse of sinning against the rules of grammar or of Greek syntax, is one of those errors which it would be well to cease repeating. The preposition *ἀπό*, *from*, is construed (i. 4) with the nominatives *ὁ ὢν* (*who is*) and *ὁ ἐρχόμενος* (*who cometh*). Barbarism! is the cry. The Gospel, on the contrary, is written in correct Greek.—But in the same verse (i. 4) we find this same preposition *ἀπό*, *from*, regularly construed with the genitive *τῶν ἑπτὰ πνευμάτων* (*from the seven spirits*). And it is the same, without a single exception, throughout the whole of the rest of the book! The construction which is accused, far from being a scholar's mistake, is therefore the bold anomaly of a master who wished to paint, by the immutability of the word, that of the subject designated—God. A number of appositions in the nominative to substantives in the genitive or dative are alleged. Comp. ii. 20 (Tisch.), iii. 12, etc. But at every turn we find in the same book appositions in their regular cases (comp. i. 10, 11, iii. 10, etc.). In the opposite cases the author, by braving grammar, evidently wished to give greater independence to the appositional substantive or participle. The Gospel again and again furnishes us with analogous irregularities (comp. vi. 39, xvii. 2, etc.).—Again, it is remarked that the Gospel makes use of abstract terms, whereas the Apocalypse loves to clothe the idea in a figure. The one will say *life* where the other says *living fountains of water*; the one *light* where the other says *the lamp of the holy city*; the one *the world*, the other *the Gentiles*; the one *death*, the other the *second*

<sup>1</sup> The matter in question is especially the testimony which Justin bears to the Apocalypse; now we have seen what follows in favour of the Gospel, from the testimony of the same Justin, from that of Papias, and from that of ch. xxi.

*death*, etc. etc. For answer, it is enough with Hase to remark that "the Apocalypse uses the forms of poetry which are sensible (*sinnlich*)."<sup>1</sup> Neither should we forget that the Apocalypse is the work of ecstasy and vision, and that John conceived it *ἐν πνεύματι* (*rapt in spirit*), while the Gospel is the calm and collected reproduction of simple historical memories, and that it is written *ἐν νοῦ* (in a state of *settled judgment*).<sup>1</sup>—Objection is also taken to the Aramaisms of the Apocalypse, which form a contrast to the Hellenic correctness of the Gospel. Here account must be taken of a decisive fact. The Apocalypse is written under the constant influence of the prophetic delineations of the Old Testament, the style of which consequently distils on its own, while the Gospel simply relates the events of which the author was a witness, independently of every foreign model. In such different conditions of redaction, as the Dutch critic Niermeyer<sup>2</sup> has justly said, the entire absence of difference between the two writings (supposing that both proceeded from the same author) would furnish reason for "legitimate astonishment." Winer has remarked how much more decidedly Aramaic is the style of Josephus when he relates the Old Testament history, and is under the influence of the sacred narratives, than when he describes the events which happened under his own eyes.

But with all that, what real and radical unity of style between those two writings in the eyes of every one who goes beyond the surface! In this relation we recommend Niermeyer's excellent essay (see p. 27). The same favourite expressions: *to make a lie; to do the truth; to keep the commandments or the Word; to hunger and thirst*, to indicate the profound wants of the soul; the term *Amen, Amen*, which so often begins the declarations of Jesus in the fourth Gospel, becoming in the Apocalypse the personal name of Christ Himself; the figure of the *Lamb*, applied in the Gospel (with the term *ἀμνός*) to the victim burdened with the sin of the world, and used in the Apocalypse with the neuter and more forcible term *ἀρνίον* to denote the glorified Lord, and to form the counterpart of the term *θηρίον*, the Beast. Finally, the name *Word*, or *Word of God*, given to Christ, which belongs only

<sup>1</sup> Comp. on this difference, 1 Cor. xiv. 14, 15.

<sup>2</sup> Reviewed by Busken-Huet, *Revue de Théologie*, September 1856.

to the three Johannine writings in the whole of the New Testament, and connects them as by an indissoluble bond of union. To these analogies of expression let us add that of entire delineations; for example, Rev. iii. 20, where the author describes the intimate communion of Christ with the believer: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me;" which comp. with John xiv., more particularly with ver. 23: "We will come to him, and make our abode with him." Or the description of the heavenly blessedness of believers, Rev. vii. 15-17: "And He that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; . . . for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Here we find united several of the characteristic expressions of the Johannine style: *σκηνοῦν ἐν* (to dwell in a tent), comp. John i. 14, *πεινᾶν, διψᾶν* (to hunger, thirst), Gos. vi. 35; *ποιμαίνειν* (to feed), x. 1-16, xxi. 16; *ὀδηγεῖν* (to lead), xvi. 13; and does not the last trait, depicting God's tenderness, recall the expression of Jesus, xiv. 21: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father"?—A last analogy, which puts a seal on the preceding, is found in the quotation of Zechariah (xii. 10), Rev. i. 7, where the author corrects the translation of the LXX. exactly as is done by the author of the Gospel, John xix. 37.

2. In respect of *matter*, the harmony between the two writings is not less remarkable.

It is sometimes said that the God of the Apocalypse is a God of wrath, while the God of the Gospel is all love. It seems to be forgotten that it is in the Gospel that we find the threatening: "Whosoever obeyeth not the Son, the wrath of God abideth on him" (iii. 36), and this other: "Ye shall seek me, but ye shall die in your sins" (viii. 24); and, on the other hand, that it is the author of the Apocalypse who twice reproduces (vii. 17 and xxi. 4) that promise of Isaiah, the tenderest of all contained in Scripture: "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Love rules in the Gospel, because this book describes the first coming of the Son of God

as a *Saviour*; severity in the Apocalypse, because it is the description of the second coming of the Son as *Judge*.

The Christology of the Apocalypse is identical with that of the Gospel. We have already shown (p. 147) that the designation of Christ as *ἡ ἀρχὴ τῆς κτίσεως τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *the beginning of the creation of God* (iii. 14), is not to be understood in the sense of a temporal beginning, as if Jesus Himself formed part of creation, but in the sense in which eternity may be called the beginning, that is to say, the principle of creation. This meaning flows from the passages where the term *beginning* (*ἀρχή*) is completed by the term *end* (*τέλος*), and where the parallel epithet, *the first*, is likewise completed by *the last*. It must be remembered that these expressions are borrowed from Isaiah, in whom they are, as it were, the insignia of Jehovah's sole glory. If Jesus Himself formed part of creation, according to the author of the Apocalypse, as Hilgenfeld asserts, how could he call Him *ὁ ζῶν*, *He that liveth*, i. 18? This word reminds us of the sayings of the Gospel, i. 4: "In Him was life," and vi. 51: "I am the living bread," a term which in the context implies the sense of *vivifying*. The adoring homage of all creatures is paid to the Lamb at the same time as to the Father (v. 15), a fact which should be compared with xxii. 9: "Worship *God* (only)." But at the same time this Son is subordinate to the Father. The revelation which He gives to His servants in this very book is one "which God gave them," i. 1. In the Gospel, Jesus also declares that it is "the Father who giveth to the Son to have life in Himself" (v. 26), and that "His Father is greater than He" (xiv. 28). The terms Word and Son, which are common to the two writings, both imply this double notion of dependence and of community of nature.

The way of *justification* before God is absolutely the same in both writings. There is no question in the Apocalypse either of circumcision or of any work of the law. "Salvation" comes down "from the throne of God and of the Lamb" as a divine gift (vii. 10). The same figure is applied to the *river of living water* (xxii. 1). It is "in the *blood of the Lamb* that the elect wash their robes" (vii. 14); it is "by this blood that they gain the victory over Satan" (xii. 11). Justification and sanctification are therefore the fruit of faith in Christ's

work. If mention is frequently made of the keeping of the *commandments of God*, the same exactly is the case in the Gospel (xiv. 21, xv. 10) and in the first Epistle (v. 2, etc.). And it is quite evident that this obedience is one which springs from faith.—Objection is especially taken to the charge brought against the Bishop of Pergamos of tolerating those who, “following the example of Balaam, teach men *to eat meats sacrificed to idols* and to commit fornication” (ii. 14). The doctrine thus arraigned is no other, it is said, than that of St. Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians (viii.—x.). Here, then, is a declaration of war against Paulinism, and the evident indication of a Judaizing tendency; it is the antipodes of the fourth Gospel.—But one and the same thing may be said in two very different spirits. Paul begins in the First Epistle to the Corinthians by authorizing the eating of sacrificial meats in the name of Monotheism and of the liberty of faith: the Christian cannot fear to contract defilement from material nourishment; but afterwards he restricts this authorization in two ways: (1) The exercise of this right is subordinate to the duty of charity towards scrupulous brethren; (2) it can never extend to participation in the sacred feasts celebrated in heathen temples, because such an act implies identification with idolatry (x. 14–21), and because in such conditions the believer, “he that thinketh he standeth,” may easily fall (1 Cor. x. 12). Evidently he understands thereby: fall into impurity, that vice so widely spread at Corinth, and against which he had just been guarding the members of the church in ch. vi. Now it is precisely against this second mode of eating sacrificial meats that the author of the Apocalypse also protests, as is shown by the intimate connection between the two expressions: *eating meats offered to idols*, and *committing fornication*. What temptation to this latter vice could have arisen from eating such food at a private table, whether that of the Christian himself, or at a brother’s who had invited him? And that alone is what Paul authorizes (1 Cor. x. 25–27). We know, on the contrary, that towards the end of the first century, and from the beginning of Gnosticism, the heretics set themselves to recommend the eating of the sacrificial meats, precisely in the sense in which Paul had interdicted it. They sought thereby to

reconcile Christianity with paganism. "They eat without scruple," says Irenæus (i. 6), "the meats offered to idols, deeming that they cannot pollute themselves thereby; and whenever there is an entertaining festival among the heathen arranged in honour of idols, they are the first at it." It is easy to understand the falls which followed. Irenæus also adds immediately: "that these Gnostics gave themselves up to the lusts of the flesh even to satiety;" and when the Jew Trypho reproaches Justin with the fact that Christians eat sacrificial meats, the latter replies without hesitation, that "it is only the Valentinians and other heretics who do so." Basilides taught, according to the testimony of Eusebius (*H. E.* iv. 7), that at times of persecution one might, to save his life, eat meats offered to idols and deny the faith. The former of these two acts was only the external form of the latter. Such were the abominations against which the author of the Apocalypse protests. What have they in common with the case authorized by Paul?—We have treated this passage at some length, because it is one of the principal arguments on which the opinion so generally spread in our day, the Judaizing character of the Apocalypse, is based.

It has been alleged that when the author puts the Church of Ephesus on its guard "against those who call themselves apostles and are not, and whom it has found liars," he means to describe St. Paul. But what! in a letter addressed to a church which Paul had founded during a three years' residence, and from which Christianity had spread into all the surrounding countries, a writer dared to assert that the apostleship of this man was a fiction! Was it not in that country of Asia Minor that those multitudes of converts were found, owing to the labours of the apostle, whose triumph the author of the Apocalypse celebrates, ch. vii. and elsewhere? "He who proves too much proves nothing," is the simple answer of Luthardt to such an assertion. Volkmar has made another discovery: the false prophet, the Beast with the lamb's horns, the attendant of the Antichrist, who seeks to bring the whole world under his power, is again St. Paul; for, in the Epistle to the Romans (ch. xiii.), he teaches Christians the duty of submitting to the higher powers, which is equivalent to inducing them to take the mark of the Beast!—Is not this bad

pleasantry rather than serious argument? The way of submission described by Paul is that which the whole of Scripture teaches in regard to earthly powers. It was that which Jeremiah marked out for the last kings of Judah towards Nebuchadnezzar. Jesus knows no other: "Put up thy sword into its sheath, for he that taketh the sword shall perish by the sword." Even the author of the Apocalypse recommends it to the Christians persecuted by the Antichrist, for he meets every desire for active resistance with this threatening: "Whosoever taketh captive shall go into captivity; whosoever killeth by the sword shall be killed by the sword. Here is the *patience* and *faith* of the saints." The strength of the persecuted church shall be, as was already said by Isaiah, *in rest*, in reckoning on God alone. The Reformed Church of France has carried this line of conduct even to heroism, and whenever it has for a moment swerved from it, it has had no occasion for self-congratulation.

As to the conception of *the church*, it is absolutely the same in the Apocalypse as in the fourth Gospel and in St. Paul; and it is a *gross error* to assert, as Volkmar does, that believing Gentiles are in this book merely *tolerated*, and form a sort of *plebs* in the Holy City. As Hase says: "Behind the hundred forty and four thousand sealed of the twelve tribes of Israel, John sees an innumerable multitude of Gentiles, of every nation, and tribe, and tongue, clothed in white robes" (ch. vii.). "They are before the throne of God, and serve Him night and day in His temple," and "God dwells with them . . . and He wipes away all tears from their eyes" (vv. 15-17). Is this the reception given to a worthless plebs? This assertion is so wholly false, that the hundred forty and four thousand Jews mentioned before are not even believers yet. Their conversion is not related till ch. xiv. 1 ff. In ch. vii. they are only *sealed* (reserved) to be afterwards consecrated. But, whatever may be the truth on this latter point, and even if those 144,000 formed the *elite* of the assembly of the church, the Apocalypse in giving them this place would be at one with St. Paul, who, Rom. xi., compares converted Gentiles to wild branches grafted into the patriarchal stock in room of the Jews, the natural branches; and also with the author of the fourth Gospel, who, ch. x.,



represents the sheep taken from the Israelitish fold as the centre of the church, and the sheep called from other nations as simply grouped round this primitive nucleus (ver. 16). The divine work which the author of the Apocalypse celebrates from beginning to end, when he puts into the mouth of all believers without distinction the song of the Lamb; when to one and all he gives the titles of *kings* and *priests* to God the Father, which Israel had borne only typically; when to the twelve elders, representing the twelve tribes of Israelitish Christianity, he adds twelve others perfectly equal to the former, and who with them represent before the throne the Christians of the Gentile world,—this entire new creation, which he contemplates with transport and which he exalts, is nothing else than the work of St. Paul. And in this book St. Paul is the false prophet in the service of the Antichrist!

But do not the author's *eschatological* views condemn us? Niermeyer himself feels embarrassed by that *Jerusalem* of the end of the times, which seems to perpetuate the preponderance of Judaism even in the perfect state of the kingdom of God. "If," says he, "the *earthly* Jerusalem could be swept away from the apocalyptic vision, the whole book would thereby be *spiritualized*." It is not difficult to satisfy this postulate. The author represents (xxi. 16) the wall of that future Jerusalem as having a height equal to its length and breadth, and consequently forming a perfect cube. That cube measures twelve thousand furlongs, which makes nearly fifty leagues in each dimension. Can any one reasonably believe that a real city was imagined of so monstrous a form? But the figure, grotesque if taken in a material sense, becomes sublime the instant it is understood spiritually. The most holy place in the tabernacle and temple had the form of a perfect cube, while the holy place had that of a rectangle. What, then, does the author mean by this figure? That the New Jerusalem shall be throughout what the most holy place was formerly: the abode of the thrice holy God. It is the realization of the last prayer of Jesus: "That they may be one in us, as we are one;" the state which St. Paul describes 1 Cor. xv. 28: "God all in all." And if there should be any hesitation in believing that this glorious state of things applies in the Apocalypse to other believers besides those of

Jewish origin, let the words be read, xxi. 2 and 3: "I saw the holy city, the New Jerusalem, coming down from heaven from the presence of God, and I heard a great voice from heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God *in the midst of men.*" And, as if to leave no doubt as to the meaning of the word *men*, the author adds: "And they [they who were not His people] *shall be His peoples*, and God Himself shall be with them, their God." In speaking of the *final* Jerusalem, Niermeyer simply forgets that that future Jerusalem is by no means a restoration of the old, and that the author describes it as a *new* Jerusalem *coming down from heaven* from the presence of God. It is the church in its entire extent and in all its perfection, embracing everything in the whole range of humanity, which has been given to Christ. We here find the widest universalism. And if it is so with the holy city itself, we must, of course, extend the same process of spiritual interpretation to all that forms its beauty: the gates, the walls, the square, the river, the trees. And all these figures, spiritually understood, guide us directly, if the Gospel is really a spiritualized Apocalypse (Baur), to this result: that the Apocalypse is radically identical with the Gospel.

A general comparison of the apocalyptic *drama* with the narrative contained in our Gospel leads us also to hold their identity of authorship. The contrary, no doubt, is affirmed. It is said: the Apocalypse breathes the most burning hatred against the Gentiles, it is by a Jewish author; the Gospel reserves all its hatred for the Jews, it is by a Gentile author. Again it is said: the Apocalypse moves in the scenes of the last times, which are unknown to the Gospel; the latter, on the contrary, points only to the hostile relation of Jesus to the Jews during His sojourn on the earth. These two objections fall to the ground before a single observation. The work of Jesus is twofold. In the first place it concerned the Jews, then came *the times of the Gentiles*, when salvation was offered to the latter. The Gospel relates the first of these relations, the Apocalypse treats of the second; and the two writings complete one another as the two halves of one and the same whole, which might be entitled: The substitution of the kingdom of God for that of Satan throughout the whole earth. The *actors*, too, in both dramas are at bottom the

same. They are these three: *Christ, faith, unbelief*. In the Gospel: the Christ, as Christ in *His humiliation*; faith, represented by *the disciples*; unbelief, represented by *the Jews*. In the Apocalypse: the Christ, as *glorified Lord*; faith, represented by *the Bride* or the Church; unbelief, by *the Gentiles*, the majority of whom reject the Gospel call, just as the majority of the Jews rejected it in the time of Jesus. There is therefore no partiality in this book. On the one hand, we have believing Gentiles, innumerable in multitude, whom the author beholds with transport triumphing before the throne, exactly as during the life of Jesus there had been believing Jews raised to the most intimate communion with Him. On the other, a mass of unbelieving Gentiles, who more and more draw down on them the judgments of the glorified Lord (seals, trumpets, vials), precisely as the mass of the Jews became more and more hardened and embittered against the Lamb of God in the midst of them. The only difference between the two dramas, the evangelic and apocalyptic,—and the difference belongs to the very nature of the things,—is, that in the former there are related the Passion and the resurrection, the foundations of redemption for all; in the latter, Christ's second coming as the consummation of salvation and judgment for all. This difference is one bond more between the two writings; for thereby the Apocalypse assumes the Gospel all through, behind it, so to speak, and the Gospel the Apocalypse, as it were, before it; and we thus understand whence arises the almost complete absence of the eschatological element in the Gospel.

*The progress and phases* of the struggle, there with the Jews, here with the Gentiles, are also entirely similar. In both books the end seems near from the beginning. But it is constantly deferred; the reader expects it in the Apocalypse after the sixth seal, after the sixth trumpet; it is ever adjourned again as in the Gospel, where John repeats the words again and again: "But His hour was not yet come." The catastrophe also is radically the same, though in two different forms: an external victory of Satan over the kingdom of God: in the Gospel, by the murder of Jesus; in the Apocalypse, by the extermination of the church under the Antichrist; but in both cases a victory, first spiritual, then

shortly after external, of the champion of the cause of God; there, by the resurrection of the Christ; here, by the glorification of the church. The whole is clear: the only difference is in the two subjects: on the one hand, the Christ *come*; on the other, the Christ *coming*. But for the rest the one book seems to be traced over the other, both as to the part of the actors and as to the progress of the action.

To place these two works in opposition to each other, it is necessary, as Luthardt says, to materialize the one and spiritualize the other to excess. By this artifice it is possible to dazzle the vulgar, but this is no longer science; it is fiction. The two books are there, and sooner or later truth resumes its rights.

If the results of our study are well founded, all the external proofs in favour of the Johannine origin of the Apocalypse, to which Baur, Hilgenfeld, Volkmar attach so great value, become so many confirmations of the Johannine origin of our Gospel.

XII. There is an objection which seems to have produced the decisive impression on the mind of our French critics, such as Renan and Sabatier. John is called in the fourth Gospel *the disciple whom Jesus loved*; here is a marked superiority which is ascribed to him in relation to his colleagues. This is not all; he is constantly exalted so as to become in every respect the equal of Peter, or even to surpass him, not only in agility, but also in discernment and quickness of faith. This spirit of jealousy and petty rivalry cannot have been that of John himself; it must therefore be held that the redaction, at least of our Gospel, is due to a disciple of the apostle, who wished at any cost to exalt the person and part of the venerated master whose narratives and lessons he had collected. We are evidently here face to face with a process of tendency. There are facts related; with what view? One answers: Because they happened so; the other seeks secret intentions, and soon discovers them; he ascribes the facts to the narrator's imagination, moved by some particular view. It is a grave matter to found conclusions which may have decisive consequences for the church on such processes of interpretation. In the particular case it turns out that the

supposed intention is in manifest contradiction to a very large number of facts. In ch. i. 43, Peter, it is true, is only the third to come to Jesus. But if this were to exalt John at his expense, the author, who does not trouble himself with history, should ascribe to John himself the part of introducing Peter to Jesus. This is what he does not do; he attributes this honour to Andrew, Peter's *own brother*,—an expression by which he explains the part of Andrew, and accounts for it historically. As to John, he is not directly designated in this scene, either under his own name or by any paraphrase whatever. Not only so, but in ver. 41, even before Andrew brings Peter, when he is for the first time introduced on the scene, he is already designated as Simon Peter's brother, that Peter who had not yet appeared, and who is thus presented from the outset as the principal personage of the whole Gospel history by the side of Jesus. Finally, as if all that were not yet sufficient in the eyes of the author suitably to exalt the person and part of Peter, Jesus at His first look discerns in him His chief supporter, and distinguishes him by a surname of high honour, while He does nothing of the kind in regard to the four or five other disciples who are called on the same occasion. And it is in this scene that men have the talent to discover the intention of depreciating Peter or exalting John!—Ch. vi. places us again in the midst of the apostolic circle. Who plays a part in this confidential scene? It is Philip or Andrew, the latter again designated as *Simon Peter's brother* (vv. 5 and 8). Then at the close of the whole narrative, when in view of the defection of nearly all the Galilean disciples one of the apostles stands forth to answer this question of Jesus: "Will ye also go away?" who is he to whom the evangelist gives the post of honour, and who in the name of all proclaims his indestructible faith in the Messiahship of Jesus? Is it John? Is it some less known disciple, whose rivalry would be less dangerous to this apostle? It is Peter himself, he whom our evangelist wishes to disparage!—At the last meal, Peter beckons to John, who is seated close to Jesus, to ask him to put a question to the Master. But if the fact really transpired thus, what is to be concluded from it? And who could seriously affirm the contrary? Is it an impossibility? Does not the account which follows really prove, by an insignificant

circumstance, that Peter was not by the side of Jesus? (vv. 5 and 6). Finally, in the same passage, does not the evangelist ascribe to Peter a saying in which his whole devotion, his whole faith breaks out: "Lord, not my feet only, but my hands and my head!" (xiii. 9). The conversations which follow the meal offered the evangelist a fine opportunity of putting on the stage his favourite disciple, him whom Jesus loved. We are told of the questions of Thomas, Philip, Jude; but there is not the slightest allusion to the presence of this disciple. Peter's cry of devotion: "I will lay down my life for Thee," is cited; are we to suppose this a piece of Machiavellism the better to mark his presumption, and the better to throw into relief afterwards his denial? But as to this fall of Peter, John is precisely the evangelist who relates it in the gentlest form. There is no oath, no curse in the mouth of Peter; the simple word, *he said*.

Peter is introduced into the high priest's house by *another disciple* who was known to that personage; but there is nothing to tell us that this disciple was John. And even if it were John, it would be slender honour in a writing whose tendency is said to be so strongly anti-Jewish, to have been on intimate terms with the spiritual head of the nation. At Gethsemane it is Peter who, in our Gospel, strikes with the sword. Judged in relation to the mind of Jesus, the act is undoubtedly wrong, but contrasted with the cowardice of the other disciples, who all flee, it is certainly an honour. Peter does not fear to put into practice the profession of devotion which he had made.— On the morning of the resurrection, when the two disciples run to the sepulchre, John arrives *soonest*, and this is said to be one of those calculated events whereby the superiority of this apostle is asserted over his colleague. . . . Men have the hardihood to write such puerilities! If it is so, let them at least abstain from calling such a book, with Hilgenfeld, "the Gospel of the eagle flight!" Immediately after, on simply seeing the order which reigns in the sepulchre, John rises to faith in the resurrection (xx. 8), while it is not said that it was so with Peter. Here is a point which seems a little more suspicious. But this is precisely one of the most decidedly autobiographical traits of the fourth Gospel. The point in question is the most intimate, that of faith, and John simply

tells us how this result was wrought in him. Could he tell so exactly what passed in his colleague? Whether the light broke also in his heart *at that moment* and *in that way*? Perhaps it remained unknown to himself to the last. But as Paul and Luke both tell us of an appearance of the risen Jesus granted to Peter that same day, the circumstance renders it probable that this apostle remained near the tomb with a confused presentiment, which was not transformed into real faith till His appearance. Let us observe in passing, that no special appearance granted to John is mentioned.

There remains the scene of ch. xxi. If the writer really wished to establish a parallel between the two apostles, it must be acknowledged that the contrast is all in favour of Peter. John, it is true, discerns the Lord from the boat, but he does not move from the place, while Peter leaps immediately into the water. John does not play the slightest part in the conversation which follows the meal; Peter is the only object of the Lord's attention. Not only does Jesus restore him as an apostle, but He expressly confides to him the direction of the church, and even that of the apostolate: "Feed my lambs; guide my sheep." And as the crown of his ministry, He promises him the honour of a bloody martyrdom. Thereafter it is he, he only, whom He invites to follow Him, to receive in close conversation the communications which He has yet to make to him. The disciple whom Jesus loved takes the liberty, without being called, to walk modestly behind them; it is Peter himself who brings him on the scene by the question which he puts somewhat indiscreetly to the Lord in regard to him. But, it is said, John's superiority reappears in this very place; for the promise made to him, *that he should not die*, eclipses even that of martyrdom made to Peter. Be it so; only the evangelist's explanation which follows would require not to invalidate immediately that pretended promise! What a contrast between the two sayings, the one relative to John: "Yet Jesus said not, He shall not die;" the other, relative to Peter: "Now this He said of the death by which Peter should glorify God."

There remains in reality only one word which can be turned to account in support of the objection we are combat-

ing; it is the designation, *the disciple whom Jesus loved*. Weisse, I believe, was the first to take offence at the expression, and to see in it a repulsive vainglory. Sabatier thinks that if John had written it himself, "it would be difficult to put humility among his virtues." How much more delicate and how much more just the judgment which Hase shows! "Weisse," says he, "did not understand the joyous pride of being in all humility the object of the most unmerited love." Of all the rays of that glory, *full of grace and truth*, which had been displayed here below by the Word made flesh, there was one which had fallen on John, and which he must reproduce in his narrative: the Son of God had carried His condescension so far as to have a *friend*. To recall so sweet a memory was not pride, it was humble gratitude. To disguise his own name under this periphrasis was not to glorify the man, it was to exalt the tenderness of Him who had deigned to stoop so low. He knew himself just as the grace-saved believer knows himself, as the object of the most amazing love. So it is that Paul speaks of himself (2 Cor. xii. 2-5).

XIII. Long ago we expressed the conviction that Reuss' position in regard to the fourth Gospel was untenable. To hold the apostolic origin of the book, and at the same time to regard the discourses contained in it as forming together a treatise of mystical theology which the author at his own hand has put into the mouth of Jesus . . . that is an evident moral impossibility. Reuss was bound to seek a way of escape from this contradiction, and he has recently found it. It is the passage xix. 35.<sup>1</sup> Following the example of Weiss, Schweizer, Keim, Weizsäcker, he thinks he sees in this passage the perfectly clear distinction laid down by the author of the Gospel himself between his person and that of the apostle John, who furnished him orally with the authentic materials of his narrative.—Let us study this text more closely. It is composed of three propositions: "And he that saw bare witness; and his witness is true; and he knoweth that he saith true, that ye might believe." Till now it had been thought that it was the *witness* himself who was speaking here.

<sup>1</sup> *Théologie johannique*, p. 103.



(1) He declares that his witness regarding the fact related (the simultaneous fulfilment of the two prophecies by the apparently accidental spear-thrust of the Roman soldier) is now given (the perfect *μεμαρτύρηκε*): it is a thing done, done by this very recital; comp. i. 34; (2) he attests the truth of the witness borne; (3) he makes protestation of the inward conviction which he has in himself of the reality of the fact related, and that in order that the readers (*ye*) may also give it full faith.

In this third proposition *the author* uses the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος*, *he* (that one), in speaking of the witness; and in this word many find a proof that he is speaking of the witness as a person *different* from himself, and who can be no other than the apostle. But, first of all, the author may perfectly speak of himself in the third person, as Paul does, 2 Cor. xii. 2-5, or like Jesus Himself, when He habitually designates Himself under the name of the Son of man; and consequently he may use the pronoun of the third person in all its forms. But if he here chooses the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος*, *that one*, it is because the word has a particular and constant meaning in the fourth Gospel. It there denotes a being who possesses a certain character or a certain function *exclusively*; not, consequently, a *remote* person in opposition to another *neurer*, but one *single* person, in contrast to *every* other; so i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any time . . ., the only-begotten Son, He (*ἐκεῖνος*) hath declared Him;" or xii. 48: "My word . . . *it*, it is, it alone (*ἐκεῖνος*), which shall judge him;" comp. v. 39: "The Scriptures . . . it is *they* (*ἐκεῖναι*) which" . . .; xvi. 14: "The Spirit . . ., it is *He* (*ἐκεῖνος*) who shall glorify me," etc. Jesus, too, in speaking of Himself, adopted this pronoun as His designation; comp. ix. 37: "Thou hast seen Him (the Son of God), and He that speaketh to thee is He (*ἐκεῖνος*)."<sup>1</sup> It is exactly so in xix. 35. He designates himself by this pronoun as the man who, having been the sole witness of the fact among the apostles, can alone attest it with the certainty of an eye-witness. There is not therefore one well-founded

<sup>1</sup> Reuss objects that in the passage ix. 37 the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος* denotes the predicate, while in xix. 35 it refers to the subject of the sentence. What matter! In both cases it is still the very one who speaks who designates Himself by this pronoun.

logical or grammatical objection to the most generally received meaning of the passage.

See now the meaning which the fore-mentioned writers seek to give it.

*1st Proposition:* The *editor* of the Gospel declares that it was the *witness* (the apostle) who informed him of the circumstance he has just related.—This meaning is not impossible, though it is somewhat surprising to see the distinction between these two personages breaking through all of a sudden, while not the faintest trace of it had thus far appeared.

*2d Proposition:* The writer attests the truth of the account which he has from the mouth of the witness.—This is far from natural, for it would rather be for the witness to attest the truth of the fact related by the evangelist. An unknown and anonymous editor, posing as security for the account of the witness, and that witness an apostle . . . ! This would be strange enough. Whence would he derive such a right and authority ?

*3d Proposition:* The editor attests the profound conviction which the witness cherishes of the reality of the fact related. "He knows (the apostle-witness) that he saith true." This becomes wholly unintelligible ; for how can one testify of what is passing in the inmost soul of another individual ? One might understand the editor saying : "And *I know* that he saith true." That would mean : Being such as *I* know him, I have the certainty that he cannot lie. But with the form : "*he knoweth* (he) that he saith true" . . . , this declaration has no meaning. Finally, the editor adds : "that ye might believe." If it is John who says this to express the object of the narrative which he has just put in writing, we understand what he means : "As for me, the witness, I have the profound consciousness that what I tell you is true, *that ye also* (who read) *may believe* (as well as myself who saw)." His testimony is to become, for those who read, what the sight itself was to him. But if, on the contrary, the matter in question is the oral account given by the apostle to the author long before, this saying ceases to have any meaning ; for there is no direct bond between such a testimony and the readers of the actual writing ; the "*that ye may believe*" has no longer any justification.

Finally, the two verbs in the present must be remarked: "He knoweth" and "he saith true." What do they prove? That at the time when the lines were written, the witness of the facts was still living. And in that case what is gained by substituting for him as editor one of his disciples? The Gospel none the less remains a narrative composed under the eye and with the approbation of John himself.<sup>1</sup>

There is another passage, besides, which absolutely condemns this meaning given by Reuss and many others to xix. 35; it is the analogous declaration xxi. 24. These men, occupying a well-known and respected position in the church, expressly affirm what those critics, resting on xix. 35, deny, namely the identity of the evangelist-editor with the apostle-witness: "That disciple (he whom Jesus loved) is he *who bears witness* (ὁ μαρτυρῶν) of these things, and *who wrote them* (ὁ γράψας), and we know that his witness is true." It is true, Reuss maintains, that these men were mistaken, and that in good faith, some time after the death of John, they confounded the apostle with the editor. But those attestors, who were able to furnish the Gospel with a postscript which is not wanting in a single manuscript or version, must have taken an active part in the publication of the writing; they must consequently have been its first depositaries. In such circumstances, how could an error on their part be possible? Then, to express themselves as they do, they must have read the book which they themselves published, at least the passage xix. 35, for, according to Reuss, the author in these words declares exactly the opposite of what they solemnly affirm. Finally, when the two passages are compared, it must not be forgotten that the attestors of ch. xxi. say: *we know*, and not: *he knoweth*, as is said by the speaker in ch. xix. By the plural pronoun of the first person they distinguish themselves as precisely from the witness-apostle as by the singular pronoun of the third person, *he knoweth*, the editor of xix. 35 identifies himself with this witness. How, then, can Reuss say: "The sentence

<sup>1</sup> Reuss is quite aware of this grave difficulty, and seeks to obviate it. He says that if the author has said: *He knoweth*, it is because the Greek language did not furnish him with a special term to say: *He knew*. But it was enough for the author to write instead of εἶδεν, *he knoweth*, ᾔδει, *he knew* (*he knew when he was alive*); and does not the following verb, put also in the present: "that he saith true," confound so puerile an evasion?

xxi. 24 occurs in another place in the body of the Gospel; the analogy is obvious"? Yes, but the difference is not less so.<sup>1</sup>

Hilgenfeld saw clearly that it was impossible to find in xix. 35 a distinction deliberately established by the writer between himself and the witness. He holds therefore that the author, after wishing all through his work to pass himself off as the Apostle John, forgot himself for a moment at the passage xix. 35, and let the cat out of the bag. This is the only expedient left. But is it admissible? The reader will judge for himself. Anyhow, if it is so, we must give up speaking of the supreme ability of an author to whom it is thought possible to ascribe such an oversight.

XIV. Will it be necessary to stop at a last objection to which some critics appear to attach a certain value? How, it is said, could a man have regarded Jesus as a Divine Being, after having lived with Him familiarly for three years? But the conviction was formed in him only gradually. And precisely this everyday familiarity took away from it whatever of an overwhelming character it might have had for dogmatic reflection. The Apocalypse, that writing which in the so-called critical school is generally ascribed to the apostle, raises exactly the same problem. Jesus is represented in it as *the first* and *the last*; He is called in it the *Holy* and the *True*, just as Isaiah calls Jehovah; and yet it is attributed to the apostle. The recognition of the Messianic dignity of Jesus was a first step which softened the transition to the recognition of His divinity.

Arrived at the end of this long review of all the objections raised by modern criticism against the unanimous tradition of the church, we may be allowed to point out a curious phenomenon, which is not without psychological value in judging of this discussion. Is it not surprising that every adversary of the authenticity seems especially struck with some one of these fourteen objections, which strikes the other critics only faintly, and in comparison with which he ascribes to all the rest but slender importance? We leave the reader to explain the fact which more than once has given us matter for thought.

<sup>1</sup> Not to prolong this discussion, we postpone to the following article what we have to say on the commencement of the First Epistle of John (1 John i. 1-4).

## § 3. THE INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

In his introduction to the New Testament (§ 93), Credner has summed up this evidence as follows: "If we possessed no historical data regarding the author of the fourth Gospel, we should none the less be led to a positive result by the indications which the book itself supplies. The nature of the language, the freshness and dramatic vivacity of the narrative, the accuracy and precision of the descriptions, the peculiar manner in which the forerunner and the sons of Zebedee are spoken of, the love, the fervid tenderness of the author for the person of Jesus, the irresistible charm shed over the Gospel history presented from that ideal point of view, the philosophical reflections with which this Gospel begins,—all leads us to the following result: the author of this work can only be a man born in Palestine, only an eye-witness of the ministry of Jesus, only an apostle, only the beloved apostle, can only be that John whom Jesus had bound to His person by the celestial charm of His teaching, that John who reposed on His bosom, who stood near the cross, and who, during his sojourn in a town like Ephesus, not only felt himself attracted by philosophical speculation, but even fitted himself to hold his place in the midst of those Greeks distinguished for their literary culture."

We cannot do better than follow the course marked out in this admirable paragraph, in which we should like only to change the two terms: *ideal* and *philosophical*, which seem to us not to render the true shade. Taking this summary as a programme, we shall also start from the circumference and gradually approach the centre.

I. The author is a Christian of *Jewish* origin.

This is proved by his style, which, without Hebraizing, nevertheless possesses the inward peculiarities of the Hebrew language (see p. 176).

The same follows from the corrections which the author makes in the translation of the LXX. from the original Hebrew in a number of quotations. We think, with Westcott,<sup>1</sup> that the fact is indisputable in the following three: vi. 45 (Isa.

<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible, St. John*, p. xiv.

liv. 13), xiii. 18 (Ps. xli. 9), xix. 37 (Zech. xii. 10); and we shall add without hesitation xii. 40 (Isa. vi. 10). Not once, on the contrary, does the evangelist quote from the LXX. at variance with the Hebrew.

The intimate harmony of the teaching of Jesus with the Mosaic law and with the prophets, His constant references to the types of Jewish history, the perfect communion of spirit established between Abraham and Jesus,—all these particulars are set forth with so much force, that it is impossible to avoid subscribing to the judgment of Weizsäcker. Only a Jew, who amid the foreign surroundings in which he dwelt had preserved *the heritage of his youth*, could narrate in this fashion. The development of the author's personal faith certainly passed through these two normal phases of Judeo-Christian faith; the acknowledgment of Jesus as the Messiah, and faith in Him as the Son of God. Compare, for the former of these two steps, the profession of faith made by the first disciples, i. 42 and 46, and for the second the whole sequel of the narrative. This progress is indicated in the words which sum up the Gospel (xx. 31): "That ye might believe that Jesus is *the Christ, the Son of God.*"

A last and thoroughly conclusive proof arises from the knowledge of Jewish usages which the author shows. He knows perfectly the Jewish feasts (the Passover, the feast of Tabernacles), and not only the greater, but also the less, which the law had not instituted, as that of *Purim*, v. 1 (see the commentary), and that of the *Dedication*, x. 22. He knows the addition of an eighth day to the feast of Tabernacles (vii. 37), and the prohibition of all medical treatment on the Sabbath (ix. 14); the Jewish opinions according to which the coming of the Messiah was to be preceded by that of Elias, and the Messiah to spring from a wholly obscure origin (i. 21, vii. 27). He is not ignorant either of the prevailing hostility between the Jews and the Samaritans, or the more spiritual character of the Messianic expectation among the latter (iv. 9 and 25, 26). The Jewish mode of embalming bodies, different from that of the Egyptians (xix. 40), the custom of the Jews to purify themselves on entering their houses (ii. 6), the synagogal excommunication (ix. 22), the custom of closing the sepulchral grottoes with large stones (xi. 38, xx. 1), the sale of

animals and the exchange set up in the temple (ii. 14),—all these circumstances, many of them not mentioned in the Synoptics, are familiar to him. He knows the scruples felt by the Jews both about entering a heathen dwelling, and about leaving the bodies of the condemned publicly exposed beyond the day of execution (xviii. 28, xix. 31). He knows that a Rabbin does not engage in conversation with a woman (iv. 27); that the religious rulers of the nation treat with the most profound contempt that portion of the people who have not received rabbinical training (vii. 49); and finally, that in case of conflict between the law of the Sabbath and that of circumcision on the eighth day, the latter takes precedence of the former (vii. 22, 23).

II. This Jew did not live abroad; he was a *Palestinian* Jew.

He speaks of the different *places* in the Holy Land as a man who knows them himself, and to whom all the topographical details of the country are familiar. He knows that there exist other places having the name of Cana and Bethsaida than those of which he speaks, and which he distinguishes by the epithet, *of Galilee* (ii. 1, xii. 21). He knows that Bethany is 15 furlongs distant from Jerusalem (xi. 18); that Ephraim is situated on the confines of the desert (xi. 54); that Enon is near Salim (iii. 23); that a distance of 25 to 30 furlongs is equal to nearly half the breadth of the Sea of Tiberias (vi. 19, comp. with Matt. xiv. 24); that it is easy to make the journey on foot round the northern end of that sea (vi. 5 and 22); that to go from Cana to Capernaum, one must *descend* (ii. 12); that it is necessary to cross the Cedron over a bridge to get from Jerusalem to the foot of the Mount of Olives (xviii. 1); that the pool of Siloam is quite near Jerusalem (ix. 7); and that there are intermittent springs in the neighbourhood of the temple (v. 7). He also knows the part of the temple where are the chests intended to receive the offerings (viii. 20), and Solomon's porch (x. 23). The picture of the entrance of the valley of Sichem in the scene of Jacob's well, could only have been drawn by a man who had gazed on Mount Gerizim, commanding the valley, and the magnificent fields of wheat which spread to the right in the plain of Mokhra. Renan declares: "Only a Jew of Palestine who

had often passed the entrance of the valley of Sichem could have written that."

The author is as well informed of the *historical circumstances* of the period in which the facts he describes fall. He knows that the right of putting to death has been lately taken from the Jews (xviii. 31); he knows that at the time when Jesus makes His first appearance in the temple, the work of reconstructing that edifice has lasted already for forty-six years (ii. 20). He knows thoroughly the family relations and the relations of sympathy which unite the present high priest to the former, and the influence which the latter continues to exercise in the course of affairs (xviii. 13-28).

Baur thought he had discovered in our Gospel a multitude of historical and geographical errors. This accusation is, at the present day, abandoned. "There is no reason," even Keim says (p. 133), "for believing in these alleged errors." Renan is copious on this view: "The too often repeated opinion, that our author knows neither Jerusalem nor Jewish matters, seems to me utterly destitute of foundation" (p. 522).<sup>1</sup>

III. We can prove by a multitude of particulars that this Palestinian Jew was a *contemporary* of Jesus and a *witness* of His history; let us add even, not to be unduly detailed and lengthy, *an apostle*.

This appears from the multitude of minute details which abound in the narrative, which it is impossible to explain by a dogmatical or philosophical idea, and which can be nothing else than the simple and almost involuntary expression of personal recollection.

And first as to times and seasons: "It was about the tenth hour" (i. 40); "It was about the sixth hour" (iv. 6); "And He abode there two days" (iv. 40); "Yesterday at the seventh hour" (iv. 52); "It was winter," or "It was bad weather" (x. 22); "It was night" (xiii. 30); "Infirm thirty-eight years" (v. 5).—As to the determination of places: The treasury of the temple (viii. 20); Solomon's porch (x. 23); Jesus remained outside the town (xi. 30).—As to numbers:

<sup>1</sup> On the alleged mistakes imputed by Baur to the evangelist, see this Commentary on the following passages: i. 28 (*Bethany*), iii. 23 (*Enon*), iv. 5 (*Sychar*), xviii. 1 (*Cedron*), vii. 52, xi. 49, etc.



The six water-pots in the hall (ii. 6); the four soldiers (xix. 23); the hundred pounds of perfume (xix. 39); the 200 cubits and the 153 fishes (xxi. 8 and 11).—One is introduced by all sorts of details into the inmost circle of Jesus and His apostles. The author refers to those most pleasant relations which Jesus maintained with them, with Philip for example (vi. 5-7); the interposition of Andrew (vv. 8, 9); the lad whose were the loaves; the indirect warning given to Judas (ver. 70); the name of this apostle's father (ver. 71); the blunt but generous declaration of Thomas (xi. 16); his incredulous exclamation and his cry of adoration (xx. 25, 28); the questions of Thomas, Philip, and Judas on the last evening (ch. xiv.); the decisive moment when the light finally broke on all of them, and when they proclaimed their faith (xvi. 30): the sudden invitation of Jesus: "Rise, let us go hence" (xiv. 31). Such particulars as the following are also to be remarked: "They had lighted a fire of coals" . . . (xviii. 18); "The coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout" (xix. 23); "Having put the sponge round the hyssop" (xix. 29); "The servant's name was Malchus" (xviii. 10), etc. etc. "So many precise traits," says Renan, "which are perfectly intelligible if we see in them the recollections of an old man of wondrous freshness;" but, we shall add, which become repulsive in so grave a narrative if they are merely fictitious particulars intended to conceal the romancer under the mask of the historian. Only a profane charlatan could thus play with the person and character of the best known actors in the Gospel drama, and with the person of the Lord Himself.—Weitzel has well remarked how thoroughly this delicate narrative admits us to all the shades of the intimate life of the apostolic circle.<sup>f</sup> The author designates the disciples, not by their generally received name in the church, that which they bear in the apostolic catalogues, but by that which they bore among their fellow-disciples; thus, instead of Bartholomew, he says Nathanael (i. 46-50 and xxi. 2), and thrice he designates Thomas by the Greek translation *Didymus* (twin), as if it were a question of a personal reminiscence very dear to his heart (xi. 16, xx. 24, xxi. 2).

<sup>f</sup> *Studien und Kritiken*, 1849.

To all these details let us add the great scenes in which there is shown, as it were openly, the pencil of the eye-witness: the account of the calling of the first disciples (ch. i.); of the sojourn in Samaria (iv.); of the private scenes connected with the resurrection of Lazarus and the feet-washing (xi. and xiii.); finally, the incomparable sketch of Pilate's negotiations with the Jews (xviii. and xix.).

If, after all these facts, there should remain any doubt as to our author's being an eye-witness, it would vanish before his own testimony, which no one now-a-days, neither Weizsäcker nor Reuss nor Sabatier, has the hardihood to charge with imposture, as the school of Baur did.

That testimony is expressed in the three following passages: i. 14, xix. 35, and first Epistle i. 1-4.

The author thus expresses himself, i. 14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory" . . . It is now alleged that the beholding referred to here is solely the inward view of faith, which is the possession of every Christian. Does not Paul say: "We with unveiled face behold the glory of the Lord" (2 Cor. iii. 18); and John himself: "Whosoever sinneth hath not seen Him"? (1 John iii. 6). Thus Keim and Reuss.—True, there is a spiritual beholding of Jesus to which the passages refer; but these sayings are not found, in the Epistles from which they are taken, in connection with the description of the fact of the incarnation, as in the passage John i. 14: "The Word was *made flesh* . . ., it *dwelt* . . ., and we *beheld*" . . . At the head of a historical work which begins thus, and in which there is about to be related the earthly life of Jesus, such a declaration can have no other view than that of solemnly *guaranteeing* the narrative which is about to follow. It is impossible to confound such a context with that of an Epistle in which the author describes the spiritual state common to all Christians.

The passage xix. 35 has already been studied. The identity of the author of the Gospel with the apostle, the witness of the crucifixion of Jesus, is there positively affirmed. This passage, objects Sabatier, is too like in character to that of the appendix (xxi. 24) to admit of our drawing any but the same conclusion from it. But we have already shown

(p. 260) that the character of the two passages is, on the contrary, wholly different; in ch. xix. (*he knoweth*) the witness affirms his identity with the editor of the Gospel; in ch. xxiv. (*we know*) the friends of the author and witness affirm his identity with the disciple whom Jesus loved; thus each affirms essentially the same thing, but in a way suitable to his particular position and part.<sup>1</sup>

There exists a second writing, evidently from the same pen as the Gospel, and the author of which likewise declares himself a witness of the facts and an apostle, with a clearness which leaves nothing to be desired by any one who does not wish to close his eyes to the light. We read, 1 John i. 1 ff.: "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, of the Word of life . . . declare we unto you, that ye may have fellowship with us . . . ; and these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full; and this is the message which we have heard of Him and declare unto you" . . . How is it possible to deny, in view of such expressions, that the author intends to give himself out as an eye and ear witness of the facts of the Gospel history? Let any one tell us what more forcible terms he could have used to designate himself as such. Reuss says: "It is enough that Jesus lived the life of mortals to enable every believer to say, We have seen, heard, and touched Him."<sup>2</sup> Yes, but on condition that when he speaks thus, he does not expressly contrast himself with other believers who have neither seen, heard, nor touched, and to whom he therefore says: "*We* declare unto *you* . . . these things write *we* unto *you*, that ye also may have fellowship with us, and that your joy may be as complete as ours." Reuss says: "Every preacher who transmits the truth to a new generation will ever be able to express himself in the same way." The man who can tranquillize himself by such a subterfuge we leave in his happy quietude. We have evidently here the same contrast as in John xx. 29, between those who *have seen* and those who shall *believe without having*

<sup>1</sup> Sabatier's ten lines on this subject (*Encycl. des Sc. relig.* p. 193) are to me an insoluble enigma beyond all discussion.

<sup>2</sup> *Théol. johann.* p. 106.

*seen*; or, as in xix. 35, between him who *has seen* and you who shall *believe*. Sabatier has recourse to another expedient. He thinks he can explain the words by the author's desire, "not to present a historical testimony, but to combat Docetism." There is nothing more in them, says he, than "the positive affirmation of the reality of the flesh of Jesus Christ" (p. 193). But, if it were so, what purpose would it serve to begin with the words: "That which was *from the beginning*," developed in ver. 2 by these: "And *the life which was with the Father* was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness of it" ?—The intention of the writer is obviously not to contrast the reality of the body of Jesus with the idea of a mere appearance, but to bring out these two facts which seem contradictory, and the union of which was of vital importance in his view; on the one hand, the *divine*, eternal being of Christ; on the other, the perfect reality, not of His body only, but of His *human* existence. It is the same thought as that which is expressed in the saying which forms the theme of the Gospel: "The Word was made flesh." Besides, the Docetes did not deny the sensible appearances in our Lord's life, and the apostle would have made no way against them by affirming them.

It therefore remains indisputable, with every one who is determined to take the texts for what they are, and not to make them say what he wishes, that the author expressly gives himself out in two of those texts, and that he is given out in the third by friends who know him personally, as a witness of the facts related in the book; and if any one refuses to admit this double testimony, he cannot escape the necessity of making him an impostor. We take it well of the modern writers who, like Reuss and Sabatier, recoil from such a consequence; but we think that it is not possible to do so except by sacrificing the exegetical conscience.

IV. If we seek, finally, to designate this apostle, at once a witness and historian of the Gospel facts, we are forced to recognise in him the disciple whom Jesus loved, John himself.

And first: *the disciple whom Jesus loved*.

The author declares, xix. 35, that he is the man who with

his own eyes saw two prophecies fulfilled at the same time by the spear-thrust of the Gentile soldier. Now his narrative mentions only one apostle present at our Lord's crucifixion—the apostle whom Jesus loved (ver. 26). It is evident, therefore, that he gives himself out as that disciple.—We have already called attention to the sketch of the manner in which the disciple whom Jesus loved arrived at faith in the resurrection (xx. 8 and 9). The absolutely autobiographical character of that account leaves no doubt as to the identity of that disciple with the author.—The same holds of the intimate and wholly personal details which are given regarding the relation of Peter to him at the last Supper (xiii. 24–27), and of the account of their last conversation with Jesus after His appearing in Galilee (xxi. 19–22).—Let us add, that no one more than the disciple whom Jesus loved was under obligation to rectify the tenor of a saying which concerned him, and which circulated in a form fitted to compromise the dignity of Jesus.

We say further: *John, the son of Zebedee.*

In all the apostolical catalogues John and James are named in the first rank after Simon Peter, and this place, which is constantly assigned them, is justified by the particular distinctions which they shared with that apostle. How does it happen that in the fourth Gospel, in the only case in which the sons of Zebedee are mentioned (xxi. 2), they are placed last of the five apostles mentioned, and so after Thomas and Nathanael? This circumstance is inexplicable, unless the author of the account is himself one of those two brothers. In the Synoptics, the forerunner of Jesus is constantly called John, *the Baptist*; this was the title conferred on him not only by Christian, but also by Jewish tradition, as we see in Josephus (*Antiq.* xviii. 5. 2): "John, *surnamed Baptist*, whom Herod had executed." In our Gospel, on the contrary, he is always called John and nothing more. One would naturally conclude therefrom that the author of the narrative had become acquainted with the forerunner before fame had added the title Baptist to his name as an inseparable epithet, consequently from the beginning of his public activity. Then, if there are reasons for holding that the author himself bore the name of John, it is the more easily understood why he did not feel

the need of giving to the forerunner a title fitted to distinguish him from some other John equally well known in the church. For the idea of a confusion between him and the bearer of his name must have been, as Hase says, "wholly remote from his consciousness."—Finally, their remains a decisive circumstance—it is the absence from the book of all mention both of John's own name and of those of the other members of his family. His mother, Salome, who in the Synoptics is mentioned among the women standing by the cross of Jesus (Matt. xxvii. 56; Mark xvi. 1), is not named here in the parallel enumeration (John xix. 25). No more is James in the scene of the calling of the first disciples (ch. i.), where, however, a slight touch, full of delicacy, betrays his presence.<sup>1</sup> This style is absolutely different from that of forgers. "The latter," says Reuss, "seek above all to emphasize the names which are to serve as their passport."<sup>2</sup> This complete and thoroughgoing omission, from one end of the book to the other, of the names of three persons who occupied one of the foremost places in the surroundings of Jesus, leaves no room for doubt that the author was particularly related to all three.

We cannot deny ourselves the pleasure, as we close, of quoting here a beautiful paragraph from Hase (p. 48): "While the Apostle John is nowhere named, there passes across the whole Gospel an unknown and, as it were, veiled figure, which sometimes stands out, but without the veil ever rising. It is impossible to believe that the author did not himself know who the disciple was *whom Jesus loved*; who, at the last feast, reclined on His bosom; who, with Peter, followed the Master when made prisoner; to whom the latter bequeathed His mother; and who, running with Peter, arrived first at the tomb. There must therefore have existed between the author and this personage a particular relation, and a reason, personal to himself, for not naming him. How natural to think that he designated himself by this periphrasis, which embraced the sublimest experience and the entire happiness of his existence!"

<sup>1</sup> Ch. i. 42: "Andrew *first* finds his *own* brother Simon." This strange form can only be explained by the understood idea that the other disciple also sought his brother, but did not find him till later

<sup>2</sup> *Théol. johann.* p. 100.

## § 4. THE CONTRARY HYPOTHESES.

We shall only deal here with those hypotheses which have a serious character. We therefore set aside, without discussion, such fancies as those of Tobler and Lützelberger, who ascribe our Gospel, the former to Apollos, the latter to a Samaritan who emigrated to Edessa, in Mesopotamia, about 135. We meet, in the first place, with "*the great unknown*" of Baur and his school, who is said to have written a romance of the Logos a little before or after the middle of the second century; the man whom Keim calls "the most brilliant flower that followed the age of the apostles."—One thing strikes the mind in this hypothesis at the first glance: I mean the very title *unknown*, which men are obliged to give to the author of such a work. Every one knows the mediocrity of the personages and writers of the second century compared with those of the first. To the epoch of creative production there succeeded one of pale reproduction. What is that Epistle of Clement of Rome to which Eusebius awards the epithets *great and marvellous* (ἐπιστολὴ μεγάλη τε καὶ θαυμασία)? A good pious letter, such as an ordinary Christian of our day would write. Polycarp and Papias are not in any way superior to Clement, Ignatius surpasses them in originality; but what strangeness and eccentricity! Hermas is of the most killing dullness. The Epistle to Diognetus has a certain distinction in a literary point of view; but as to the thoughts, and even as to all that is most striking in exposition, it rests absolutely on the Epistles of Paul and the fourth Gospel. If we take away what is borrowed from these apostolical writings, it falls back into the general mediocrity. And in the midst of this period of effeteness there arises a solitary man, whose writings have so original a character that they form a class completely by themselves in the entire collection of Christian, and even human literature; this man does not live as a hermit; he takes, according to Baur, an active part in the controversies of his time; he pronounces the word of pacification in all the questions which agitate it; in an incomparable work he lays the foundation of Christianity, and of the wisdom of future ages.—And this man, this "flower of his age," no one has seen flourish; the church, the witness of his life and

labours, has forgotten even to the slightest trace of his existence. No one can tell where this extraordinary star rose and set. Verily, a strange story! It is said, no doubt: And the author of the Book of Job and of the Epistle to the Hebrews, are not they also great unknowns? We answer: The remote antiquity from which the first of these writings proceeds is buried, so far as we are concerned, in profound darkness; how different from that second century of the church, regarding which we have such copious and detailed information! The Epistle to the Hebrews is but a simple theological treatise, an important and original writing no doubt; but how different from a work containing a history, in many respects a new history, of Jesus, that subject of supreme importance in the eyes of the church! The author of the one is lost among the splendours of the apostolic age; while the author of the other might be expected to shine like a star of the first magnitude in the ill-lighted sky of the second century.

Let us add, that at that period, when the portrait of Jesus was fixed by three accounts universally spread and already distinguished from every other writing of the same kind, a pseudo-John would have taken good care not to compromise the success of his fraud by diverging from the generally received history of Jesus. Renan rightly says: "A forger, writing about the year 120 or 130 [how much more at the date of 130-160!] an imaginary Gospel, would have contented himself with treating the received version after his own idea, as is the case in the apocryphal Gospels, and would not have overturned from the foundation what were regarded as the essential lines in the life of Jesus."<sup>1</sup> Or, as Weizsäcker also observes: "An author who wrote this Gospel in order to introduce certain ideas into the church, would never have ventured to invent a historical basis so different from that presented by the prevailing traditions."<sup>2</sup> The author who.

<sup>1</sup> *Vie de Jésus*, 13th ed. pp. lxxv., lxxvi.

<sup>2</sup> *Jahrb. für D. Theol.* 1859, p. 698. Reuss says to the same effect: "Is it credible that a forger, if he had wished to pass for one of the first disciples, would have ventured to depart so often from the synoptic accounts in regard to generally known facts, at the risk of immediately seeing his own charged with errors and falsehoods?" The circumstance mentioned here is so manifest that even de Wette was struck with it: "A final critical sentence which denies to John all participation in this work, has against it not only the odious-



with the supreme authority of a master, modified, corrected, and completed the synoptical narrative, could not be a mere unknown; he must have felt himself to be an *acknowledged* master of this field, and certain of finding credit for his history within the church.

Hase, moreover, justly points out that a writer remote from the facts, and desirous of offering a delineation of the person of the Logos, to men of his time, would not have failed in this fictitious description to reduce the human to a minimum, and to trace the purely marvellous history of a God, allowing Him merely a terrestrial *form*; while the fourth Gospel presents us with precisely the opposite phenomenon: "Everywhere in Jesus the fullest and most tender humanity; everywhere, under the golden breastplate of the Logos, the beating of a true man's heart, whether in joy or in sorrow."<sup>1</sup>

Hilgenfeld thinks that the unknown author, in composing such a work, wished to bring back the churches of Asia from the Judaizing Christianity of the Apostle John to the pure spirituality of St. Paul, originally established in these churches. Ordinarily, the procedure of forgers is justified by saying that they make the alleged author speak as they think he would have spoken in the circumstances in which they themselves live. Thus it is that Keim excuses the pseudo-John: "Our author has written in the just conviction that John would have written in a precisely similar manner had he still been alive in his time." Let our two critics agree if they can! According to the latter, the author sets himself to continue the Johannine work in Asia; according to the former, he strives to overturn it, and that by borrowing the mask of John himself! This second stage of the pious fraud comes very near the impious fraud. The expedient of the pious fraud has been singularly abused in these last times, as if this form had been admitted without repugnance by the conscience of the church itself. That it was frequently employed is proved by facts beyond denial; but that the church ever assented to it

ness of supposing a forgery, but also the improbability that Christian antiquity would have accepted a Gospel which diverged on points of such importance from the Gospel tradition, without feeling assured and tranquillized by its apostolical authority."—(*Einl.* § 110 g.)

<sup>1</sup> *Gesch. Jesu*, p. 47.

is what the facts quite as positively contradict. The author of the well-known book, *The Acts of Paul and Thecla*, found it vain to allege that he had composed the little work with a good intention, and in love to the Apostle Paul (*id se amore Pauli fecisse*); he was nevertheless obliged, after confessing his fault, to retire from his office as presbyter (*convictum atque confessum loco decessisse*). This is what passed, according to Tertullian's account, in a church of Asia Minor in the second century.<sup>1</sup> And yet the whole matter in question in this book was an innocent anecdote, of which Paul was the hero; while in the case of the fourth Gospel, the romance would be nothing less than a fictitious history of the person of the Lord!

This mysterious X of Tübingen criticism is in fact only an *imaginary quantity*. The instant we stand face to face with the world of realities, it is seen that this great unknown is no other than a great *misknown*—John himself.

It was needful, therefore, to make trial of a name. Nicolas proposed the *Presbyter John*, and by this personage Renan seems now disposed to hold.<sup>2</sup> But this hypothesis raises difficulties not less serious than the former. First of all, it is impossible to believe that such a man, the immediate disciple of Jesus and contemporary of John, would have sought to pass himself off for this apostle, by expressing himself as he makes the author do in the passage xix. 35. Moreover, with what other intention than that of disguising himself could he have so carefully effaced from his narrative the names of that apostle, of his brother, and of his mother? Can such a part be attributed to the aged disciple of the Lord? Finally, this pious presbyter can only have been a second-rate man. Papias, in the enumeration of his authorities, assigns him the last place, even after Aristion. Polycrates, in his letter to Victor, where he refers to all the eminent men who have adorned the church of Asia, the Apostles Philip and John, Polycarp of Smyrna, Thraseas of Eumenia, Sagaris of Laodicea, Melito of Sardis, makes no mention of this personage. "So," says Sabatier rightly (p. 195), "he must be left in the shade and in the secondary rank where the documents put him. He is of no use in resolving the Johannine question."

<sup>1</sup> Tertullian, *de Baptismo*.

<sup>2</sup> *L'Église chrétienne*, 1879.

And what do Reuss, Sabatier, Weizsäcker, and others? They take refuge in a sort of chiaroscuro. Not being able to deny the exactness, precision, and historical superiority of the information on which our Gospel rests, and, on the other hand, being thoroughly determined not to acknowledge the authenticity of the discourses of Jesus, they have recourse to an anonymous author, and are content to regard him merely as one of the members of the school of Ephesus, a *disciple of the apostle*, who has blended the tradition proceeding from him with Alexandrine wisdom. But can this demi-authenticity suffice? Is it not contrary, first of all, to the author's own testimony, who, as we have seen, declares himself in his Epistle to be a personal witness of the facts, and, in the Gospel a witness of the facts, and the disciple whom Jesus loved? Is it not contrary, in the next place, to the testimony of his colleagues, the other members of the same school, who bear witness with one accord, xxi. 24, that the witness-author is no other than the disciple whom Jesus loved? The more we find ourselves obliged to trace back the composition of this work to John's own date, the more must we acknowledge the improbability of the supposition of a fraud. It would require to have been concerted and executed, not by one individual only, but by the whole community who surrounded John.— Besides, this so improbable supposition is irreconcilable with the admirable originality of the discourses of Jesus. In fact, either these discourses are the work of the Apostle John, and in that case there is no longer any reason for contesting the Johannine composition of all the rest of the book, or they are the work of an anonymous disciple of the apostle, and in that case we must here apply what is said by Sabatier in relation to the hypothesis of the Presbyter John: "The disciple remains infinitely greater than he who served as his patron." And how is it possible with any probability to apply to an Ephesian disciple of John that whole array of facts by which we have proved the *Jewish* origin, the *Palestinian* residence, the marks of a *contemporary and witness* belonging to the author of this Gospel narrative? The master might have transmitted to a *disciple-author* the great lines of the narrative; but that multitude of particular and minute traits which from one end to the other distinguish the description, can

only be explained if the author and the witness are one and the same person.

We conclude by saying with B. Weiss, that every hypothesis contrary to the authenticity is exploded by encountering still greater difficulties than the traditional opinion. Keim says proudly: "Our age has annulled the judgment of the ages." But is the school of Baur "*our age*"? And were it so, no age is infallible. It is enough to have one infallibility proclaimed in our day, without adding one of the left to that of the right.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE PLACE OF COMPOSITION.

If John is really the author of the Gospel, and if he finished the second part of his apostleship in Asia Minor, nothing is more probable than that this Gospel was composed at Ephesus. Such is the unanimous tradition of the primitive church (see pp. 46-49); and here it is certainly that we can best imagine the birth of such a work. A multitude of particulars prevents us from thinking that it was composed for Palestinian readers. What need to translate for former Jews Hebrew terms such as *Rabbi*, *Messiah*, and *Siloam*, to signalize the term *Bethesda* as a Hebrew name, and to explain Jewish usages (i. 39, 42, iv. 25, v. 2, ix. 7, ii. 6, xix. 40. etc.)? Other particulars naturally direct our thought to a Greek country: first the language, then the satisfaction with which the author describes certain traits in the ministry of Jesus which refer to the Greeks, such as the ironical question of the Jews: "Will he go unto the dispersed among the Greeks?" (vii. 35), or the request of those Greeks who, shortly before the Passion, desired to converse with Jesus (xii. 20). It was amid Hellenic surroundings that such memories had their full appropriateness. But there were Greek churches elsewhere than in Asia Minor; so several critics have thought of other countries: Wittichen, of Syria; Baur, of Egypt. Well! even independently of tradition, we think there would still be ground to decide in favour of Asia

Minor. This country, says Renan, "was at that period the theatre of a strange movement of syncretic philosophy. All the germs of Gnosticism already existed there." We have thus no difficulty in understanding the use of the term *Logos*, which forms an allusion to the discussions probably raised in such a theological and religious centre. Besides, is it not in this country very particularly that the influence of the Johannine Gospel makes itself felt all through the second century? And is not the heresy against which the First Epistle of John seems to be especially directed, that of Cerinthus, who taught at Ephesus during the last years of the apostle's life? Let us add that it is to the churches of Asia Minor that St. Paul addressed those Epistles which treat the subject of Christ's person absolutely from the same point of view as the fourth Gospel; we mean the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians. It was in those countries, undoubtedly, that human speculations tended to lower the dignity of Christ, and that the churches had most need to be enlightened on this subject. These indications seem to us sufficient, and even decisive.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE OCCASION AND AIM OF THE FOURTH GOSPEL.

Tradition is not so unanimous on this point as on those preceding. The accounts of the Fathers are at one, no doubt, in declaring that if John decided to write, it was only at the instance of those who surrounded him. In the Fragment of Muratori it is said that "John was exhorted to write by his fellow-disciples and by the bishops." Clement of Alexandria relates that he did so at the instigation of the notables, and under the inspiration of the Spirit.<sup>1</sup> Eusebius expresses himself thus: "The apostle, urged, it is said, by his friends, wrote the things which the first evangelists had omitted."<sup>2</sup> Finally, Jerome narrates, in his emphatic style, that he was constrained by almost all the bishops of Asia, and

<sup>1</sup> Προτρεπόμενα ὑπὸ τῶν γυναικῶν, πνεύματι θεοφωτισθέντα (Eusebius, *H. E.* vi. 14).

<sup>2</sup> *H. E.* iii. 24.

by deputations from numerous churches, to write something more profound respecting the divinity of the Saviour, and to mount to the very Word of God.<sup>1</sup> This circumstance, attested in so many ways, is interesting as agreeing with what we know of the essentially receptive character and of the absence of outward initiative which distinguished the Apostle John. But the foreign impulse which led him to take pen in hand, must have been itself called forth by some external circumstance; and the following is what naturally suggests itself. John had long taught in those churches *vivâ voce*. When the Synoptics reached those countries, his hearers remarked and appreciated the differences which distinguished the accounts of their apostle from those other narratives; and it was the impression produced by this discovery which no doubt led to the solicitations which were thenceforth addressed to him. This explanation is confirmed by the testimony of Clement. "John, the last survivor, seeing that external (*corporeal*) things had been described in the Gospels (the Synoptics), at the instance of the leading men, wrote a *spiritual* Gospel." Eusebius also says that when Matthew, Mark, and Luke had each published their Gospel: "Those writings having come into the hands of all, and into those of John, the latter approved of them . . . and that urged by his friends, he wrote" . . . (see above). These friends of John who induced him to write were, no doubt, the depositaries of his book, and the men who charged themselves with its publication; and it was they also who, in discharge of this task, furnished it with the postscript which accompanied it into all the world, and which has come down to us (xxi. 24).

But what *aim* did the apostle particularly set before him in acceding to this desire? It is here that ancient and modern writers differ. The author of the Fragment of Muratori seems to admit no other intention on the part of the evangelist than that of instructing and edifying the church. John had, according to him, the task of *relating*; the other apostles present (Philip, Andrew?), that of *checking*. These expressions suppose a purely *historical* and *practical* aim.

Yet, if the synoptical Gospels were already in the hands both of the author and his readers, the new narrative could

<sup>1</sup> *Comment. in Matt. iv., De vir. illustr. c. 9.*

not possibly fail to be intended to *complete*, or in certain respects to correct, the older narratives. Otherwise, what purpose would it serve to compose a new one? So several Fathers do not hesitate to state this second aim, which is closely connected with the first. Eusebius declares that the apostle wrote the things omitted by the first evangelists, and very specially that he repaired the omission of what Jesus had done at the beginning of His ministry; then he adds that "if Matthew and Luke have preserved to us the genealogy of Christ according to the flesh (*γενεαλογία*), John has taken His divinity (*θεολογία*) as his point of departure." "It was," he adds, "the part which the Divine Spirit had reserved for him, as the most excellent of all" (John iii. 24). Clement of Alexandria gives a very high and purely spiritual scope to John's intention of completing the Synoptics: "As corporeal things were described in the Gospels, he was solicited to write a spiritual Gospel," that is to say, one fitted to expound, by means of the discourses of Jesus preserved in it, the *spirit* of the facts recorded by the Synoptics.

To this *historico-didactic* aim, some Fathers add the intention of combating various errors which began to make way in the end of the first century. This *polemical* aim is attributed by Irenæus, if not to the whole Gospel, as is often said, at least to the prologue: "John, the disciple of the Lord, wishing to root out the seed which had been scattered in the heart of men by Cerinthus, and previously by the Nicolaitans . . . and to lay down the rule of truth in the church, commenced thus" (iii. 11. 1). Jerome expresses himself nearly to the same effect: "As John was in Asia, and the seed sown by heretics, such as Cerinthus, Ebion, and others, who deny that Christ is come in the flesh, was already sprouting, . . . he replied to the brethren who solicited him that he would write, if all fasted and prayed to God with him; which they did. After which, the revelation with which he was filled burst forth in this prologue: 'In the beginning was the Word'" (*ibid.*). Several moderns have adhered to these suppositions, or added new ones. Erasmus, Grotius, Hengstenberg hold to the idea of a *polemic* against *Cerinthus*. Lessing, de Wette, and others think, with Jerome, that the author was specially aiming at the *Ebionites*. Semler, Schneckenburger, Ebrard think that

he had the *Docetæ* in view; Grotius, Storr, Ewald: *the disciples of John the Baptist*.

Finally, the modern school, rejecting with a sort of disdain the various aims which we have indicated, and thinking to rise to a higher conception of our Gospel, attributes to it a purely *speculative* aim.<sup>1</sup> Lessing had already declared that John had saved Christianity—which but for him would have disappeared as a Jewish sect—by teaching a higher conception of Christ's person.<sup>2</sup> Whence had he taken this new notion of the Christ? Lessing did not explain himself on this point, no doubt prudentially. Modern criticism has undertaken to give the answer in his place. Lücke thinks that John proposed to raise the simple faith of the church, threatened with the double heresy of Ebionism and Gnosticism, to the state of *Gnosis* or higher knowledge. Reuss attributes no other aim to the author of this work than that of publishing his own "evangelical theology founded on the idea of the Saviour's divinity" (p. 29). Hilgenfeld, as we have seen, holds that the pseudo-John wrote that he might set up again in Asia Minor the standard of Paulinism which had been overthrown and supplanted by the Judeo-Christianity of John. According to Baur, everything is fictitious, except a few synoptic materials, in the writing meant to resolve all the burning questions of the second century, apparently without touching them. The author accredits Gnosis in the church by introducing into it the theory of the Logos; he moderates Montanist exaltation; he resolves the question of Easter at the expense of the churches of Asia, but in the sense of the other churches; he reconciles the two parties, the Pauline and the Judeo-Christian, and finally succeeds in founding that one and universal church after which Christianity aspired from its origin; he consummates the apostolic work.

Our task is to examine these various conceptions, and to discover what of truth or error each of them may contain.

Our Gospels, all four, propose one single aim, to produce and strengthen faith by presenting to it historically its supreme object, Jesus Christ. But each of them does so in

<sup>1</sup> Keim: "The evangelist is indeed much too great to follow the historical aim."

<sup>2</sup> *Neue Hypothese über die vier Evangelisten*, ed. Lachmann, t. xi.



its own way, that is to say, each one presents this object to the church in a different aspect. Matthew *demonstrates*, with a view to the Jews, and by means of the harmony between the history and prophecy. Luke *expounds*, by exhibiting to the Gentiles the treasures of universal divine grace. Mark *depicts*, making the Wonderful One live again as He was beheld by witnesses. If John relates, it is as little merely to relate. Exactly like the others, he relates in order to strengthen the faith of the church, first in the Messiahship, then in the divinity of Jesus. Such is his declaration in the often-quoted passage xx. 30, 31, where he gives his own explanation regarding the aim of his book: to show in Jesus the Messiah (*the Christ*) first, then the Son of God, that every one may find in Him eternal life.

This declaration indicates nothing else than that *historical* and *practical* aim which the author of the Fragment of Muratori implicitly ascribes to our Gospel; and its contents are fully confirmed by the contents of the book itself. How does the author, in fact, take to his task? He relates the history of the development of his own faith, and of that of the other apostles, from the day when the two disciples of John the Baptist recognised Jesus as *the Christ* (ch. i.), till that day on which Thomas worshipped Him as his Lord and *his God* (ch. xx.). These are the point of departure and the point of arrival. The narrative embraced between these two limits serves only to guide from the one to the other; and this fact alone suffices to enlighten us as to its aim. John wishes to make his readers repeat the course which his own faith traversed in the company of Jesus; he wishes by the whole series of the facts and doctrines which enlightened himself to enlighten the church; he wishes to glorify in her eyes the divine object of her faith by the same means as those by which Jesus was glorified in His own: the beholding and hearing of the Word made flesh. When we express ourselves thus, we only paraphrase the words of John himself in the beginning of his first Epistle (i. 1-4), and annotate the expression: *in presence of His disciples*, in the passage of the Gospel in which he explains his aim (xx. 30).

But from the very fact that the history traced by him was already given in three writings which he possessed, and which

his readers possessed, he puts himself inevitably into connection with those previous works. And hence it is he dismisses the thought of relating the facts in their totality, as if his publication were the first or only one. In the declaration, xx. 30, 31, he expressly reminds his readers of the fact that "Jesus did many other things in presence of His disciples which are not written in this book." It is also natural, consequently, that where he finds blanks in those writings which seem to him of some importance, he should seek to fill them up, or that if some facts do not seem to him to be presented with perfect clearness, he should seek to present them in their true light. As we have said, John certainly did not write *to complete*, but he often did complete or rectify in passing, and without losing sight of his aim: to display the terrestrial glory of the Son of God to the view of faith. Hence it is that he omits the Galilean ministry, fully described by his predecessors, and dwells particularly on the residences at Jerusalem, in which the glory of the Lord had shone forth in a way which made an ineffaceable impression on his heart, in the conflict with the powers of darkness concentrated in that place. The intention of completing the previous narratives, both historically considered, as Eusebius thought, and from a more spiritual point of view, as Clement of Alexandria asserted, is therefore perfectly well founded in fact; we set it down as a secondary aim, or, to speak more correctly, as a means subservient to the principal aim. Reuss thinks that this combination of certain secondary aims with the principal one "goes only to betray the weakness of those hypotheses." But is there a single historical work in existence which really follows only one aim, and which does not now and again take the liberty of working to some secondary result? Thiers assuredly did not write the history of the Consulate and of the Empire with the view of completing previous narratives. But will he refuse now and again to give special prominence to facts which his predecessors may have omitted, or to rectify those which in his view have been given inaccurately or incompletely? It is not therefore as "a slave of the most vulgar patristic tradition" that we maintain, as Reuss says, "so poor a thesis."<sup>1</sup> It is

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire de la théol. chrétienne*, ii. p. 312.

because of the facts, undeniable facts, to which even Reuss in his last work has found himself forced at length to open his eyes,<sup>1</sup> that we continue to maintain this view.

We persist even in a third opinion, not less opposed to the views of this critic. We maintain the truth, within certain limits, of the *polemical* aim ascribed to our Gospel by many Fathers, and by a goodly number of modern critics. The First Epistle of John incontestably proves that the author of our Gospel lived amid surroundings where already not a few false doctrines had sprung up within the church. We are perfectly at one with Keim and many others in recognising that the principal heresy combated in that Epistle was that of *Cerinthus*, known to the Fathers as the adversary of John at Ephesus. He taught that the true Christ, the Son of God, was not at all that poor Jew the son of Joseph, called Jesus, who died on the cross, but a heavenly Being who descended on Him at His baptism, and adopted Him temporarily as His organ, but who left Him to reascend to heaven before the Passion. Nothing better accounts than this doctrine for the polemic of 1 John ii. 22: "Who is a liar save him that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?" Comp. also ch. iv. 1-3. Now can it be denied that the central word of our Gospel: "The Word was made flesh," cuts right at this error by affirming, in the fact of the incarnation, the organic and permanent union of divinity and humanity in the person of Jesus Christ?—The same saying set aside, on the one hand, the ordinary heresy of the *Ebionites*, who, without falling into the subtilties of Cerinthus, simply denied the divinity of the Christ; and, on the other, the *Gnostic* error, already existing perhaps in some minds, of a divine Christ who had taken nothing of humanity but the appearance. John thus placed a rock in the midst of the church against which the waves of the most opposite false doctrines must be broken. It was an indirect polemic, the only one suited to a historical work, but which was completed and defined by the more direct polemic of the Epistle.

Neither does this Epistle of John allow us to overlook in certain passages of the Gospel the intention of refuting the pretensions of John the Baptist's disciples, who from the first

<sup>1</sup> See the note quoted p. 95.

had taken their place among the adversaries of the Lord. When the apostle says, 1 Ep. v. 6: "He, Jesus the Christ, is He who came with water and blood, not with water only, but with water and blood," is it not indisputable that he means to set aside the pretended Messiahship of John the Baptist, whom his disciples declared to be the Christ, though He had offered to the world only the symbolical purification of water-baptism, and not real purification by the blood of expiation? If, from this evidently polemical passage, we return to these declarations of the Gospel: "He [John] was not that light; but he came to bear witness to the light" (i. 8); "Who art thou? And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ" (i. 19, 20); "And his disciples came to him and said, Behold, He to whom thou barest witness baptizeth! . . . John answered, Ye are my witnesses that I said unto you, I am not the Christ" (iii. 26-28),—we shall be obliged to yield to the evidence, and to acknowledge that John in these sayings and narratives had in view former disciples of the forerunner, who, influenced by jealous hatred of Christ and the gospel, went the length of declaring their old master to be the Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

The polemical aim, as a secondary one, seems to us therefore justified by facts. And what more natural indeed? When one establishes a truth, especially a truth of the first importance, he establishes it, no doubt, by itself, and in consideration of its intrinsic worth; but not without desiring, at the same time, to set aside the errors which might supplant it or paralyse its beneficent effects.

There is only one aim, among those which have been mentioned, which we found ourselves forced to exclude absolutely; it is—we repeat it to the great scandal of Reuss—the *speculative* aim, the only one which this critic admits. Let us explain. In the view of Reuss and many others, the fourth Gospel is intended to assert in the church a new theory regarding the person of Jesus, which the author

<sup>1</sup> Apollos (Acts xviii.) and the twelve disciples of John (Acts xix.) certainly did not go so far. But it is not merely the circumstance related John iii. 25 ff. which shows us the secret hatred of a part of John's disciples to Jesus; there are also facts related by the Synoptics; comp. Matt. ix. 14 and parall., and perhaps even xi. 2 ff., for the disciples must by their reports have provoked this step taken by John.

had formed personally by identifying Christ with the divine Logos with which the Alexandrine philosophy had made him acquainted. We have shown that the facts, when seriously investigated, are not in harmony with this view, which, besides, gives the lie to the author's own declaration (xx. 30, 31). For in this passage he does not speak of his intention to raise faith to the state of speculative knowledge, but simply of his desire to strengthen faith itself, by presenting to it its object, Jesus the Messiah and the Son of God, in His fulness, and agreeably to all the signs in which He had displayed His unparalleled glory in his presence and that of his fellow-disciples. There is no place in such a programme for a Christ who should be only the fruit of the evangelist's metaphysical speculations. Never, besides, in our Gospel is faith anything else than the assimilation of testimony (i. 7); and testimony relates to a historical fact, not to an idea. It is possible, indeed, to imagine Thiers writing the history of Napoleon with the intention of displaying the greatness of his hero; it is possible also to imagine him now and again completing and correcting the narratives anterior to his own, or even indirectly justifying the political and financial measures of the great monarch, by allusions to false theories in circulation on those questions. But what the historian would certainly never have done would have been to make use of his hero's person as a mouthpiece to spread over the world any theory whatever which belonged to himself, and with this view to ascribe to him acts which he had never done, or discourses which he had never delivered.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In my first edition I expressed myself thus: "The only aim positively excluded by that which we have just deduced from the declaration of the author (xx. 30, 31) is the speculative or didactic aim, the intention of satisfying the understanding by giving Christian dogma a new development." Reuss quotes this sentence, suppressing the words: "the intention of *satisfying the understanding*." Now these omitted words are precisely those which explained what I here understood by *didactic* aim. It is perfectly clear that in relating John proposed to *teach*; the only question is, whether this instructive narrative was intended to strengthen faith, as he himself asserts, and as I also assert, or was composed with the view of *satisfying the understanding*. To suppress these last words is to render my thought doubtful and absurd. In my second edition, to avoid all ambiguity, I wholly suppressed the term *didactic* in this sense, and said: "The only excluded aim . . . is the philosophic or speculative aim" (i. p. 294).

To confirm the theological and speculative aim attributed by him to our Gospel, Reuss asks "if it was not this book which served as a basis and point of departure for the formulas of Nice and Chalcedon" (p. 33).—I answer, No; for the subject of those formulas was not the texts of John. It was the fact of the incarnation itself, the union of the divine and human in the person of Christ regarding the mode of which it was sought to reach an understanding. Now this fact is not taught only in the fourth Gospel. It was taught, as we have seen, in the Epistles of St. Paul (Col. i.; Phil. ii.; 1 Cor. viii. and x., etc.), in the Epistle to the Hebrews (ch. i. and ii.), in the Apocalypse, even in the Synoptics. The Johannine Gospel discovered the expression which best sets in relief the union of the divine and human in Christ; but this union itself forms the basis of all the writings of the New Testament. It was not therefore the fourth Gospel, it was the Christian fact which obliged the Fathers of Nice and Chalcedon to seek formulas fitted to give account of this contrast which forms the supreme greatness of Christianity, while it is its greatest mystery.<sup>1</sup>

I have pleasure in closing the discussion of this subject with the following lines from B. Weiss, in which I find my view fully stated: "To expound the glory of the divine Logos as he had beheld it in the earthly life of Jesus (i. 14), as it had become more and more grandly revealed in conflict with unbelieving and hostile Judaism, and as it had led receptive souls to an ever firmer faith and an ever happier contemplation,—such is the wish of the evangelist. This fundamental idea of the narrative does not in the least impair its historical character, because it was derived from the facts themselves through which the author lived, and because he confines himself to pointing out its realization in history."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We do not return here to the aims set forth by Baur and Hilgenfeld. We think that the remarks, pp. 272-274, may suffice.

<sup>2</sup> Introduction to the *Commentary on John's Gospel*, p. 41. Among recent hypotheses we may further note, as particularly curious, the system set forth by Noack in his work, *Aus der Jordan-Wiege nach Golgotha*, 1870: Jesus, the son of Mary and a Samaritan soldier, came, in very consequence of that discreditable birth, to regard God as his Father. He lived in a constant state of ecstasy, which he maintained by artificial means, fasting for instance. After having kept himself at that artificial elevation till he could do so no longer, he

Shortly after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Apostle John, set free from all duty to his own people, came and settled in Asia Minor. There flourished the magnificent churches planted by the labours of the Apostle Paul. But the prophecy of that same apostle: "I know that after my departure shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts xx. 29), began to be fulfilled. An apostolic hand was needed to direct those churches. Round about Ephesus there stretched the fairest field for Christian work. We have already said with a great writer: "The church's centre of gravity was no longer at Jerusalem; it was not yet at Rome; it was at Ephesus." Moreover, this city was not only the great commercial mart between Asia and Europe, but also the meeting-place of a rich and active intellectual exchange between the religious and philosophical movements of the East and the culture of the West. It was the resort of the orators of every school, of the partisans of every system.

On such a theatre, the Palestinian apostle must have grown daily, not certainly in the knowledge of the person and work of Jesus, but in acquaintance with the manifold relations, sympathetic or hostile, between the Gospel and the various tendencies of human wisdom. Those Christian populations to whom St. Paul had opened the way of salvation by instructing them in the contrast between the state of sin and that of grace, and by showing them the means of passing from the one to the other, John now introduced to the full knowledge of the Saviour's person; he spread out before their view a great number of salient facts which, for one reason or another, tradition had left in the shade, many sublime lessons which had been profoundly impressed on his heart, and which he alone had preserved; he described the relations, so full of love and condescension, which the Lord had maintained with His own, and the proofs which He had given them in this intisought for death; and the person who assisted him to realize that wish, and so became the necessary to this final act in his life, was—Judas. He it is who was *the disciple whom Jesus loved*, it is he who was the author of the fourth Gospel, which underwent a transformation at a later period, but the primitive meaning of which was restored by Noack. Jesus died on Gerizim, whither he had withdrawn with his seven disciples, and where, with the help of Judas, he fell into the hands of his enemies, and was set free from life.

mate communion of His divine greatness and His filial relation to the Father. All these elements in the knowledge of Christ which he brought with him, acquire a new value from the relation in which they were placed amid such surroundings, to the speculations of all kinds which were current there.

The day came, no doubt after many years, when the churches said to themselves that the apostle who was the depositary of such treasures would not live always, and did not belong to them alone; and measuring the distance between the teaching which they had enjoyed and that which they found given in the existing Gospels, they asked John to put in writing what he had narrated to them. He consented, and opened his work with a preface, in which, putting his history into connection with those efforts of human wisdom of which he was daily witness, he laid down with a firm hand the central point of the Gospel history, the incarnation, and impressed every reader with the vital importance of the history he was about to read: the Christ, the subject of the work, would be *life* to him, as well as to the disciples, if he received Him; *death*, as to the Jews, if he rejected Him (John i. 1-18).

Later, there proceeded from his apostolical labours in those same churches the same apostle's *first Epistle*, in which as a father he addresses mature men, youths, and children, and in which he alludes in the first lines to the testimony which he does not cease to give among them to that great fact of the incarnation which he, as it were, *saw with his eyes, and touched with his hands*. Some have thought to find in ver. 4: "And we write unto you" (comp. ii. 14, 21, 26, etc.), an allusion to the composition and sending of the Gospel. We do not think we are authorized by the context to apply these expressions to any other writing than the Epistle itself.

The *two small Epistles* issued from the same surroundings. They seem to us, indeed, to belong to the same author. Independently of the identity of style, who else than John could have designated himself simply by the title: *the Elder* (*ὁ πρεσβύτερος*), without adding his name? An official presbyter of the church of Ephesus could not have done so, for he had colleagues, elders as well as himself; and if the word is taken here in the sense it has in the fragment of Papias: *an immediate disciple of the Lord*, no other than the Apostle



John could appropriate the name so absolutely, and as an exclusive title.

Finally, it was no doubt later still, during a temporary exile, and under the impression of Domitian's recent persecution, that John composed his last work: the *Apocalypse*, in which, contemplating as from a rocky height the age that had gone past, and those that were to follow, he completes the view of Christ *come* by that of Christ *coming again*, and prepares the church for the prolonged struggles and the final crisis which shall precede His return.<sup>1</sup>

There is a fact fitted to awaken the reflection of thinkers. St. Paul, the founder of the churches of Asia Minor, must have left his type of doctrine deeply impressed on the life of those churches. And yet the Pauline impress is almost effaced in the whole theological literature of Asia Minor in the second century. And this disappearance is by no means the effect of weakening or decay; there is a substitution. It is the appearance of a new impress, equal at least in dignity to the former, the trace of another influence not less Christian, but of a different character. Another equally powerful personality has passed through them, and given a particular and entirely new stamp to the Christian life and thought of those countries. This phenomenon is the more remarkable because the history of the church of the West presents to us one of a wholly opposite kind. Here the Pauline type remains; it reigns without a rival down to the third and fourth centuries; it recurs at every instant in the conflicts of a purely anthropological character which agitate this part of the church. And when it is gradually effaced, it is not to give place to another quite as elevated and spiritual, but it is in the way of gradual weakening and a course of growing materialization and ritualism.

This broad fact should suffice to prove that the two Johanne books, which are the documents of the new type impressed on the churches of Asia, the fourth Gospel and the first Epistle, are not the works of a Christian of second rank, of some unknown disciple, but that they proceed from one of the *peers* of the apostle of the Gentiles, one of those disciples

<sup>1</sup> For reasons which prevent us from placing the composition of the *Apocalypse* earlier, see my *Etudes bibliques*, 3d ed. t. ii. pp. 325-330.

who drank at the fountainhead, an immediate and particularly intimate heir of Christ.

We are well aware what stops short a number of excellent minds, when they would sum up in the inmost tribunal the acts of this great process with a sentence favourable to the apostolic origin of our Gospel. They are afraid, if they recognise in Christ the appearance of a Divine Being, that they will lose in Him the true man. This anxiety will vanish the instant they substitute for the traditional notion of the incarnation the true biblical notion of this supreme fact. From the truly scriptural point of view, indeed, there are not in Christ two opposite and contradictory modes of being, proceeding side by side in one and the same person. What the apostles show us in Him, is a human mode of existence *substituted*, through the voluntary humiliation of the Saviour of men, for His divine mode of existence,—then transformed, by a holy and normal development, so as to be able to serve as an organ for the divine life, and to realize the original glory of the Son of God. And let us not forget that this transformation of our human existence into a glorified humanity is not carried out in Christ alone; it is carried out in Him, only that through Him it may be realized in all those who are united to Him by faith: "To all them that received Him, He gave power to become sons of God, even to them that believe in His name; and [in fact] the Word was made flesh" (i. 13, 14). If the Son abandons for a time the divine state to descend into our human mode of being, it is to draw us into that ascending movement which, from the day of His incarnation, He impresses in His very person on the history of humanity, which from Pentecost onwards He communicates to all believers, and the goal of which is to be: *God all in all*, as its point of departure was: *God all in one*.

The domain of being passes infinitely beyond that of thought, not absolute thought, but ours.—Do we not see, even in our narrowly limited human life, the inspirations of love infinitely transcending the calculations of the understanding? How much more when the matter in question is the inspirations of divine love in relation to the thoughts of the human mind!

To accept the bringing down by faith into the sphere of

human life the living gift of eternal love, is to do three things all alike salutary. It is to dethrone man in his own heart; for the Son of God, by His voluntary self-abasement, constrains us to the sacrifice of self (Phil. ii. 5 ff.). It belongs to it to open heaven; for such a gift is an indissoluble bond between the heart of God and that of every man who accepts it. It is to make the believer the eternal abode of God; for Christ in him is God in him. Thereby God reigns.

But suppress this gift by refusing or diminishing it,—and this is what those labour to achieve who make the fourth Gospel a treatise of theology instead of a history,—the human sphere closes on itself; immediately man asserts himself; he is no longer nourished except from self; God withdraws. Man is enthroned and reigns here below.

The thought of the gift of the only Son is not the fruit of human speculation; it bears within it the seal of its divine origin. God alone could have thought thus, because God alone can love thus.

Let us now with this certainty approach the study of the pages in which this great fact of divine love has been most distinctly revealed to the world; and may these pages themselves speak louder than any pleader, and the time come when they shall no more need an advocate!

COMMENTARY

ON THE

GOSPEL OF ST. JOHN.

## PREFACE TO THE COMMENTARY.

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I FEEL myself constrained, in publishing this commentary anew, to repeat the Dedication which accompanied the first edition. The words which I on that occasion addressed to the friend who since then has been removed from the scene of faith to that of sight, expressed, in a passing form, feelings which have never ceased to fill my heart. That Dedication will in particular apprise the studious youth of France and Switzerland how constantly they have been before my mind in the course of my former and my new studies, the fruit of which is offered to them in these pages.

In the preface to his *Bibelwerk*, addressed to the church, M. de Bunsen thus expresses himself: "If the Gospel of John is not the historical narrative of an eye-witness, but a myth, then we have no historical Christ, . . . and it is either a piece of the blindest superficiality or the bitterest irony to attempt to beguile us into the belief that a collective (*gemeindlich*) Christianity can still subsist on such a supposition" (p. x.).

The conditions on which a collective Christianity may exist differ, indeed, from those of individual Christianity. The individual may to a certain extent find spiritual life and moral health in faith in a Son of man who gradually ascends to heaven and becomes God. Such a believer is like the woman who touched the hem of Jesus' garment and obtained healing virtue by the touch.

But the creative power which produced the church, which has upheld it till now throughout the ages, and which guarantees its future existence and its final triumph—this cannot

proceed from attachment to a man who has become God; it emanates only from faith in the Son of God made man, faith in the Christ who, before ascending to God, came down from His presence as the perfect gift of His love. The Son of man deified is still man exalted. The Son of God made man is God glorified. And hence the bread "which came down from heaven" is also the only bread which "giveth life unto the world." Without faith in the *Word made flesh*, the church at the end of a few generations would be mute, and Christianity would share the lot of the forms which preceded it. This is the danger which more than ever threatens the world in our day.

In recent French publications I have sometimes met with statements from which it would follow that the Tübingen School, the great adversary of the fourth Gospel and champion of naturalism, was in a state of complete dissolution, and henceforth destitute of all influence. This, I fear, is an illusion. True, this School abandons the most advanced positions which it took up at first. It proceeds with more circumspection than at its first appearance. But by this moderation it has visibly extended its influence. And its action is so far from being exhausted at the present hour, that the traces of it are more and more to be found even among men who but lately showed themselves still independent of this powerful scientific current. The first phase of it is at an end. But that which is appearing will not be less formidable to the faith of the church and positive Christianity. The crisis through which the Christian world is passing has not reached its apogee.

I have sought in the first volume of this work, the Critical Introduction, to expound as clearly and fully and loyally as possible what is now called *the Johannine question*. And men who are conversant with the intricate studies of modern criticism, such as Professor Mangold, have not refused their testimony to my having written with a full knowledge of the question (*Theologische Literaturzeitung*, 1876, No. 14).

But it is impossible nowadays to conceal from ourselves the fact,—the question of the *Johannine writing* is determined by another graver still: that of the *Johannine Christ*; and most frequently it is the latter which sways the solution of the former. Nothing can prevent the critic, whose inward feeling, for one reason or another, is repugnant to the Christ of John, from resolving the question of the fourth Gospel in a way conformed to the secret wish of his antipathy; as, on the other hand, the author, whose deepest and holiest aspirations are awakened on meeting with the figure of that same Christ, “full of grace and truth,” will soon find in the lights proceeding from such profound sympathy the solution of critical difficulties which have been declared insurmountable.

When, on the one hand, we see Volkmar, that he may be able to place the composition of the Gospel of the Logos about 160, resolved to make its author the disciple of Justin (!),—and when, on the other hand, we see Keim, obliged by his testimonies and quotations to carry back the date of the composition to the first third of the second century, yet (that he may be able effectively to combat its authenticity, notwithstanding the date thrown back so early) going the length of denying that the Apostle John made any sojourn in Asia Minor at the end of the first century (!),—in view of those two facts, it is obvious that criticism, that would-be impartial and coldly objective science, is *capable of anything* to meet the secret wishes of the party pursuing it, because this is not abstract science, but a *man* too often governed by personal impressions and *à priori* principles which historical investigation does not touch nor modify, but which, on the contrary, hold the latter under their sway.

The study of the book itself may supplement in a way the weakness of critical discussion. The decisive influences which tell on the unprejudiced heart proceed most frequently from the Word itself. In this respect the commentator's task will consequently be to labour to scatter the mists which obscure

the clearness of the text, in order to facilitate that moral action which the book is capable of exercising over the reader by its own intrinsic virtue.

The only important exegetical works which we know on our Gospel since the publication of this commentary in 1863 and 1864, are Bäumlein's short treatise (1863), the author of which occasionally makes admirable use of his philological tact and erudition; the fifth edition of Meyer's excellent and indispensable commentary (1869), and the second edition of Luthardt's commentary, the last volume of which has just appeared (1876). Would that I could thank the second of those authors, the venerable Meyer, for the care with which he has referred throughout to my work. But he has entered on his rest, and my voice can no more reach him. I am the more happy to express to M. Luthardt my acknowledgments for the kindly attention which he has thought good to show me. What matters it that, in those exegetical discussions, differences are more conspicuous than agreements? This is inevitable. Those points are naturally passed over in silence in regard to which harmony is obtained.

The attentive reader who has studied the first edition of this commentary will easily appreciate the amount of labour which I have bestowed on its revision. Every page will furnish him with examples. More than ever do I feel the responsibility of expounding such a writing as that of John. This Gospel is the gem of the church, as its author was the gem of the apostolate. May this commentary not obscure too much the splendour of this unrivalled book! May it contribute in some little measure to make it shine with a livelier brilliance, to the glory of Him who was and who is the eternal brightness of the glory of God (2 Cor. iv. 6)!

NEUCHÂTEL, *November 1876.*



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## **INTRODUCTION.**

## INTRODUCTION.

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**D**EVOTING the first part of our volume to the general introduction to the Fourth Gospel, we have reserved two subjects which, from their very nature, appear to us more appropriately treated in a special introduction to the commentary properly so called. These are the statement of the leading opinions in regard to the *plan* of the Gospel, and the enumeration of the most important *documents* in which the text of this narrative has been preserved to us. These two topics form the subject of the two chapters of this introduction.

### CHAPTER I.

#### THE DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF THE PLAN OF THE GOSPEL.

Between the exegesis of the Fathers and modern works on the Gospel of John there is a marked difference. With the former, the idea of a plan and a systematic order seems almost to have no existence, so entirely is the historical character of the writing assumed as certain. According to the modern conception, on the contrary, of which Baur's work is the most complete expression, the *idea* plays so decisive a part, that not only does it determine its order and plan, but furnishes even its substance, so that fact, as such, is almost annihilated; and that allegorical exposition, the name of which till now recalled the worst days of exegesis, is reinstated as the really normal method of interpretation. In the eyes of the ancients, our Gospel was only a collection of facts and discourses accidentally connected with one another. At the present day, on the

contrary, it is a work of the reason rigorously systematic, the purest synthesis of the Christian idea, but a work as independent of history as it is possible for the Ethics of Spinoza to be of sensible realities.

This complete reversal of the point of view has come about gradually. The works of Lampe, de Wette, Schweizer, and Baur seem to me to form the main points in this scientific process.<sup>1</sup>

Lampe was the first to propose, according to Lücke, a general division of the Gospel. It was still very rude: 1. The prologue, i. 1-18; 2. The narrative, i. 19-xx. 29; 3. The epilogue, xx. 30-xxi. 25. Then, what had greater value, he subdivided the narrative into two parts: *A*, The public ministry of our Lord, i. 19-xii. 50; *B*, The last acts of His life, xiii. 1-xx. 29. Lampe had thus put his finger upon one of the leading divisions of the Gospel. All his successors who have effaced the boundary line between chaps. xii. and xiii. have gone backward in the understanding of John's work.

Eichhorn made no change in this division. Only he gave other titles to the two parts of the narrative properly so called: 1. The first, i. 19-xii., was intended, according to him, to demonstrate that Jesus is the promised *Messiah*; 2. The second, xiii.-xx., contains the account of the *last days* of His life. This was not a real improvement. The contents of the first part are badly designated (Eichhorn applies to the first twelve chapters what really applies only to the first four); and the idea of the second part is not logically co-ordinate with that of the first.

Before Eichhorn, Bengel<sup>2</sup> had endeavoured to settle the division of the Gospel on another principle. After ingeniously bringing into correspondence the initial week (i. 19-ii. 11) and the final week (xii. 1-xx. 31), regarding them as pendants, he divided the intermediate history according to the feasts, holding chiefly by the three journeys of Jesus to Jerusalem, mentioned ii. 13 (Passover), v. 1 (Pentecost, according to Bengel), vii. 2 (Tabernacles). But this arrangement evidently rested on too external a principle. It had, besides, the great disadvantage of obliterating the separation so strongly marked

<sup>1</sup> In treating this subject, we are under special obligation to the work of Luthardt, *das Joh. Evang.*, 2d ed., i. pp. 200-222.

<sup>2</sup> *Gnomon N. T.*, 1742.

by the evangelist himself, and indicated by Lampe, between chap. xii. and xiii.

Nevertheless, Bengel was followed by Olshausen, who, in accordance with this principle of division, laid down these four parts: 1. i.-vi.; 2. vii.-xi.; 3. xii.-xvii.; 4. xviii.-xxi. Lücke himself, in his first two editions, despaired of reaching a profounder plan, and contented himself with striving to improve the division which is founded on the journeys to the feasts.

De Wette was the first to discern and bring out the development of one idea in our Gospel. The *glory of Christ*, such was the thought round which the entire work seemed to him to revolve: 1. The first chapter unfolds the idea summarily; 2. The first part of the narrative (ii.-xii.) exhibits it translated into action in the ministry of Jesus, and that: *A*, By particular examples (ii.-vi.); *B*, By the preparation for the catastrophe during the last visits of Jesus to Judea (vii.-xii.); 3. The glory of our Lord appears in all its brightness in the second part of the narrative (xiii.-xx.), and that: *A*, Inwardly and morally, in His sufferings and death (xiii.-xix.); and *B*, Outwardly and sensibly, in the triumphant event of the resurrection (xx.).

This great and beautiful conception, by which de Wette certainly forms an epoch in the understanding of our Gospel, prevailed in exegesis for a time. Lücke came decidedly under its influence in his third edition; but at the same time he introduced a subdivision, which must not be lost sight of. That is the separation between chap. iv. and v. Indeed, up to chap. iv. the opposition to Jesus does not yet make itself distinctly known. From chap. v. it gives character to the narrative, and goes on increasing to chap. xii.

Baumgarten-Crusius, taking advantage of de Wette's conception, and of the happy subdivision introduced by Lücke, was led to adopt the following arrangement:—1. The works of Christ, i.-iv.; 2. His struggles, v.-xii.; 3. His moral victory, xiii.-xix.; 4. His final glory, xx. It was de Wette's idea put in a still better form than it had been by de Wette himself. It was the first thoroughly rational division of the whole contents of our Gospel. Almost all the leading divisions of the narrative were established and indicated (v., xiii., xx.).

Yet the division of de Wette and of those who followed

him takes account of only one of the elements of the narrative, the objective factor, if one may so speak, Christ and His manifestation. But there is another element in John's narrative, the subjective factor, the conduct of men towards our Lord on occasion of His revelation, the faith of some and the unbelief of others.

Alexander Schweizer vindicated a place for this human element in the general order of our Gospel. He assigned it even the decisive part, and that while resting mainly on the side of unbelief. He maintains the following plan, which reproduces precisely the leading sections which we have just indicated:—1. The struggle making itself heard in the distance, i.-iv.; 2. Breaking out in all its violence, v.-xii.; 3. The issue, xiii.-xx. Thus understood, the Gospel becomes a drama, and assumes a tragic interest. But in the conduct of men towards our Lord, unbelief is but one side. Does not the element of faith remain too much in the background in this conception of Schweizer? The factor thus neglected could not long fail to vindicate its place.

Before coming to this point, so easily foreseen, we ought to mention some remarkable works which appear to us to be connected, if not historically at least in principle, with the standpoint already mentioned. Like de Wette and Baumgarten-Crusius, M. Reuss makes the general order of the Gospel turn on the revelation of Christ.<sup>1</sup> He maintains three parts: 1. Jesus revealing Himself to the *world*, i.-xii.; enrolling, i.-iv.; then selecting, v.-xii.; 2. Jesus revealing Himself to *His own*, xiii.-xvii., seeking to infuse into their heart, and to convert into their innermost life, the speculative ideas expressed in the first part in a dogmatical or polemical form. Thus far the order is perfectly logical, and in those few words there are undoubtedly contained ideas fitted to shed light on the progress of Christ's work in our fourth Gospel. But here arises a difficulty, due to the general standpoint which M. Reuss takes up in regard to the work of John: the rational division is exhausted. There is no third term to be placed logically beside the *world* and *believers*. And yet the Gospel is not at an end, and a place must be assigned to the three

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. de la Théol. chrét.*, 2d ed., t. ii., pp. 392-394. *Die Gesch. der heil. Schr. N. T.*, 5th ed., 1874, sec. 221.

chapters which yet remain. M. Reuss forms them into a third part, which he entitles, "The denouement of the two relations previously established," xviii.-xx. But how does the narrative of Christ's death and resurrection resolve the knot formed by the twofold relation of Jesus to the world and believers? Inasmuch, answers M. Reuss, as "Jesus remains dead to the unbelieving, while to believers He rises again victoriously." If, in such a matter, an ingenious phrase were enough, one might declare himself satisfied. But can M. Reuss be so himself? Must he not perceive that a purely historical termination does not square with a speculative gospel—an *ideal* work, such as *his* Gospel of John is? Speculative theorems and historic facts are not to be summed up in order one, two, three, unless we have come to the conclusion to see in the latter also nothing but ideas, a religion, or a system of morals in action. And is not this what M. Reuss really seems to do, when he closes his analysis of our Gospel with the words, "Thus it is that the history to its very end is the mirror of religious truths"? What! events like those of the Saviour's death and resurrection transformed into simple illustrations of religious truth,—in other words, of John's metaphysics? But in no other way is it possible for M. Reuss to make of the Gospel a homogeneous whole, and to co-ordinate the third part logically with the other two. We see at what cost this higher conception must be purchased, which regards the fourth Gospel as formed by John's *reflections on the person of Christ!*

Ebrard returned so fully to the positive character of the history, that he fell back on the plan of Bengel, and anew connected the order of our Gospel with the feast-journeys. But he discovered a profounder meaning for this principle of division, which is apparently altogether external. He justly remarked that the journeys of Jesus to Judea are the real knots of the history; for, Jerusalem being the centre of resistance, every period during which Jesus resided in the capital, instead of being a step towards His exaltation, became one towards the final catastrophe. Nevertheless, we have already seen, and we shall again see, the insufficiency of this division.

De Wette had made everything turn on the objective element, the manifestation of the glory of Jesus. Schweizer

had set prominently in relief one of the subjective factors, viz. unbelief. Baur laid hold of the other. He sought to point out in our Gospel the (ideal) history of the development of faith. To this task he devoted the resources of a mind at once the most sagacious and unshrinking; and thus he has powerfully contributed to demonstrate the unity of John's work. He divided the Gospel into nine sections, but which, excepting the prologue, and passing over certain secondary divisions, may be reduced to five: 1. The first manifestations of the Word, and the first symptoms of faith and unbelief resulting therefrom, i.-vi. 2. The (dialectic) victory of faith over its opposite, unbelief, vii.-xii. 3. The positive development of faith, xiii.-xvii. Arrived at this point, there is the same perplexity for Baur as for M. Reuss. How to pass from idea to history, from the dialectic development of faith to the positive facts of the Saviour's death and resurrection? The idea demands nothing more. In this way continues Baur. 4. The death of Jesus appears as the work of unbelief; 5. His resurrection as the consummation of faith. Such is the meaning of xviii.-xx. But, in spite of this dexterous manipulation, this last part is nevertheless an after-birth, as in the case of M. Reuss. The passion and resurrection are facts too grave to have their place seriously assigned them in the recital of the dialectical development of faith, and to be made mere indicators on the path which leads from the objection of Nathanael (chap. i.) to the cry of faith uttered by Thomas (chap. xx.). We must either idealize the fourth Gospel to the very end, or, by a retrogressive conclusion, starting from the truly historical character of the last part, recognise also that of the preceding parts.<sup>1</sup>

Luthardt accepted almost entirely the results of Baur's labours on the special point before us. Only as the basis of the development of faith he laid down the historical revelation of Christ, so well brought out by de Wette. The Son displays His glory; faith is born, but at the same time unbelief awakes;

<sup>1</sup> Here comes to light, in regard to a particular point, the difficulty which attaches to the entire philosophical standpoint on which Baur's theology rests. In virtue of what logical necessity does the idea pass from its pure existence to translate itself into fact? The pure idea leads only to the pure idea! The *fact* is there . . . , such is the only reason. Hegel himself was never able to find another.



and very soon Jesus can no longer manifest the divine principle which is in Him, except in conflict with the hostile elements which surround Him. Nevertheless, in the midst of this conflict, faith gathers strength in the disciples, and the moment arrives when Jesus, after having broken with the people and their leaders, gives Himself wholly to the faith of His own, and impresses on it the seal of perfection. Hence Luthardt gives the three following divisions:—1. Jesus beginning to reveal Himself as the Son of God, i.-iv.; 2. Jesus continuing to give testimony to Himself, while contending with Jewish unbelief, v.-xii.; 3. Jesus giving Himself completely to the faith of His own, xiii.-xx.

Luthardt, following in the steps of Baur, seems to me to have penetrated further than any one else into the spirit of the book, and into the inmost thought which guided the course of the narrative. And yet the defective point in the plan which he proposes is perfectly obvious; it is found in the last section. How are we to include the account of the passion in the third section, entitled, *Jesus and His own*? Luthardt is certainly mistaken when he confounds in one group elements so heterogeneous as those which are contained in his third part, xiii.-xx.

Meyer's division appears to me to be rather a retrograde step than one in advance. On the one hand, it raises secondary parts to the rank of principal parts. For example, in the first eleven chapters, which Meyer divides into four sections: 1. The first revelations of the glory of the Son, i. 1-ii. 11; 2. The continuation of this revelation in the face of growing faith and unbelief, ii. 12-iv.; 3. New revelations and growth of unbelief, v., vi.; 4. Unbelief arrived at its culminating point, vii.-xi. On the other hand, Meyer unites in one parts which are entirely distinct, when he throws together xii.-xx. into one group, entitled, 5. The highest manifestation of the glory of Jesus before, during, and after His passion.

M. Arnaud<sup>1</sup> returned to the division of Bengel, Olshausen, and Ebrard according to the feast-journeys. Thus, between the prologue and the resurrection, he has five parts, corresponding to the five journeys indicated by the evangelist: 1. ii. 13 (Passover); 2. v. 1 (feast not named); 3. vii. 2

<sup>1</sup> *Commentaire sur le N. T.*, t. ii., 1863.

(Tabernacles); 4. x. 22 (Dedication); 5. xii. 1 (Passover). Besides the disadvantage already referred to, of effacing the line of demarcation so distinctly traced by the evangelist himself between chaps. xii. and xiii., this division has the further defect of converting into a sort of appendix that whole important part of the narrative which is anterior to the first feast-journey, i. 19-ii. 12.

M. F. de Rougemont, in his translation of Olshausen's *Commentary*, 1844, has described the plan which, so far as the distinction and ordering of the parts goes, appears to me to come nearest to the truth: 1. Jesus attracts to Himself those who "do" the truth, i.-iv.; 2. He reveals Himself to the world, which rejects Him, v.-xii.; 3. He manifests Himself fully to His disciples, xiii.-xvii.; 4. He dies after having finished His work, xviii., xix.; 5. He rises again, and becomes through the Holy Ghost the source of life to believers, xx. The only defect in this arrangement seems to me to lie in the name which it gives to the contents of certain parts, and in the absence of a distinct logical relation between them.

The foregoing review has exhibited three principal factors in the narrative of our Gospel: Jesus, faith, and unbelief; or, to define more exactly: the manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah and Son of God; the birth, growth, and perfecting of faith in the disciples; the parallel development of national unbelief. De Wette, Schweizer, and Baur have shown us in their plans the chief example of three divisions founded solely or mainly on one of those factors. But those attempts have all failed. We have seen those frames break down in succession through the impossibility of including in them this or that part of the narrative; a fact which is easily explained if our Gospel is a work of a really historical nature. A rational framework applied to history must always have something artificial about it, and betray its insufficiency on some side. Fact must always pass beyond the ideal, because it includes the incalculable element of liberty. If, then, renouncing synthetical divisions, which are connected more or less with the view that the fourth Gospel is essentially a work of reason, we ask the book itself to give the secret of its internal arrangement, we find the narrative dividing itself into five groups, exhibiting a very natural gradation, which

the plans indicated above have successively brought to light:

1. i. 19-iv. The *manifestation of our Lord* as the Messiah; and as a subsidiary subject, the birth and first developments of faith, and the first hardly-perceptible symptoms of unbelief.

2. v.-xii. The powerful and rapid development of national *unbelief*, unfolding itself, however, on the basis of the growing revelation of Jesus as the Son of God, and advancing side by side with the development of the faith of the disciples, which is getting confirmed and rooted by means of those struggles.

3. xiii.-xvii. The energetic and decisive development of *faith* in the disciples during the last hours which they passed with their Master; and that by means of the highest revelations of Jesus, and in consequence of the expulsion of that disciple in whose person unbelief had till then maintained its footing, even in the bosom of the chosen circle.

4. xviii., xix. The consummation of national *unbelief* in the murder of the Messiah, contrasting with the calm shining of the glory of Jesus athwart that gloomy night, as well as with the silent growth of faith in the few disciples whose eyes were able to admit those mild glories.

5. xx. (xxi.) The appearances of the Risen One, which, as supreme revelations of Jesus, consummate the victory of *faith* over the last remains of unbelief in the apostolical college.

Exegesis will show whether this summary of the narrative is in conformity with the text and spirit of the writing. If it is so, the three chief elements which we have named will be unfolded simultaneously and face to face with one another in every part of the narrative, with this difference, that while the first—the revelation of Jesus—forms the permanent basis of the narrative, the other two—arise alternately, the one with an ever purer brilliancy, the other in more and more sombre hues, on this common background. Faith is born, i.-iv.; unbelief prevails, v.-xii.; faith reaches its relative perfection, xiii.-xvii.; unbelief is consummated, xviii., xix.; faith reaches its perfection, xx. (xxi.)

There is in the arrangement of the Gospel, as we have understood it, nothing systematic, nothing factitious. It is the photography of history. If exegesis establishes the reality of this plan, which is at once so natural and profound,

we shall find in the fact an important confirmation of the really historical character and the seriously practical aim of our Gospel.

Imagine a spring day with the sun rising in a bright sky. The ground, moistened with the snows of winter, greedily absorbs his warm rays; everything which is capable of life awakes and is renewed; nature travails. Yet, after some hours, vapours rise from the damp earth; they unite and form an obscure canopy. The sun is veiled; a storm is threatened. The plants, under the impulse which they have received, nevertheless accomplish their silent progress. At length, when the sun has reached the meridian, the storm breaks forth and rages; nature is given over to destructive powers; she loses for a time her quickening star. But at eventide the clouds disperse; calm is restored; and the sun, reappearing in more magnificent brilliancy than that which attended his rising, casts on all those plants—the children of his rays—a last smile and a sweet adieu.—Thus, as it appears to us, the work of St. John is developed. This plan, if it is real, is not the work of theological reflection; it is the product of long-contemplated history. Conceived in the calm of memory and the security of possession, it has nothing in common with the combinations of metaphysical labour or the subtle calculations of ecclesiastical policy.

## CHAPTER II.

### ON THE PRESERVATION OF THE TEXT.

The text of our Gospel has been preserved, in whole or in fragments, in three kinds of documents: *manuscripts, ancient versions, and quotations of the Fathers.*

#### I.

##### *The Manuscripts.*

The manuscripts (MSS.) are divided into two great classes:—those which are written in uncial letters called *majuscules* (Mjj.), and those in which we meet with the rounded and

cursive writing which has been in use since the tenth century of our era, the *minuscules* (Mnn.).<sup>1</sup>

I. The *majuscules* having acquired a sort of individual value in critical science, and having been raised to the rank of real personages, it is of importance to form a particular acquaintance with each of them. To facilitate the study of the reader, we shall divide them into three groups: 1. The *vetustissimi*; those, namely, which date from the fourth and fifth centuries, the patriarchs. 2. The *vetustiores*, ascending to the sixth and seventh centuries. 3. The *vetusti*, or simple veterans, the products of the eighth, ninth, and tenth centuries. They are designated, since the time of Wetstein, by means of the *majuscule* letters of the Latin, Greek, or even Hebrew alphabets.<sup>2</sup>

The *first* group comprehends at present four MSS., more or less complete, and four documents which are altogether fragmentary.

1. *Cod. Sinaiticus* (Ⲁ); at St. Petersburg; discovered by Tischendorf on the 4th February 1859 in the monastery of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai; dating, according to this learned author, from the first part of the fourth century; according to others,—Volkmar, for example,—from the end of the fourth or beginning of the fifth century; written, probably, at Alexandria; retouched by several correctors. It contains our Gospel without a blank. Published by Tischendorf, Leipsic 1863.

2. *Cod. Vaticanus* (B); dating, according to Tischendorf, from the middle of the fourth century; probably written in Egypt; containing our Gospel without a blank. Published by Tischendorf, *Nov. Test. Vaticanum*, Lipsiæ 1871.

3. *Cod. Ephraëmi* (C), No. 9 of the Imperial Library of Paris, *rescriptus*; according to Tischendorf, of the first part of the fifth century; written, probably, in Egypt; retouched in the sixth and ninth centuries. In the twelfth century the text of the New Testament was effaced to give place to that of the works of Ephrem, a Father of the Syrian church. The ancient writing has been recovered by chemical means, but this manuscript still presents considerable blanks. Of our Gospel, only

<sup>1</sup> We do not speak here of *Evangelistaria* and *Lectonaria*, embracing the contents of such pieces of the Gospels and Epistles as were set apart for regular reading in public worship.

<sup>2</sup> We shall employ the signs adopted by Tischendorf in his eighth and last edition of 1872.

the eight following passages have been restored: i. 1-41, iii. 33-v. 16, vi. 38-vii. 3, viii. 34-ix. 11, xi. 8-46, xiii. 8-xiv. 7, xvi. 21-xviii. 36, xx. 26 to the end of the Gospel.

4. *Cod. Alexandrinus* (A); at London; of the second half of the fifth century; written, probably, at Alexandria. One blank only in our Gospel: vi. 50-viii. 52.

5. Seven palimpsest fragments (I) found in Egypt by Tischendorf; dating from the fifth and sixth centuries, and containing of John's Gospel some passages of chaps. iv., xi., xii., xv., xvi., and xix.

6. Fragments brought from an Egyptian monastery (I<sup>b</sup>); at London; dating from the fourth or fifth centuries, according to Tischendorf; containing of John some verses of chaps. xiii. and xvi.

7. A palimpsest fragment (Q); of the fifth century, according to Tischendorf; found in the Wolfenbüttel Library; containing of our Gospel the two following passages: xii. 3-20, xiv. 3-22.

8. Some fragments of a *Cod. Borgianus* (T); at Rome, fifth century (Tischendorf), containing, parallel with the Egyptian translation called the Sahidic, the two passages: vi. 28-67, vii. 6-viii. 31.

The *second* group is more meagre. It contains only one ms. and five fragments, or collections of fragments.

9. *Cod. Cantabrigiensis* (D); at Cambridge; of the middle of the sixth century (Tischendorf); although filled with Alexandrine forms, it has no doubt been written in the West, and probably in Southern Gaul (Bleek, *Einl.* p. 707). Parallel with the Greek text there is found a Latin translation, earlier than that of Jerome. Two great blanks in our Gospel: i. 16-iii. 26, xviii. 13-xx. 13.

10. A palimpsest fragment (P); at Wolfenbüttel; of the sixth century; containing three passages of our Gospel: i. 29-41, ii. 13-25, xxi. 1-11.

11. Fragments of a splendid manuscript (N), four leaves of which are found at London, two at Vienna, six at Rome, thirty three at Patmos; of the end of the sixth century (Tischendorf); containing of John: xiv. 2-10, xv. 15-22.

12. Fragments obtained by Tischendorf from the *Porphyri* Library (ε<sup>c</sup> and ε); of the sixth century; passages of chaps. vi. and xviii.

13. Some fragments (T<sup>b</sup>); at St Petersburg; of the sixth century; passages of chaps. i., ii., and iv. of our Gospel.

14. Marginal annotations (F<sup>a</sup>) in the *Cod. Coislinianus* of

Paul's Epistles (H-202 of the Imperial Library of Paris); containing some verses of John from a text of the seventh century (v. 35 and vi. 53, 55).

The *third* group is the most considerable: it contains eleven MSS. more or less complete, and fragments of six others.

15. *Cod. Basileensis* (E); at Basle; of the eighth century; it appears to have been used in public worship in one of the churches of Constantinople; it contains the entire Gospel of John.

16. The beautiful Paris Cod. (L); of the eighth century; it wants only xxi. 15 to the end.

17. Fragments of a Cod. of the Barberini Library (Y); of the eighth century; containing of our Gospel: xvi. 3-xix. 41.

18. *Cod. Sangallensis* (Δ); written in the ninth century by the Scotch or Irish monks of the monastery of St. Gall; entire, except xix. 17-35. This Cod. contains an interlined Latin translation, which is neither that of Jerome nor the version anterior to that Father.

19. *Cod. Boreali* (F); at Utrecht; of the ninth century; containing of our Gospel: i. 1-xiii. 34, but with numerous blanks.

20. *Cod. Seidelii* (G); brought from the East by Seidel; at London; of the ninth or tenth centuries; two blanks: xviii. 5-19 and xix. 4-27.

21. A second *Cod. Seidelii* (H); at Hamburg; of the ninth or tenth centuries; some blanks in ix., x., xviii., and xx.

22. *Cod. Cyprius* (K); at Paris; of the ninth century; brought from the island of Cyprus to the Colbert Library; entire.

23. The Cod. of *des Camps* (M); at Paris; of the ninth century; presented to Louis XIV. in 1706 by the Abbé of des Camps; entire.

24. Fragments of a Cod. from Mount Athos (O); at Moscow; of the ninth century; containing i. 1-4 and xx. 10-13.

25. A fragment from the library of Moscow (V); of the ninth century; containing i. 1-vii. 39.

26. A Cod. brought from the East by Tischendorf (r); at Oxford and St. Petersburg; ninth century; containing iv. 14-viii. 3 and xv. 24-xix. 6.

27. A Cod. brought from the East by Tischendorf (Δ); at Oxford; ninth century; entire.

28. Fragment of a Cod. (X); in the University Library at Munich; containing passages of i., ii., vii.-xvi.

29. A Cod. brought from Smyrna by Tischendorf (Π); ninth century; entire.

30. A Cod. of the Vatican (S); of the year 949; entire.

31. A Cod. of Venice (U); of the tenth century; entire.

Thus we have our Gospel in thirty-one documents in uncial letters, entire, almost entire, or wholly fragmentary. The oldest of those MSS., it is well known, bear almost no trace of accentuation, punctuation, or separation of words and periods. These different elements were introduced into the text gradually; and that is one of the means which serve to determine the age of the manuscripts. We dare not therefore allow those elements of the text any sort of authority.

II. There are reckoned more than five hundred *minuscules* deposited in the different libraries of Europe. All have not yet been collated. Though they are all more recent in origin than the Mjj., some of them may nevertheless have been copied from documents which had a text anterior to that which the latter reproduce. Some occasionally offer very remarkable readings; witness the Cod. 63 (Tisch.), which alone exhibits the omission of John xxi. 25, now supported by the Cod. Sinaiticus.

## II.

### *The Old Versions.*

The translations (Vss.) have the disadvantage that they do not present the text of the New Testament directly, but leave it to be conjectured. Yet they, too, can render important services to the criticism of the text, especially when the question relates to the omission or interpolation of words and passages, and the more so as many of them are much earlier than our oldest manuscripts.

There are two of them which, for critical importance, excel all the others: the ancient Syriac translation called *Peschito*, and the old Latin translation which, from a passage of St. Augustine, has received the name of *Itala*.

#### I. *Peschito* (Syr.).

This translation (the name of which seems to signify the *simple*, the *faithful*<sup>1</sup>) goes back certainly to the second century

<sup>1</sup> Tischendorf thinks otherwise. See Bleek, *Einl.* p. 720; and J. B. Glaire, *Intr. hist. et crit.*, 1862, t. i. p. 187.



of our era, and seems from the first to have had an ecclesiastical destination. It is in general what its name indicates, faithful without servility. When necessary, it sacrifices the idiom of the Syriac language rather than depart greatly from the original text. The principal edition, that quoted by Tischendorf, is the edition of Leusden and Schaaf, 1709 and 1717 (Syr<sup>sch</sup>). Cureton, from a Syrian manuscript of the fourth century found in an Egyptian monastery, has published fragments of a translation of the Gospels which contain the following passages of John: i. 1-42, iii. 6-vii. 37, xiv. 11-28 (Syr<sup>cur</sup>).

There is another Syriac version, made at the beginning of the sixth century; it is called the *Philoxenian* translation (Syr<sup>p</sup>).

## II. Itala (It.).

Long before the time of St. Jerome, and probably from the middle of the second century, there existed a Latin translation of the New Testament. It was even more necessary in pro-consular Africa than in Italy, where the Greek language was better known. It is probable, therefore, that it was composed here and spread from this province. It appears to have been slavish to excess, and extremely rude. It existed in very varied forms. We possess several copies of those old Latin versions, first in bilingual manuscripts; as to the Gospel of John, the only one which contains it is Cod. D, the Latin translation of which is designated by d; then in particular manuscripts, such as the *Vercellensis*, of the fourth century (a); the *Veronensis*, of the fourth or fifth centuries (b); the *Colbertinus*, of the eleventh century (c), etc.

About the end of the fourth century, St. Jerome entered upon a work of revision in relation to this ancient translation, similar to that which, in the Syrian church, produced the Philoxenian translation. He corrected the version in use by ancient Greek manuscripts. This translation, the *Vulgate* (Vg.), is preserved in several documents of high antiquity, but which are far from being always in harmony with one another, or with the presently authorized form of this important version; for example, the Cod. *Amiatus* (am.) and the *Fuldensis* (fuld.), both of the sixth century.

Of the other ancient translations, the most interesting for critical use are the three *Egyptian* versions: the *Sahidic* (Sah.), in the dialect of Upper Egypt; the *Coptic* (Cop.) translation, in that of Lower Egypt; and the *Baschmuric* (Bas.) translation, in a third dialect, which Champollion the younger supposed to be that of Fayoum. What gives those versions a special interest is, first, their date (middle or end of the third century); and next, their intimate relation to the text of our oldest Greek manuscripts.

## III.

*The Fathers.*

The quotations from the New Testament contained in the writings of the Fathers have been called "Fragments of ancient manuscripts." This definition is inexact, except when the author intends to quote textually. Very often, the Fathers quote from memory, or merely according to the sense. The most interesting authors, so far as criticism of the text is concerned, are Irenæus (Ir.), Clement of Alexandria (Clem.), Tertullian (Tert.), Origen (Or.), Chrysostom (Chrys.). We shall often have to collate the readings of Origen with those of the oldest Greek mss.; and from the relations existing between them, we may have to draw some conclusions which are not without importance as bearing on the normal reconstruction of the primitive text. The readings of the heretics, and particularly (in so far as concerns our Gospel) of Heracleon, have also a certain value.

## IV.

The above remarks, as much abridged as possible, will suffice to put readers who have not yet busied themselves with the criticism of the text in a position to understand that part of our commentary which refers to this essential branch of exegesis, and to render accessible to them the great edition of Tischendorf (8th, 1872), in the notes of which there is concentrated the result of immense labours.

Since the time of Bengel, it has been an established point that the critical documents tend to form themselves into groups with a considerable measure of regularity. Thus, in Paul's Epistles, if we take a list of variations with an indication of the authorities on which the different readings rest, it is enough to run over a few pages to discover easily three groups of documents which sometimes follow each their own way, again unite two against one, sometimes also proceeding in unison. In the Gospels, those opposite camps tend to reduce themselves to two. But the strife is permanent; it is

reproduced almost at every verse. These are, on the one side, among the Mjj., B C L X;<sup>1</sup> among the vss., the Coptic translation; and among the Fathers, most notably Origen; on the other, among the MSS., the Mjj. E F G H K S U V Δ, and almost the entire body of the Mnn.; and among the Fathers, frequently Chrysostom. The other authorities: Ⳑ A D M Γ Δ Π, Syr. It., oscillate between those two parties; some inclining more habitually to one of the texts, the others towards the opposite text.

As the text presented by the authorities which are comprehended in the second of those two groups appears to be that which had prevailed in the churches of the Greek Empire, it is called *Byzantine*; while the opposite text, reproduced in the most ancient Greek MSS., evidently originating from Alexandria, has received the name of *Alexandrine*.

The question, then, which will present itself at every step will be this: to which of the two texts the preference is to be given. It is true, this is no longer a question in the eyes of many exegetes and critics; to hear them, it would seem that only ignorance or prejudice can still defend the Byzantine text. The editions of Lachmann and the work of M. Rilliet (introduction and translation) exhibit the climax of this tendency. Notwithstanding, Matthæi, Scholz, Rinck, and Reiche have undertaken, both in general and in a multitude of particular instances, to defend the Byzantine text. It is well known that this text is almost the same as that which is commonly called the *Received text* (T. R.).<sup>2</sup> For the Byzantine documents being the first which came into the hands of those who edited the New Testament after the discovery of printing, it was this text which accidentally prevailed in ordinary use, until the labours of Mill, Bengel, Wetstein, Griesbach, etc., having brought to light the readings of the opposite text contained in the oldest Greek MSS.,

<sup>1</sup> How does M. Rilliet (in his translation of the N. T. from the text of the *Cod. Vaticanus*, p. xxxiv.) arrange the MS. X in the other class? X proceeds almost constantly along with B C L.

<sup>2</sup> The sign Ⳕ (the Greek *st*), used by Tischendorf to designate the T. R., is used from the fact that it is in general the same as that of the large edition of Robert Stephen, *Stephani tertia*, of 1550. In the 145 to 150 passages where the reading of Stephen differs from the Received text (that of the Elzevir editions of 1624 and 1633), the latter is specially designated by Ⳕ.

a reaction took place against the Received text, and the balance inclined decidedly to the side of the Alexandrine text.

Is the question of superiority finally resolved? Can it even be settled in a general and absolute way? I cannot help doubting if it can. We are at this moment under the sway of a reaction; and it is the common fate of reactions to "pass beyond the truth." When we see Meyer, despite his evident prejudice in favour of the Alexandrine text, forced by his good exegetical sense to give the preference, by several relapses so to speak, in every chapter to the Byzantine reading; when we see Tischendorf himself, in his edition of 1859, previously to the discovery of the Sinaiticus, restoring to his text a multitude of Byzantine readings which he had discarded in preceding editions in favour of Alexandrine variations; when one has himself practised exegesis for a certain time, and has been obliged at every instant to recognise in the text of the MSS. B C L traces of arbitrary corrections arising from the grammatical purism of the Alexandrine literati,<sup>1</sup>—he feels that he must abstain from every *à priori* principle, and that substituting one prejudice for another would not be to advance science.

And is it not really a prejudice to imagine, as the learned ignorance of some does at the present day, especially since Tischendorf's recent good fortune, that the most anciently copied text is therefore the most ancient and pure? As if the epoch of the transcription of a text were the real date of the text! Does not a MS. of the tenth century copied from a document of the second present an older text than a MS. of the fourth century transcribed from a document of the third? Besides, the date of the original MS. is not even in this question the chief matter. The really grave question is as to the degree of confidence with which the copyist regarded the document which he was transcribing. If he copied it with docility, without arrogating the place of corrector and censor, the chances of alteration were infinitely reduced. But if the previous knowledge which he believed himself to have of the alterations which the text had undergone filled him with dis-

<sup>1</sup> Griesbach's good faith had already extorted from him the confession, "*Grammaticum egit Alexandrinus censor*" (Preface to his 2d edition).

trust of his model, there was no limit to the errors which his hardihood might commit. A transcription made in the fourth century under such conditions will be much more faulty than a copy executed in the tenth in a spirit of confiding simplicity.

I am free to believe, for my own part, that those suppositions are not altogether so gratuitous as might appear at first sight. It is neither from the fourth nor the fifth century that alterations of the text of the New Testament date. Origen complained of them bitterly even at the beginning of the third.<sup>1</sup> He complained at Alexandria itself, where the evil was consequently not less, but where it was probably more considerable than anywhere else. And yet it is to MSS. copied in that very city, and later than Origen by at least a century, that we are to attribute a superiority raised above all discussion!

But, it will be said, has not the Cod. Sinaiticus come to confirm in a striking way the superiority of the Alexandrine text? To have the enormous importance attributed to it by Tischendorf; and to merit the applause with which its appearance was hailed, this document would require to be anterior to the age when alterations were introduced into the text. Otherwise, what have we in this codex? A new witness to the already known Alexandrine text. May we not apply here the judicious observation of Griesbach: "Produce the same actor twenty times on the stage, with as many different costumes and names, he will yet be always the same person"? Let five or six documents more of the same kind be found, older than the Vaticanus and even the Sinaiticus, the question will not thereby be decided. What would be more decisive, would be the discovery of a document of the Greek text anterior to the period when the beginning of alterations can be established.

To sum up, there are only three suppositions possible: Either the Alexandrine text is on the whole the simple and natural reproduction of the primitive text, while the Byzantine

<sup>1</sup> *In Matth.* t. xv.: "It is evident that great diversity has been introduced into the manuscripts, either by the carelessness of certain copyists, or by the blameworthy audacity which has led some to correct the texts, or through the fault of those who allowed themselves to add or retrench what seemed to them good."

is the result of a gradual accommodation to the literary tastes which prevailed at Constantinople, and in the churches dependent on that metropolis; or the Byzantine text is the docile and simple transcription of the apostolic text, while we have in the Alexandrine text, with its continual abbreviations, the result of a work of correction in which the exegetes and grammarians of that capital of the scientific world thought themselves entitled to indulge, having to do with a text which they distrusted; or, finally, both suppositions are simultaneously true, and are realized, the one in one case, the other in another. . . . I do not pronounce. I merely ask of the reader an impartial and attentive study of the context in every particular case. All I wish by these reflections is, to keep open the question which there is an apparent wish to close, and to claim entire liberty in the discussion of details.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> We are happy to be able to quote in favour of our view the authority of Bäumlein: "No one class of manuscripts can be named whose readings absolutely deserve the preference" (*Comment. über d. Ev. Joh.* 1868, p. 1); and that of the eminent English critic Scrivener, who, after a profound and lengthened study of all the documents, lays down as a first principle of criticism: the impossibility of restoring the original form of the N. T. by consulting *only one class* of manuscripts, and demonstrates this proposition by enumerating a series of errors in the two most ancient manuscripts, the Sinaiticus and the Vaticanus. We had already maintained this view vigorously in our first edition.

## THE TITLE OF THE GOSPEL.



THE title appears in the MSS. in different forms. The simplest is that which we find in  $\aleph$  B D: *κατὰ Ἰωάννην* (*according to John*). The most of the Mjj. and  $\aleph$  have (at the end of the book), *εὐαγγέλιον κατὰ Ἰωάννην*, *Gospel according to John*; T. R., with a very large number of Mnn., *τὸ κατὰ Ἰ. εὐαγγ.*, *the Gospel according to John*. Stephen's third edition adds *ἅγιον* (*holy*) before *εὐαγγ.*, with several Mnn. Some Mnn. read, *ἐκ τοῦ κ. Ἰ. εὐαγγ.* The vss. also vary: *evang. Johannis* (Syr.); *ev. per Joh.* (Goth.); *ev. secundum Joh.* (Cop.); *ev. sanctum prædicationis Joh. præconis* (following certain editions of Syr.).

All these variations sufficiently prove that the title does not come from the hand of the author or editor of the Gospel. Had it belonged originally to the body of the work, it would be the same, or nearly so, in all the documents. It was undoubtedly added when the collection of the Gospels took place in the churches. Now, the forming of the Gospel collection came about more or less spontaneously in each locality, as is shown by the different arrangement of our four Gospels in the canons of the churches. The differences in the title are explained in the same way.

But what is the exact meaning of the phrase: "*according to John*"? From the time of the Manichean Faustus (Augustine, *contra Faustum*, xxxii. 2) down to our time, there have been learned authors who have given to *κατὰ*, *according to*, a very wide sense: Gospel compiled *according to the type of preaching* followed by Matthew, John, etc. So MM. Reuss (*Gesch. der heil. Schr. N. T.*, § 177) and Renan (*Vie de Jésus*, p. xvi).<sup>1</sup> The consequence would be, that those four phrases,

<sup>1</sup> These phrases merely signify that such were the traditions emanating from each of those apostles, and resting on their authority.

instead of attesting, would rather exclude the complete authenticity of our Gospels. But the authors of those titles would thus have contradicted themselves; for no one in the primitive church ever assigned to those four writings any other authors than those who are named in the titles,—a fact which holds good independently of certain particular traditions which, like that of Papias in reference to St. Matthew's Gospel, seem to contradict it. Besides, this meaning, *according to*, would not at all apply to the second and third Gospels; for Mark and Luke had never been regarded as the founders of a peculiar and independent tradition, but merely as the compilers of those which emanated from Peter and Paul. The title of those two writings should therefore have been: *Gospels according to Peter* and *according to Paul*, if, in reality, the word *according to*, in the mind of the authors of the titles, had had the meaning ascribed to it by the critics whom we are combating.<sup>1</sup> Their error arises from their giving to the term *gospel* a meaning which it had not in the language of primitive Christianity, and which it only received in the course of the second century. In the still living and spiritual language of the New Testament, this word never designates a *book*, a writing relating the Saviour's coming, but the *glad news of God* to man, consisting in that coming itself; comp. for example, Mark i. 1; Rom. i. 1. The meaning of the titles is not therefore: "a book compiled according to the tradition of" . . . , but: "the blessed advent of Jesus Christ related by the care or the pen of" . . . . It would not have been possible, in this sense of the word *gospel*, to say as we now do, "John's Gospel;" the ellipsis was rather: "the Gospel of God." Besides, we find the preposition *κατά* used by Diodorus of Sicily to denote the author himself when he calls the work of Herodotus: "The History according to Herodotus" (*ἡ κατ' Ἡρ. ἱστορία*), or by Epiphanius (*Hæc.* viii. 4) when he says: "The Pentateuch

<sup>1</sup> We are not forgetting that, as to Mark's Gospel, there is assumed between our present Gospel and the immediate tradition of Peter, a writing now lost, which was Mark's real work, and formed the foundation of our second Gospel, and that thus the sense in which the "according to Mark" is taken is preserved. But, at least, there is no such hypothesis regarding Luke's Gospel; and whatever may be the authority of the critics who at the present day defend the hypothesis of a *Proto-Mark*, we believe that it rests on very precarious grounds (see our *Comment. on St. Luke's Gospel*, vol. ii. pp. 437-440).



according to Moses (*ἡ κατὰ Μωϋσέα πεντάτευχος*)." M. Reuss cites the title of the apocryphal gospel *εὐαγγ. κατὰ Πέτρον*. But it is very clear that the author who wished to pass this gospel under the name of Peter sought to ascribe the compilation of it to the apostle, and so gave to the word, *according to*, the same meaning as we do. As to the well-known phrases, *εὐαγγ. κατὰ τοὺς δώδ. ἀποστόλους, καθ' Ἑβραίους, κατ' Αἰγυπτίους* (according to the Twelve Apostles, the Hebrews, the Egyptians), it is evident that in these cases *κατά* denotes either the entire ecclesiastical circle from which those writings were judged to proceed, or that circle in the bosom of which they passed current.

## PROLOGUE.

### I. 1-18.

**E**ACH evangelist enters upon his subject in the way which corresponds best to the spirit of his narrative. Matthew, whose purpose is to demonstrate the right of Jesus to the theocratic throne, begins with His genealogy. Mark, who compiles memorabilia, throws himself without exordium *in mediam rem*. Luke, who purposes to write a history properly so called, gives account to his readers of his sources, aim, and method. The prologue of John ought to be equally in keeping with the general viewpoint of his narrative. But to determine this relation requires the profound study of that remarkable piece which more than any other passage of our holy books, perhaps, has exercised a decisive influence on the conception of Christianity in the church down to our own day.

How far does the prologue extend? Only to ver. 5, answers M. Reuss. According to this view, the narrative would begin at ver. 6: "*There was a man whose name was John.*" This mention of the birth of John the Baptist would be followed at ver. 14 by the mention of the incarnation of the Word; then the reference to the ministry of John the Baptist (ver. 19) would bring the narrative down to the beginning of the ministry of Jesus Christ (ver. 35).

But a glance at vv. 15 and 16-18 is enough to prove that this arrangement does not at all correspond with the thought of the evangelist. The testimony of John the Baptist recorded at ver. 15 comes in on this supposition either too late (comp. vv. 6-8) or too soon (comp. ver. 19 et seq.). More than that, it would form an intolerable tautology with the double repetition of the same saying in vv. 27 and 30. It is in the two latter passages that the declaration of the forerunner is placed in its historical position,—that it is, properly speaking, nar-

*rated*. In the first, it is simply *quoted*, and that from an entirely different point of view from that of history, with a didactic aim. The dogmatical or religious reflections contained in vv. 16-18 would be equally out of place if the narrative had already begun. Finally, ver. 18: "*The only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father*" . . ., so evidently forms the pendant of ver. 1, that we must recognise in it the closing of the cycle opened at ver. 1. The narrative, then, does not begin till ver. 19, and vv. 1-18 form a whole of a particular kind.

Is there a plan in this prologue? Or does it only contain a metaphysical lucubration or a pious effusion, without any definite course or rational progress?

Lücke and some moderns maintain two parts: 1. Vv. 1-5. The *primordial* existence of the Logos. 2. Vv. 6-18. His *historical* appearance. In this way the coming of Christ in the flesh would undoubtedly be mentioned twice at vv. 11 and 14; but as it is taken up, it is said, more profoundly the second time than the first, there is no repetition properly so called. This reply, it must be confessed, is somewhat subtle.

Olshausen and Lange maintain three sections: 1. Vv. 1-5. The *primordial* activity of the Logos. 2. Vv. 6-13. His activity under the *Old Testament*. 3. Vv. 14-18. His incarnation and activity in the *church*. In this way the order of historical progress would be rigorously observed by the evangelist. But the point in question is, whether this plan is compatible with the expressions of which he makes use, particularly whether the words of vv. 11-13 really allows us to apply this passage to the time of the Old Testament.

Luthardt and Hengstenberg contend, not for chronological sections, but for concentric cycles, reproducing, when taken together, a summary of the Gospel history, each time with some new development. 1. Vv. 1-5. The summary of the activity of Christ, comprehending His coming in the flesh, and the general ill success of His ministry. 2. Vv. 6-13. The same history, with special mention of the forerunner and the delineation of Jewish incredulity. 3. Vv. 14-18. The same fact once more, but presented more specially from the standpoint of the blessings it brings to believers.—The study of the details is the only thing which can furnish us with the means of appreciating this plan.

Hoelemann, in a little work full of erudition, *De evangelii joh. introïtu*, etc., Leipsic 1855, has endeavoured to trace the plan of the prologue by following out, in a more thoroughgoing way than is ordinarily done, the parallelism between this piece and the first chapter of Genesis. He succeeds perfectly in the outset. But when he seeks to bring into correspondence the words: "*The light shineth in darkness*" (ver. 5), with the separation of the light from the darkness (Gen. i. 4); or these: "*There was a man*" . . . (ver. 6), with the creation of man (Gen. i. 26); or when he comes to seek the explanation of the saying: "*This was the true Light*" (ver. 9), in an allusion to the appearance of the sun on the fourth day (Gen. i. 16),—it is impossible to follow him in his subtilties; and such exaggeration makes us the more admire the wisdom of the evangelist, who, after proceeding for a little in a line parallel with Moses, knew his time for stopping short.

In all the proposed divisions, it will be seen that the first four or five verses form a first section. The general theme of this passage is evidently the Logos, His existence, and His activity previously to the incarnation. The last words of ver. 5: "*The darkness comprehended it not*," clearly form the transition to a new idea, the rejection of the Word from the bosom of humanity. This second idea reaches its culmination and limit in ver. 11: "*He came unto His own, and His own received Him not*." Here begins a contrast precisely marked by *δέ* (*but*), the only adversative particle of the prologue; whence, accordingly, we have the point of departure for a third idea,—that of faith in the Logos, indicated at the beginning by the first words of ver. 12: "*But to them who received Him*." The development of this idea extends to the end of the prologue. Thus, then, the Word, unbelief, and faith, such appears to us to be the plan of the piece. The interpretation of the details will show whether this view of the whole corresponds to the thought of the evangelist.

We defer to the close of the prologue the study of the general questions bearing upon it.

## FIRST SECTION.

## VV. 1-4.—THE LOGOS.

The allusion to the beginning of Genesis in the first verses of our Gospel, is obvious at a glance. But John does not stop at that *beginning* which Moses made the point of departure. He ascends still higher. Why so? Because his aim is more remote than his predecessor's. To reach further, one must start higher. The Jewish historian had immediately in view only the development of the theocracy; the evangelist's aim is the second creation—Redemption. † For him the beginning of Moses does not suffice. He must plunge into eternity to find there the agent of the work which he proposes to describe. He starts from the same point as Moses, the ἀρχή, the *beginning* of the world and of time; but instead of proceeding onward, he goes backward. He seeks in God Himself the subject of his history—the Word (ver. 1); having found Him, he takes his place with Him again at the beginning of things (ver. 2), and so again descends the stream of time. He brings before our eyes, first, the act of creation (ver. 3); then the normal and primitive state of humanity (ver. 4); and that while continuing to make the Logos the sole subject of his narrative.

Ver. 1. "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*"<sup>1</sup>—If it is indisputable that the phrase: *in the beginning*, contains a reflective allusion to *Bereschith*, the first word of Genesis, it follows that it refers to the time of creation. Some modern expositors (Olshausen, de Wette, Meyer) apply it to eternity, in so far as it is the *origin* of time. Meyer quotes Prov. viii. 23: ἐν ἀρχῇ πρὸ τοῦ τῆν γῆν ποιῆσαι, "*from the beginning, or ever the earth was.*" With still more probability we may quote 1 John i. 1: "*That which was from the beginning,*" and Rev. iii. 14, where Jesus is called: "*The beginning (the principle) of the creation of God.*" Nevertheless, the sense *beginning* may be maintained in the first two passages; and from the fact that *principle* is the only meaning applicable in the third, it does not follow

<sup>1</sup> L and Gregory of Nyssa read ε before θεος.

that it should be applied here, where the word *beginning* is used absolutely (without addition), and has nothing else to determine it than its parallelism with the well-known opening of Genesis. Ver. 2, at which St. John, after having plunged into the eternal order, again returns to this point of the beginning to relate the act of creation (ver. 3), proves that the meaning which we prefer is really that which corresponds to his thought.—As to the significations “Eternal Father,” or “Divine Wisdom,” given by some Fathers (Origen, Cyril of Alexandria), or “beginning of the preaching of the Gospel,” essayed by the Socinians, they are no longer maintained by any one. But if the notion of eternity is not contained in the word *beginning*, it arises from its relation to the verb *was*. “In the beginning *was* the Word,” signifies that when everything began it did not begin; it was there already anterior to all created things, and to time itself, which is only the space wherein created things are developed. Now, what is anterior to time belongs to the order of eternity. Thus the argument by which M. Reuss (*Histoire de la théol. chrét.*, t. ii. p. 439) seeks to prove that the absolute eternity of the Word is not contained in John’s words, falls to the ground. “If,” says he, “the *in the beginning* of the fourth Gospel establishes the absolute eternity of the Word, the *in the beginning* of Genesis will establish the absolute eternity of the world.” By no means; for the relation of the words *in the beginning* to the imperfect *was* in John, is entirely different from the relation of the *in the beginning* of Moses to the perfect *created* (Gen. i. 1). In the former case, the beginning is a special point of time which emerges on the permanent basis of the *was*; in the other, the beginning coincides with the instantaneous act: God created.—As to the term *Logos* (*Word*), it must necessarily, in this context, contain an allusion to the history in Genesis. Eight times in the narrative of creation there occur, like the refrain of a hymn, the words: “*And God said.*” John gathers up all those *sayings* of God into a single *saying*, living and endowed with activity and intelligence, from which all divine orders emanate; he finds as the basis of all spoken words the speaking Word. Those resound in time; this is above time. This parallelism with Genesis would suffice to set aside the meaning of *reason*, which some

theologians of modern times have attempted to give to the word *Logos*, as if it were meant to designate the *consciousness* which God has of Himself. This rag of Hegelian logic does not suit the text of the evangelist. The word *Logos* means *reason*, only in the language of philosophy; in the New Testament, it never signifies anything else than *word*—reason as it expresses itself in discourse. Theodore Beza thought that *λόγος*, *word*, might signify here *ὁ λεγόμενος*, the *Promised One*, the personage announced by the prophets. This impossible interpretation has been presented most recently in a somewhat less intolerable form by Hofmann and Luthardt: the Gospel preached to humanity, of which Christ is the essence; the evangelic message personified in Jesus. But let the attempt be made to apply this meaning in ver. 14: "The subject of the evangelic revelation was made flesh;" or in ver. 2: "The subject of gospel preaching was in the beginning with God!" All Luthardt's efforts have not succeeded in removing the forced character of this meaning.

Again, it has been sought to give to the word *Logos* an active signification. Schleussner explains it as *ὁ λέγων* *author*; *τοῦ λόγου*, the *preacher* of the Gospel. But then, instead of a striking contrast, the term would become only a cold tautology in the saying, "*The Word was made flesh!*" The only form in which this explanation can be seriously discussed, is that given by Neander (*Gesch. der Pflanzung*, etc., 3d ed. t. ii. p. 689): *the eternal revealer of the divine being*. There is in the divine essence a principle by which God reveals Himself, the *Logos*, and a principle by which He communicates Himself, the Spirit. It is the former which is at work in the divine *saying*, Gen. i., as well as in all the theophanies and prophetic revelations of the Old Testament. It is the same which is the subject of the gospel history. We shall see how far this idea suffices to explain the different propositions of John regarding the *Logos*.

The three propositions of this verse are brief, having a deeply marked character like oracles. The first indicates, as we have just seen, the *eternity* of the *Logos*; the second expresses profoundly the idea of His *personality*. Such, indeed, is the meaning of the words *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*, *with God*, which could not well be rendered, as it seems to us, either by

one or other of the recently proposed translations: *toward God* (Astié), or: *in the presence of God* (Bonnet, Arnaud, Rilliet). The first is not English, the second is not exact. The latter would correspond to the entirely different expression, *παρὰ τῷ Θεῷ* (comp. *παρὰ σοί*, in *Thy presence*, xvii. 5). *Πρός* expresses *proximity*; but combining with that notion that of drawing near, it indicates an active relation—a felt and personal communion. The real translation would be: “The Word was *in relation with* God,” and it would be best, therefore, to preserve the old form: “The Word was *with* God.” The simplest explanation of John’s phrase is got from Gen. i. 26: “*Let us make man in our image, and after our likeness.*” It is to this intimate counsel in the depths of the divine being that this second proposition of the apostle alludes, as the first referred to Gen. i. 1. We may be astonished to find a preposition indicating motion (*πρός*, with the accusative *toward*) in connection with the verb of rest *was*. The same case reappears at ver. 18: *ὁ ὦν εἰς τὸν κόλπον*. Other examples may be quoted of a like construction in our Gospels. This form is meant here to express a *state*, the essence of which is *motion*, relation, action; comp. the use of *πρός*, 2 Cor. v. 8; Gal. i. 18. It is obvious how impossible it is to admit the Socinian interpretation maintained by some modern theologians: “The Word was eternally *in the divine understanding or plan.*” John’s words cannot designate a divine intuition. The object of the eternal motion of the Logos is God, *ὁ Θεός*. This term, especially in Greek, proves that God is God in a complete way, independently of the Logos, and that therefore the latter cannot designate the consciousness which God has of Himself, or the divine reason. The accus. *τὸν Θεόν* shows God actively corresponding to the aspiration of the Logos. The whole expression denotes, on the one hand, the subordination of the Word; on the other, the full communion of God with Him.

We are now in a position to establish the insufficiency of the explanation of the Logos proposed by Neander. If the expression, *the word*, included only the idea of revelation outwardly, John must have ascribed to the Logos a motion toward the world rather than toward God. Evidently, in the mind of the evangelist, the tendency of the Logos *ad extra*, as it will manifest itself



in the works of creating and enlightening the world (vv. 3-5), rests on an anterior and essential relation *ad intra*. To reveal God, one must know Him; to project Him outwardly, one must have plunged into His bosom. The character of revealer is therefore subordinate, even in the Logos, to a personal communion with God, in which He receives the perfect and primordial revelation, and whence He will draw all His revelations to the world. If He makes the divine glory shine forth outwardly, it is because He is filled with it inwardly. He contemplates before reflecting, He receives before giving.

The distinction of persons, so strongly emphasized by the second proposition, is in the third resolved into a community of essence: "*And the Word was God.*" Though placed first, Θεός, *God*, is certainly the attribute. The subject of the proposition can be nothing else than the Word; for the question in the prologue is not who is God, but who is the Word. If the word God is placed first in the phrase, it is because this ascription is the word in which is expressed the climax to the preceding propositions (comp. x. 33). John does not say ὁ Θεός (as in the reading of two authorities), for thereby he would be ascribing to the Logos the totality of divine existence, which would identify the Logos and God, and contradict the preceding proposition. As little does he say θεῖος, "*The Logos was divine,*"—an expression which would efface the boundary between God and what is not God, and contradict Monotheism. The word Θεός, *God*, used as an attribute, simply expresses the notion of kind. It is an adjective which, while maintaining the personal distinction between God and the Logos, ascribes to the latter all the attributes of the divine essence, in opposition to every other essence which could have been assigned Him, either angelic or human. The conjecture of the Socinian Crell, Θεοῦ ἦν ὁ λόγος, "*The Word belonged to God,*" has no critical foundation, and offers no appropriate meaning.

The third proposition of ver. 1 was the height of the climax, and this height was so great that it could not be surpassed. Accordingly the thread is broken, and no logical particle connects ver. 2 with ver. 1. With this mysterious and divine being, whom John has just discovered in eternity, he now returns to

the threshold of time, to the beginning, to pass thence to creation, as the transition to redemption :

Ver. 2. "*This same was in the beginning with God.*" Ver. 2 combines the three elements of the three propositions of ver. 1 in a single one; the pronoun *οὗτος*, "this being such as I have just defined Him, this Word-God," reproduces the third proposition; *ἐν ἀρχῇ*, *in the beginning*, the first; and *πρὸς τὸν Θεόν*, *with God*, the second. This complex phrase, by assigning to history as its principle the being whom St. John has discovered in eternity, exhibits Him clothed with all the riches of the divine attributes, in virtue of which He shall be able to accomplish the divine operations which are to be ascribed to Him in the sequel. *Οὗτος*, *this same*, therefore, by no means contains the antithesis supposed by Meyer, "This same, and other being" (comp. *all things*, ver. 3)—an explanation to which, no doubt, is to be traced the unhappy translation of M. Rilliet, "*It is He who was in the beginning,*" etc. Such a contrast is wholly groundless. The words, *was in the beginning*, serve to point to Him as anterior to the fact of creation, of which He is to be the agent; the words, *with God*, refer to the divine decree which He is proceeding to execute. Thus it is that ver. 2, summing up ver. 1, lays the foundation of all that is affirmed in vv. 3 and 4.

Ver. 3. "*All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made.*"<sup>1</sup> There is in the idea of Word the double notion of knowledge and will, and consequently of wisdom and force. It is in virtue of those attributes, received here to the full height of divine perfection, that the Word can fill the creative function which is ascribed to Him, ver. 3. Everything—the existence of things, and the order which guides them—proceeds from Him. Hence the bond which links Him so closely to created beings, especially to man, His privileged work (ver. 4), and hence that which makes way for His incarnation and His redeeming office (ver. 14). *Πάντα*, *all things*, differs from *τὰ πάντα*, *all (the) things*, inasmuch as the second indicates a special and deter-

<sup>1</sup> D and some Fathers and Gnostics read *ουδεν* instead of *ουδεν εν*. The Gnostics, Heracleon, Ptolemæus, and others, the Alex. Fathers, Clem., Or., as well as C D L, It. Vulg., put a point after *εν* and connect *ο γνοστης* as subject with the following phrase.

mined totality (2 Cor. v. 18), while the first is necessarily unlimited. The word *γίνεσθαι*, *to become*, indicates the passage from nothingness to being, and forms a direct contrast to the *was* of vv. 1 and 2. Comp. the similar antithesis, viii. 58 : “*Before Abraham was (came into being), I am.*” It is the contrast between the two orders—the temporal and eternal. The part of the Logos is designated by *διά*, *by*. This preposition does not lower the Word to the rank of a simple instrument; it is often applied to God Himself (Rom. xi. 36 ; Gal. i. 1 ; Heb. ii. 10). But it limits His part so as to leave place for a relation between God and the world, different from that of the Logos. This relation is not mentioned here ; but it is expressed by St. Paul, 1 Cor. viii. 6, by the prepositions *ἐκ*, *of*, and *εἰς*, *for* : “*To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him.*” Paul adds, in perfect conformity with our passage : “*And one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom (δι’ οὗ) are all things, and we by Him (δι’ αὐτοῦ).*” Every being, to reach existence, must have passed through the thought and will of the Logos. But He Himself draws everything from the Father, and refers everything to the Father. This limitation of the part done by the Word was already implied in the words : *with God* (vv. 1 and 2). Since there is community of action, there is distinction of office.

The second proposition of the verse, while repeating the same in a negative form, is intended to exclude all exception. The words, *without Him*, forcibly declare the entire community expressed above between God and the Logos,—the “*let us make*” of Genesis. Some moderns—Lücke, Olshausen, de Wette, and Bäumlein—think that by the words, *not anything*, John means to set aside the Platonic idea of eternal matter (*ἕλη*). But, first, matter would not be a *εἶν* ; rather it is the undetermined condition of every particular being ; and, second, matter in the ancient sense is not a *γεγονός*, a *thing which has become* ; John’s expression would therefore not apply. It is more arbitrary still to ascribe to the apostle here, with Scholten, the notion of an eternal matter from which the Logos derived the world. Where in the text is there to be found a trace of such an idea ? In general, the apostle does not philosophise ; his sole aim is to exhibit the supreme grandeur of the being who is to accomplish the work

of our redemption; He who becomes our Saviour was the divine partner in the work of creation. Every being, even the tiniest insect and the smallest blade of grass, took their origin through His mediation, and bear the mark of His wisdom and power. In our translation we have connected the words  $\delta$   $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$ , *that which exists*, with the preceding proposition, and not with the phrase following. This is the prevalent interpretation since the time of Chrysostom. The exegesis of ver. 4 will justify this exposition. It was probably the apparent tautology of the words  $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ , *took origin*, and  $\delta$   $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$ , *that which exists*, which led the oldest Fathers to connect the latter words with ver. 4. Some modern interpreters can only explain these words as "a redundancy peculiar to John's style." But this view falls to the ground as soon as we seize the relation between the perfect (present)  $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$  and the aorist (past)  $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ : "There is not in this whole creation *which exists before our eyes* ( $\delta$   $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$ ), a single being which *was not formed* ( $\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\nu\epsilon\tau\omicron$ ) by the Word." Therein we see neither redundancy nor tautology.

The Word is not only the principle who brings beings out of nothingness into existence; He is also the source of life to them all when they have been once created:

Ver. 4. "*In Him was*<sup>1</sup> *life; and the life was the light of men.*"<sup>2</sup> The authorities who connect  $\delta$   $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$ , *that which exists*, with ver. 4, understand either: "That which exists was life in Him," or, "That which exists in Him was life." The two senses are equally inadmissible; first, for a grammatical reason: the perf.  $\gamma\acute{\epsilon}\gamma\omicron\upsilon\epsilon\nu$ , referring to a present existence, does not agree with the imperf. *was*; it was no doubt the feeling of this disagreement which led to the reading  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota$ , *is*, which we find in the Sinait. and Cantab.,—a reading accepted by Tischendorf, but which is evidently a correction; second, for the more decisive reason that  $\zeta\omega\eta$   $\acute{\epsilon}\iota\nu\alpha\iota$ , *to be life*, is too strong an expression to be applied to creatures. The true description would have been  $\zeta\omega\eta\nu$   $\acute{\epsilon}\chi\epsilon\iota\nu$ , *to have life in* . . . The subject of *was* is therefore the word  $\zeta\omega\eta$ , *life*. And as this word has no article, and should therefore be taken in the most indeterminate sense, it should be translated, not as is generally done: "In Him was

<sup>1</sup> N D Italicque Syr<sup>cur</sup> read  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota\nu$  instead of  $\eta\nu$ .

<sup>2</sup> B omits in the text  $\tau\omega\nu$   $\alpha\nu\theta\rho\omega\pi\omega\nu$  (supplied on the margin).

the life," but as we have done: "In Him was life." *Life*, not for the Word Himself,—for the description of the Word in His essence is finished, and this idea would bring us back to ver. 3, —but for the universe created by Him. There is a gradation from the *by Him*, ver. 3, which referred to the creative act, to the *in Him* (ver. 4). This last expression means that the world, after having passed from nothingness to being by the power of the Word, continued to draw from Him the vivifying forces necessary for its preservation and progress. After having been the root of the tree, the Logos was also its sap. The term *life* is understood by Calvin and other interpreters as referring to the physical preservation of things in the sense in which it is used by Paul, Acts xvii. 28: "*In God we live and move and have our being.*" Others, like Lampe, Hengstenberg, etc., apply it to spiritual and eternal life. The distinction does not appear to us applicable to this passage; ζωή, *life*, denotes here existence in its full state of prosperity, in its normal expansion. Now, for certain beings, the normal development of existence is limited to physical life; for others, it rises to intellectual and moral life; the latter may even become capable of receiving supernatural or eternal life. "In union with the creative Word, John means to say there was life, full life, the perfect development of existence, for each being according to its measure, and consequently also for the whole." This idea of *life*, taken with that of *creation* (ver. 3), forms a gradation corresponding to that which we have remarked between *in Him* (ver. 4) and *by Him* (ver. 3).

Does the imperf. *was* refer to a real period of history, and to which? Brückner and Hengstenberg see in it only the expression of an ideal possibility. The former: If man had continued in union with the Word, the Word *would have been* his life. The latter: The Word alone *could* give life, so that, till the coming of Christ, the creature was debarred from access to spiritual life. Undoubtedly this interpretation is not wholly devoid of truth; it is the ideal relation between the Word and humanity which is described in this verse. But if this relation had never *begun* at least to be realized, John could not have expressed himself as he does here. Such a purely hypothetical sense would not be in harmony either with the force of the imperfect, which denotes a real point in a period

of indefinite duration, or with the historical character of all the preceding verbs. These words, therefore, necessarily refer, according to John's view, to a real period of history. Now, from the connection of ver. 4 with ver. 3, this period can be no other than that which immediately succeeded the act of creation. The subject in question, therefore, is that first spring-time during which the Word, meeting as yet with no obstacle in the universe, could make it fruitful by communicating to it, according to the capacity of each of those beings which composed it, the riches of His own life. This magnificent starting-point in a development soon broken revealed the normal state, the essential relation.

The normal state described in the first proposition found its highest expression in the being who was the masterpiece of creation, viz. man. In this privileged creature, made in the image of the Word Himself, *life* developed in the form of *light*.—The word *light*, according to Calvin and others, denotes *understanding*, that characteristic which distinguishes man from the lower animals; according to Hengstenberg, on the contrary, it is *salvation*; Luthardt would make it *holiness*. The first meaning does not answer to the fulness of John's language; when he says: "*God is light*" (1 John i. 5), he certainly does not mean: "*God is reason*." *Salvation* is undoubtedly set forth in Scripture under the emblem of light; but neither does this meaning apply, for it would here lead to a complete tautology with the term *life*. The meaning *holiness* is equally defective, because it is impossible to exclude from the term light the element of knowledge. This profound word appears to us to denote, in the language of John, the knowledge of moral good, or moral good fully conscious of itself in the living beings who realize it. The word *truth* in John expresses the same thing without a figure. Light, thus understood, is accessible to no being on the earth except man, the one being endowed with the inner organ necessary to perceive moral good. That organ, originally one, but now divided, is the sense which we call conscience and reason.

This light did not emanate directly from the Word: it proceeded from life, that life which man derived from the Word. For as bodily sight is one of the functions of physical life, so, in the normal state, spiritual light is an emanation from moral

life. The Logos is light; but it is through the mediation of life that He must become so always; this is precisely the relation which the gospel restores. We recover, through the new creation in Jesus Christ, an inner light which springs up from the life, and which gains in clearness in proportion as the moral life grows in intensity. This idea is forcibly expressed by the article ἡ, *the*, which John introduces in the second member before the word *life*. In communion with the Word there was life, normal existence for the world; and from that universal life there sprang up light in man (by vocation the being of light). Our Lord meant nothing else when He described the pure heart as the organ which sees God (Matt. v. 8).

In such a context is it not natural, whatever Meyer may say, to see in the two words: *life* and *light*, and in the relation which John establishes between them, an allusion to the tree of life and to that of knowledge? After having eaten of the former, man would have been called to feed on the second. John initiates us into the real essence of those primordial and mysterious facts, and gives us in this verse, as it were, the philosophy of paradise.—Some interpreters have applied ver. 4 to the action of the Logos in the midst of the theocratic people by means of prophecy. But the words τῶν ἀνθρώπων, *of men*, demand for the passage a universal human application. The two imperfects, *was*, by placing in the past, and to some extent in the ideal sphere, the vivifying and light-giving communication of the Logos, already awake the suspicion that the present reality no longer corresponds to that normal relation. This comes out more clearly still from ver. 5, which forms the transition between the preceding section and that which follows. The latter treats of the *unbelief* of humanity in regard to the Logos, who reveals Himself to mankind.

## SECOND SECTION.

### VV. 5-11.—UNBELIEF.

The fact of unbelief is indicated summarily in ver. 5. Then John relates the extraordinary provision which God made for its prevention, the sending of the forerunner, vv. 6-8

Finally, he describes the fact itself in such a way as to unveil its enormity, vv. 9-11.

Ver. 5. "*And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*"<sup>1</sup>—What then is this *darkness* (*σκοτία*) which all at once covers the scene of the world created and enlightened by the Word? It is impossible, with some commentators of Baur's school, to take it for eternal darkness, a kingdom of evil co-eternal with that of good. Ver. 3 is expressly opposed to this view: all that is, without exception, is the work of the Logos. But John, as shown by vv. 3 and 4, wrote for readers who knew the narrative of Genesis. We must still follow this narrative in explaining ver. 5. The darkness of which the evangelist speaks is the subjection to sin and falsehood under which mankind lives in consequence of the fact of the fall related in Gen. iii. As the Logos was the principle of life and light for the world, as soon as mankind ceased to live *in Him* (ver. 3), moral obscurity invaded it; there was *darkness*.—The Logos nevertheless perseveres in His office of enlightener (ver. 4), and concludes by Himself appearing on the theatre which he never ceased to illumine.

Formerly I referred the present *φαίει*, *He shines*, to the beneficent action of the Logos before His incarnation; this is the thought which I have just pointed out as contained in the second proposition of ver. 4. This meaning came near the explanation of de Wette, who refers the *φαίει*, *shines*, to the Old Testament revelations, and that of the commentators who apply it to the moral light granted to the Gentiles by means of reason and conscience. Three reasons have led me to give up this explanation: 1. The present *φαίει*, *shines*, especially in contrast to the two past tenses of ver. 4, does not find a natural explanation unless we apply it to a present fact; now the contemporary fact at the time when the evangelist writes can be no other than Christ's appearing on the earth and the preaching of the gospel which perpetuates its lustre here below. 2. The striking parallel passage, 1 Ep. ii. 8: "Because the darkness is passing away, and the true light already shineth" (*ἤδη φαίει*), can only from the context apply to the gospel era, and thus determines the meaning of the identical expression of the prologue. 3. The really

<sup>1</sup> B. and five Mnn. read *αυτος* (the Logos) instead of *αυτο* (the light).



decisive reason in my view is the significant *asyndeton* between vv. 5 and 6. The absence of any logical particle most frequently denotes in Greek a more emphatic and developed reaffirmation of the thought already enunciated. Now it seems to me impossible to understand this form otherwise in this passage. The historical fact introduced so abruptly in ver. 6 with the words: "There appeared a man . . .," can only be mentioned thus for the purpose of giving historically the proof of the thought expressed in ver. 5; and as the development which opens in ver. 6 and closes in ver. 11 relates throughout to the rejection of Christ by Israel, it follows that the second part of ver. 5, the theme of this development, can only relate to the same fact. So it is that the *φαίει*, *shines*, is understood by Ewald, Hengstenberg, Luthardt, Weiss. Some commentators think they can apply the act of *shining* at once to the action of the Logos *before* and *during* His earthly life; so Olshausen, Meyer, Westcott, the last mentioned even extending the meaning of the present *shines* from the date of the creation to the consummation of all things. But the two modes of illumination, the internal and the external, which would thus be ascribed to the Logos, are of too heterogeneous a nature to be combined in one and the same term. Besides, we have already seen that the present *shines* cannot be applied naturally to the times which preceded the incarnation.

The *καί*, *and*, simply denotes the calm continuity of the work of the Logos through those various phases; the office which He carried out in the depths of the human soul (ver. 4) terminated in that which He came to carry out as the Messiah in the midst of the Jewish people (vv. 5-11). Weiss and Gess object to this explanation, that it forces us to give a different meaning to the word *τὸ φῶς*, *the light*, in vv. 4 and 5: in the former, light as a *gift* of the Logos; in the latter, light as being the Logos Himself. But this arises from the fact that in ver. 4 the subject in question is a light emanating from life, and consequently impersonal, while, in ver. 5, John is speaking of light as visibly and personally present. His meaning then is as follows: that moral good, the ideal of which the Logos caused to shine in the human soul (ver. 4), He has Himself come to realize on the earth, and so make it shine in all its lustre (ver. 5). John uses the idea of light

with great freedom. We again find the same two meanings united, viii. 12, in the same verse: "I *am* the light of the world"—the meaning of the word light in our ver. 5—and: "He that followeth me shall have the light of life"—the meaning of the word in ver. 4.—The active form φαίνει, *shines*, is designedly used rather than the middle φαίνεται, which would signify *appears*, shows itself. John means, not that it has appeared, but that henceforth it spreads its brightness amid the darkness of humanity labouring to dissipate it.

The second part of ver. 5 is explained in two opposite ways according to the two opposite meanings given to the verb κατέλαβεν. This verb, which signifies to put the hand upon, to seize, may denote either a hostile act: to seize in order to check or surmount, or it may signify an act of goodwill: to seize in order to appropriate or possess. The former of these meanings is that held by the old Greek commentators (Origen, Chrysostom, etc.); long abandoned, it is now again preferred by several moderns (Lange, Weiss, Westcott): "And the darkness succeeded not in checking or extinguishing this light." In favour of this meaning there is quoted the saying, xii. 35: "Walk while ye have the light, that darkness *overtake* you not" (καταλάβῃ, in the hostile sense). But even in this passage the meaning of the verb is not at all to overcome: Jesus speaks of the night, not as *checking* the light, but as *overtaking* the traveller who has set out too late. This, the solitary example quoted, is therefore not really one. Besides, this meaning is excluded by the context when rightly understood. We have seen that the *asyndeton* between vv. 5 and 6 implied a very close connection of feeling between them. Now, this connection does not exist except in so far as ver. 5 expresses a fact, relating, like all that follows, to the development of unbelief, not of faith. It is thus not permissible to translate: "and the darkness restrained it not." To find in what follows the proof of such an idea, it would be necessary to pass over the entire development, vv. 6–11, and go on to find it in the fact mentioned, vv. 12 and 13: "To all them that received Him . . .;" which is of course impossible, the more because ver. 12 is connected with ver. 11 by the adversative particle δέ. Moreover, if the apostle had meant to express the idea ascribed to him, he had for the

purpose the proper term *κατέχειν*, to hold, repress; comp. Rom. i. 18. The suitable meaning here therefore is the other, which prevails throughout the whole New Testament. Comp. Phil. iii. 12, 13 (to reach the goal); 1 Cor. ix. 24 (to seize the prize); Rom. ix. 30 (to attain to the righteousness of faith). It is in the same meaning that it is also used in Sirach xv. 1-7: *καταλαμβάνειν σοφίαν* (to attain to wisdom). I rest only on the passages in which the verb is used, as here, in the active. The meaning of *comprehending*, which it takes in the middle (Acts iv. 13, x. 34; Eph. iii. 18), rests also on the meaning of the verb which we advocate here. John therefore means that the darkness did not suffer itself to be penetrated by the light which shone to scatter it. To understand this somewhat strange image, it must be remembered that the word *darkness* does not here denote an abstract principle, but living and free beings, corrupt humanity. Understood in this sense, the second proposition is the summary developed in the following passage, vv. 6-11; it has its counterpart in the second proposition of ver. 11. The choice of the somewhat different term *παρέλαβεν*, *welcomed* (ver. 11), to express nearly the same idea as the *κατέλαβεν* of ver. 5, will be easily understood. The *καί*, *and*, which connects this proposition with the former one, takes the place of a *δέ*, *but*, as it often does. John presents the course of things, not from the view-point of man's changing conduct toward God, but from that of the faithful and persevering conduct of the Logos toward man.—The aor. *κατέλαβεν* rises on the background of the present *φαίνει* as one particular and solitary act, an attitude taken once for all. In the eyes of the evangelist the refusal of the mass of mankind to allow themselves to be enlightened by the gospel is already an accomplished fact; comp. the saying of Jesus, iii. 19, which is the text, as it were, from which John has taken this: "Light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."—The apostle now goes on to narrate the manner in which the decisive moral fact expressed in ver. 5, and as it is consummated in Israel, took place. And to impress its gravity, he begins with relating the extraordinary measure which God took to render it, as it seemed, impossible, vv. 6-8.

Ver. 6. "There was (appeared) a man sent from God, whose

*name was John.*—It seemed as if the divinely accredited forerunner must have rendered impossible that unbelief in the Logos which was about to follow.—The term ἐγένετο, *became, appeared,* denotes a historical appearance, thus forming a contrast—is it intentional?—with the verb ἦν, *was,* which denoted the eternal existence of the Word. It is the same with the word ἄνθρωπος, *a man,* which forms an antithesis to the divine subject, which is as yet the only one on the scene. The analytic form, ἐγένετο ἄνθρωπος ἀπεσταλμένος, is not a simple periphrasis of ἀπεστάλη, as Chrysostom thought. The *appearance* of such a one as John has an importance of its own which is naturally enhanced by that of his *mission.*—In regard to the term *sent,* comp. iii. 28: “But that I am *sent* before Him;” and Mal. iii. 1, from which this expression seems to be taken.—The name *John* (*God shows grace*) in itself announced the era which was about to open. But this is not the reason why the evangelist mentions it here. It is as if he said simply: “He of whom I speak is the man whom you all know under the name of John.”

It is remarkable that our evangelist uses simply the name of John, without adding the epithet *Baptist,* which had become inseparable from the name, as appears from the Synoptics, and even from the Jewish historian Josephus.<sup>1</sup> Is not Meyer (Introd. p. 31) right in concluding from this omission that the author of our Gospel must have known the forerunner otherwise than by tradition? But for that, he would certainly have designated him by using the full title received in the church. If, on the contrary, he knew him before the public voice applied to him the surname, it is quite natural that he should describe him briefly as he does here. Besides, Credner has remarked, that as the title *Baptist* served in the church to distinguish the forerunner from another John not less celebrated, the evangelist, if he was that other John, must avoid employing the title, lest he should indirectly draw attention to his own person.—After having introduced this personage, the author describes his part:

Ver. 7. “*The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe.*”—The pronoun οὗτος, *the same,* sums up all the data of the preceding verse, as the οὗτος of ver. 2 summed those of ver. 1. The verb ἦλθε, *came,*

<sup>1</sup> “John surnamed the Baptist.” *Antiq.* xviii. 5. 2 (see Introd. p. 257).

differs from the verb *ἐγένετο*, *appeared*, ver. 6, inasmuch as the latter applied to the birth of John, while the former denotes his entrance upon public life.—The part of *witness* has such importance in the eyes of the evangelist, that he presents it in two ways; first, without government: *as a witness*, or (more literally) for *witness-bearing*; the second time, by indicating the subject of the testimony. The first expression exhibits the *characteristic* of witness in itself, in opposition to the more eminent person who is to follow. The second completes the notion of his witness-bearing.

This idea of *witness-bearing* is one of the fundamental notions of our Gospel. It is inseparable from that of *faith*, and correlative with it. Witness-bearing is rendered with a view to faith, and faith is only possible in virtue of witness-bearing. There is no faith worthy of the name except that which is fixed on a divine testimony rendered either in act or in word. Witness-bearing resembles the vigorous trunk of the oak; faith, the slender twig which embraces the trunk and makes it its support. But did the light need to be attested, indicated, demonstrated? Is not the sun its own proof? If the Word had appeared here below in the glory which is peculiar to Him (*the form of God*, Phil. ii. 6), the sending of a witness would not have been necessary. But He must appear enveloped in a thick veil (*the flesh*, ver. 14). In the state of blindness into which sin has plunged man, he cannot discern Him under this form except by means of some testimony. "To bear witness to the Light," says John, "*that all through him might believe*,"—evidently, believe on Christ through John the Baptist, and not on God through Christ (Grotius, Ewald, etc.).—The matter in question in this verse is not the part of Christ, but that of John.—When some modern critics accuse one another of agreeing with the Gnostics in setting up two kinds of men of opposite natures, origins, and destinies, the psychical and the pneumatical, they seem to forget the words: "that *all through him might believe*."—As at ver. 3 John had coupled his affirmation with a negation to sweep away expressly every notion contrary to the truth affirmed, so he does here:

Ver. 8. "*He was not the Light, but was sent to bear witness of the Light*."—The emphasis is not, as Meyer thinks, on the verbal idea: "*He was not the Light, but only a witness*." The

emphasis is on the subject (Luthardt): "It was not *he* who was the Light, but another (ver. 9)." Hence the choice of the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος*, substituted for the *αὐτός* of ver. 7. The latter has only an affirmative force; the former has always in John something of stronger emphasis, and even exclusiveness.—The *ἴνα*, in order that, depends, according to Meyer, on an understood *ἦλθε* (*came*), or is, according to Luthardt, independent of any verb, as is often the case in John (ix. 3, xiii. 18, xv. 25). But this independence can never be more than apparent,—an aim must depend on some action. And if it is hardly natural to go so far back as the verb *ἦλθε*, *came* (Meyer), there is nothing to prevent us from using the verb *ἦν*, *was*, strengthening its meaning a little: "was *there*" (*aderat*), and making it the point of support for the *in order to*.

It can hardly be admitted, I think, that in this verse John means only to give expression to the feeling which he had of the absolute superiority of Jesus to John the Baptist (Meyer, Hengstenberg). The emphatic negative form of ver. 8, and the analogous passages, i. 20, iii. 25 et seq., compared with Acts xiii. 25, and with the remarkable fact related, Acts xix. 3, 4, lead us to suppose a polemical intention against parties who attributed to the forerunner the dignity of the Messiah (comp. Introd. p. 293).

John's testimony should have opened the door of faith to all, and rendered unbelief impossible. And yet the impossible was realized, and that, too, in the most monstrous form. This is the fact which is developed in vv. 9–11.

Ver. 9. "*The true light which lighteth every man came into the world.*"—I must, I believe, finally abide by this interpretation, making the participle *ἐρχόμενον*, *coming*, the attribute of the verb *ἦν*, *was*; *was coming*, for: *came*. This analytic form involves an idea of duration. At the time when John was testifying of the light, it was on the way; it was just coming; so Bengel, Lücke, de Wette, Weiss, Westcott. The verse thus understood leaves the phrase *coming into the world* the usual and almost technical sense which it has in John (iii. 19, vi. 14, ix. 39, xviii. 37, etc.). Some commentators, while supporting the same construction, refer the term *came into the world* to the long coming of the Logos through the ages, by means of His revelations during the whole course of

the Old Testament (Keim, Westcott). But this meaning would lead, as we shall see, to a tautology with the first proposition of the following verse. Other meanings given to ἦν ἐρχόμενον (by Tholuck: "He was about to come;" by Luthardt: "He must needs come") are far from natural.—Meyer, with some ancient and modern commentators (Origen, Chrysostom, Calvin, Beza, etc.), advocates a wholly different construction; he joins the ἐρχόμενον to the substantive ἄνθρωπον: "which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." In that case τὸ φῶς, the light, is taken as the subject of ἦν, which is translated in the sense of "was present" (*aderat*): "The true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, was present;" or τὸ φῶς is made the attribute of ἦν, by giving the subject of this verb a φῶς understood to be taken from the preceding verse: "This light (to which John bore testimony, ver. 8) was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." Against this connection of ἐρχόμενον, *coming*, with the subst. *every man*, there has often been alleged the needlessness of this appendix which is understood of itself; but wrongly, as I have shown in the first edition, where I advocated this explanation. For the words thus understood would signify that the light of the Logos is a divine gift which every man brings with him at his birth, that it is therefore an innate light which is in question. Yet this idea is not lost in the other construction; it reappears, though less clearly expressed, in the words: *which lighteth every man*. The two constructions of the ἦν, whether in the sense of *was present*, or understanding for it a subject taken from the previous verse, are not very natural. Finally, the logical connection with ver. 8 is closer in the former sense: John came to bear witness of the light (ver. 8); for at that very time the light was on the point of appearing in the world (ver. 9). In my second edition I had attempted a third or even fourth construction by joining the participle ἐρχόμενον not to ἦν, nor to ἄνθρωπον, but to φωρίζει, *lighteth*, making it a sort of Latin gerund: "which *lighteth every man by coming* (itself) into the world." But this use of the participle can hardly be justified by sufficient examples.

The word ἀληθινός, *true*, appears here for the first time.

It is one of the characteristic terms of John's style. Of twenty-eight passages in which it occurs in the New Testament, twenty-three belong to John; nine in his Gospel, four in his First Epistle, ten in the Apocalypse (Milligan). It is also used in the classics. It denotes the fact as the adequate realization of the idea. It therefore contrasts, not the true with the false, but the normal appearance with the imperfect realization. Consequently the light of which John speaks is thereby characterized as *essential* light, in opposition to all light of an inferior order.—The phrase: *which lighteth every man*, if it were applied to the gospel revelation, would denote the universal character of the gospel; the present *lighteth* would be that of the idea. But it is more natural to find the same notion expressed here as in ver. 4: the Logos, as the inner light, enlightening every man, illuminating him with sublime intuitions of the good, the beautiful and the true.—The term *every man* once more gives a formal contradiction to the assertion of Baur's school, which makes John a dualistic philosopher.

The Logos when He came into the world did not arrive as a stranger. By profound and intimate relations with humanity, He had prepared for His advent and seemed to have made sure of a favourable welcome.

Ver. 10. "*He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not.*"—The first proposition forms a contrast to the last words of ver. 9: "That Light, which cometh into the world, was already there." Here is the reproduction of the idea of ver. 4. Though the sin of man made a breach in the relations between the Word and the world, it did not banish Him from it. It is always *in Him*, that "all things live and move and have their being." It is difficult to understand how exegetes like de Wette, Meyer, and Astié could refer the words, *He was in the world*, to the presence of Jesus in Israel at the time when the forerunner was preaching; and the last proposition, *the world knew Him not*, to the people's ignorance at that time of the presence of the Messiah (comp. ver. 26: *There standeth One among you whom ye know not*). What proportion is there between a fact of so little importance, and the idea of the following proposition, in which the Logos is described as the Creator of the



world! The declaration, *and the world was made by Him*, necessarily impresses on the proposition which precedes and on that which follows a character of grandeur and sublimity incompatible with so accidental a fact. If, on the contrary, the words, *He was in the world*, relate to the invisible and universal presence of the Logos before His incarnation, it is easy to understand the relation between this idea and the following one: *and the world was made by Him*. This second proposition recalls ver. 3 as the first does ver. 4. They form both of them a striking contrast to the third, which reproduces the idea of ver. 5.

Intimate as were the previous relations between that true Light and the world which it came to enlighten, *the world knew Him not*. It had been created by Him; He filled it, as the spirit of an artist fills his work; and yet when He came it did not recognise Him. The *καί, and*, which connects the third proposition with the two others, undoubtedly expresses a contrast, but imparting to it at the same time a progressive character. The work of the Logos continues; nothing disturbs His course; comp. the similar *and* of ver. 5. Let us remark here for the first time a peculiarity in the style of our evangelist. He loves the *paratactical* (by way of juxtaposition) construction so familiar to the Hebrews, and employs it instead of the syntactical conjunction of propositions, which corresponds to the genius of the Greek language. Instead of saying, "He was . . . *and* the world . . . *and* the world" . . . , a writer of Greek origin would have expressed himself thus: "*Although* He was . . . *and though* the world was made . . . the world knew Him not." The words: *οὐκ ᾔνω, knew Him not*, in connection with the first proposition, might certainly, notwithstanding our explanation of ver. 5, refer to the ignorance of the world in general in regard to the inner revelation of the Logos anterior to His coming in the flesh; comp. 1 Cor. i. 21: "After that, in the wisdom of God, the world by wisdom *knew* not God . . .," and Rom. i. 19-21. The unbelief of the Jews, ver. 11, would in this case stand out as an exceptional fact on the general background of human blindness. In that case we must translate: "*Had not known Him*." But if Paul is justified in charging the Gentiles with not having known *God*, could they be charged with not having

recognised the *Logos*? It is therefore more natural to apply the *knew not* of ver. 10 to the same fact to which we have referred the *comprehended not* of ver. 5, to the rejection of the Light which appeared in Christ on the stage of history. The word *καταλαμβάνειν*, *seize*, ver. 5, suited the *Logos* regarded as a luminous *principle* (*αὐτό*, neuter); the word *know*, *discern*, ver. 10, applies better to the *Logos* regarded in the light in which He appears here as a *person* (*αὐτόν*, masculine). We seize a principle,—we discern a person. The *κόσμος*, *world*, is here humanity blinded by sin, the *darkness* of ver. 5.

It will be seen that our ver. 10 sums up vv. 3–5, with the view of preparing for the description of the final catastrophe, ver. 11. In this verse there is indicated more expressly the agent by whose instrumentality the sinful world consummated this fatal act.

Ver. 11. "*He came into His own (dwelling-place), and His own received Him not.*" If the *knew Him not* of ver. 10 were applied to the rejection of the inward illumination of the *Logos*, this ver. 11 would form a climax to the third proposition of ver. 10: "There was something worse still!" But it is better, and it is the natural form of the *asyndeton* between vv. 10 and 11, to regard this last verse as a more emphatic repetition of the same fact as is indicated in the preceding. The expression passes from the abstract to the thoroughly historical and concrete form; and that in order to exhibit the full enormity of the fact.—The word *ἦλθε*, *came*, denotes an external manifestation, in opposition to the *was* of ver. 10, which expressed only an invisible presence. This *came* refers back to the *ἐρχόμενον*, *coming into the world*, of ver. 9. *Τὰ ἴδια*, literally, *His home* (comp. xix. 27). Before coming down to the earth, the *Logos* had prepared for Himself a dwelling-place which belonged to Him peculiarly, and which should have been as it were His door of entrance into the world. Comp. Ex. xix. 5, where Jehovah says to the Jews, "*Ye shall be my peculiar treasure among all peoples;*" and Ps. cxxxv. 4: "*The Lord hath chosen Jacob.*" Malachi had said of Christ, while describing His final appearing, His Messianic advent: "The Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to *His temple*; behold, He shall come" (iii. 1). But this door was closed against Him, and that by those very men who

should have opened it to Him: *οἱ ἴδιοι*, *His own*, His servants, the dwellers in His house, whom He had Himself established in it. *Τὰ ἴδια*, *His dwelling-place*, was Canaan, with its entire theocratic institutions; *οἱ ἴδιοι*, *His own*, are the members of the Israelitish nation. So Paul calls them in like manner *οἰκεῖοι*, *members of the household, domestici, familiares*, in opposition to the *ξένοι* and *πάρουκοι*, strangers and pilgrims, terms by which he denotes the Gentiles (Eph. ii. 19). Never, it seems, had the Jews better deserved this name of honour from Jehovah than when Jesus appeared. Their monotheistic zeal and aversion to idolatry had then reached their culminating point. The nation in general seemed to form a Messianic community, fully disposed to receive "Him who was to come," as a bride welcomes her bridegroom.—The word *παραλαμβάνειν*, *to receive to one's house*, perfectly expresses the nature of that welcome which the Messiah had a right to expect. It should have been a national, solemn, and official acknowledgment on the part of the entire nation, hailing its Messiah, and rendering homage to its God. If the abode prepared had opened in this way, it would immediately have become the starting-point for the conquest of the world (Ps. cx. 2, 3). Instead, an unheard of event took place. In Agamemnon returning to his palace after ten years' absence, and falling by the hand of his unfaithful spouse, we have the event which is tragical *par excellence* in pagan history. But what is that outrage when compared with the theocratic tragedy? The God invoked by the nation appears in His temple, and is crucified by His own worshippers!—Observe the finely-shaded difference between the two compounds, *καταλαμβάνειν*, *to apprehend*, ver. 5, which suited *the light* viewed as a principle, and *παραλαμβάνειν*, *to welcome*, which is the suitable term when the subject is the master of the house. On the *καί*, *and*, the same observation as at vv. 5 and 10. We feel that the heart of the writer is now calmly contemplating the poignant contrast contained in the two propositions of the verse.

Two explanations have been offered, opposed to that which we have been developing. Some interpreters, as Lange, for example, refer the coming of the Word in this verse to the manifestations of Jehovah and the prophetic revelations in

the Old Testament. Others—M. Reuss, for example—apply the words, *He came*, as we do, to the historical manifestation of Jesus Christ; but, according to them, the ἴδιοι designate, not the Jews, but “men in general, as creatures of the pre-existent Word” (*Hist. de la théol. Chrét.* t. ii. p. 476). M. Reuss even describes the application of the words, τὰ ἴδια, or ἴδιοι, to the Jews, as “a strange error of ordinary exegesis.” As to the first opinion, it is incompatible with the word ἦλθε, *He came*, as well as with vv. 12 and 13, which can only relate to the effects of Christ’s coming in the flesh. No one would have thought of giving another meaning to ver. 11, but for the apparent tautology which arises from it with ver. 14. This is a difficulty which we shall have to surmount. The other interpretation, that of M. Reuss, appears to him necessary, because of a difficulty which he finds in the ὅσοι, *all them who*, of ver. 12, if by *His own*, ver. 11, the Jews are understood,—we shall examine this objection in its own place; and next, because of the general fact that, according to our Gospel, “there are no peculiar relations between the Word and the Jews as such.” We think, on the contrary, we can prove that the fourth Gospel, no less than the first, recognises the existence of an organic relation between the theocracy and the coming of Christ in the flesh. Comp. i. 17: “*The law given by Moses*” is followed by “*grace and truth came by Jesus Christ* ;” ii. 16, Jesus calls the temple “*His Father’s house* ;” iv. 22: “*Salvation is of the Jews* ;” v. 39: “*The Scriptures testify of me* ;” and, moreover, viii. 35, 56, x. 2, 3, xii. 41, xix. 36, 37. All these passages overthrow the assertion of M. Reuss, and justify the meaning which we have given, in keeping with the entire context, to the expressions: *His own* (dwelling-place) and *His own*.

### THIRD SECTION.

#### vv. 12-18.—FAITH.

Though the appearing of the Word did not succeed in scattering the darkness of the human race and overcoming the resistance of Israel as a nation, His mission is by no

means a failure. On the contrary, it is at this juncture that His relations to humanity become more intimate, and that a *new humanity* appears on the earth, begotten directly of God through the instrumentality of faith (vv. 12 and 13). The *object* of this faith, which has power to create a family of God's children here on earth, is the incarnation of the Word (ver. 14a). Extraordinary as this fact is, it is *certain*; for, 1st. He was *beheld* with rapture by eye-witnesses, to the number of whom the author belongs (ver. 14b); 2d. He was *pointed out* by the divine herald, whose mission it was to proclaim Him (ver. 15); 3d. He was *proved*, and, as it were, lived on, by the whole church, which, by everything received from this unparalleled being, Jesus Christ, proves that He has the characteristics of the divine Logos (vv. 16-18). Hence the threefold testimony: that of eye-witnesses, that of the official witness, and that of the whole church.

This third part of the prologue thus goes to demonstrate the certainty and riches of faith. Ver. 18 brings us, through the experience of believers, to that summit from which we gradually descended after ver. 1. The church possesses in Jesus that eternal Word,—that Word-God, with whose existence the prologue opened.

Ver. 12. "*But<sup>1</sup> as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, to them that believe on His name.*"  $\Delta\acute{\epsilon}$ , *but*, expresses not only gradation, but opposition. This is proved, first, by the antithesis of  $\epsilon\lambda\alpha\beta\omicron\nu$ , *received*, to  $\omicron\upsilon\ \pi\alpha\rho\acute{\epsilon}\lambda\alpha\beta\omicron\nu$ , *received not* (ver. 11); and it appears also from the contrast between  $\delta\sigma\omicron\iota$ , literally: *as many of them as there are who*, and  $\omicron\iota\ \dot{\iota}\delta\iota\omicron\iota$ , *His own* (ver. 11). This latter name denoted the nation as a whole; the pronoun  $\delta\sigma\omicron\iota$  denotes only individuals. By its official representatives, the nation, as such, refused to welcome Jesus. From that time faith took a purely individual and, so to speak, sporadic character. This is expressed by the pronoun  $\delta\sigma\omicron\iota$ , *all those who*. Nay, more, in proportion as faith in the Messiah was detached from all identification with the Jewish nation as such, access to this faith was opened up to every human being. This is that impoverishment of Israel which, as St. Paul says (Rom. xi.), has formed the riches of the Gentiles. The  $\delta\sigma\omicron\iota$  are there-

<sup>1</sup>  $\Delta\epsilon$  is omitted by D and some Fathers.

fore not only those from among *the Jews* who have not shared the national unbelief, but *all believers* in general (τοῖς πιστεύουσιν, ver. 12<sup>b</sup>), whether Jews or Greeks,—all those whom John contemplates as gathered into one new people, when he says, at ver. 16 : ἡμεῖς πάντες, *all we*. Thus is resolved the dilemma by which M. Reuss (*Hist. de la théol. Chrét.* t. ii. p. 475) thinks he can prove that the words *His own* (dwelling-place), *His own people* (ver. 11), designate men in general, and not Jews. If they were Jews, he alleges, the *all those* of ver. 12, who are contrasted with the *His own* of ver. 11, would be either Gentiles—and we should be led to the assertion that Gentiles alone believed—or the Jews who believed exceptionally, and we should be forced to conclude that there were no believers except Jews! The error is in this latter conclusion. The true inference to be drawn from this *all those* is, that the Messiah being once rejected by unbelieving Israel (that of ver. 11), there is henceforth in the *human race*, taken as a whole, only *individual* believers. This substitution of individual faith for the collective and national welcome of the chosen people, is the very reason why there is used in this verse the simple verb ἐλάβον, *received*, instead of the compound παρέλαβον, *welcomed* (ver. 11). The compound had a certain grave or solemn character, which was in keeping with an official reception, such as that of the Israelitish authorities receiving in the name of the whole theocratic nation its divine King, and bringing Him into His palace, viz. the temple; while the simple λαμβάνειν, which signifies *to take*, to seize in passing, and, as it were, accidentally, is more in keeping with the notion of individual faith. In this verse, therefore, St. John, like St. Paul in all his Epistles, substitutes the great idea of Christian individualism, with its universal and human character, for Jewish nationalism, with the narrow particularism within which it was naturally confined.

The antithesis between vv. 11 and 12 is dictated by the feeling of a grave contrast. The evangelist has not expressed the consequences of the tragical statement: "*His own received Him not*;" but every one knows that for Israel they are temporal ruin and spiritual death. This results from the fact that the Logos rejected by them was the Life. But John

desires to signalize the salutary and glorious consequences arising from the welcome given to the Word by individual believers of every nation. This divine guest conferred on those who received Him privileges that are worthy of Him. The apostle mentions two, the one of which is the condition of the other: a new position in relation to God, and in this new position participation in His perfect life.

The word *ἐξουσία*, authority, competency, can neither denote simple *possibility*, which is too little, nor *power*, which would be too much; for the believer cannot make himself a child of God. What is meant is a *new standing*, granted to the believer, that of a reconciled or justified one, in virtue of which he can receive the *πνεῦμα*, the Spirit of God, which is in Him the principle of a divine life. By the possession of this life he becomes *τέκνον Θεοῦ*, a *child of God*. The expression includes more than the idea of *adoption*, Paul's *υἰοθεσία*, which would rather correspond to the state of justification, the new standing denoted by *ἐξουσία*. The word *τέκνον*, *child*, from *τίκτειν*, to *beget*, implies the actual communication of the life of God; while the word *υἱός*, *son*, does not necessarily go beyond the idea of adoption, as a civil transaction, if one may so speak. Comp. Gal. iv. 6: "*Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts;*" a statement which amounts to saying: "*Because ye are sons, υἱοί (by adoption), God hath made you children (τέκνα) by regeneration.*" The *because* of Paul is precisely equivalent to the *ἐξουσία* of John. How, with the word *γενέσθαι*, *become*, before his eyes, can Hilgenfeld venture to maintain that, according to the dualistic system of John, the children of God are such by nature, and before their acceptance of the historical Christ?

The idea, *child of God*, in the concrete sense which it has here, is foreign to the Old Testament. There, the terms *father* and *child*, in the rare cases where they occur (Ps. ciii. 13; Isa. lxiii. 16; Jer. xxxi. 20; Hos. xi. 1), express only the feelings of affection, tenderness, or compassion. This observation would suffice to set aside the explanation of exegetes who, like Lange, looking forward to ver. 14, refer vv. 12 and 13 to the faithful of the Old Testament. Expressions so strong, applied to Israelitish saints, would be in

contradiction to the declaration of Jesus, Matt. xi. 11, 12; they would not even be compatible with John i. 17 and vii. 39.

To denote the welcome given to Jesus by individual believers, the apostle had used the figurative and consequently less precise term, *receiving*. But a notion so important demanded an exact description; for the passage is an invitation to the readers to appropriate to themselves the same privileges; they must therefore know exactly in what way to do it. Hence the appendix: *τοῖς πιστεύουσιν* . . ., *to them that believe on His name*. These words indicate with precision the *mode* of the *λαμβάνειν* of individual reception. But instead of connecting them with the word *ἔλαβον*, *received*, which they explain, the author joins them to the pronoun *αὐτοῖς*, *to them*. "It is one of the peculiarities of John's style," observes Luthardt, "to describe the moral condition, by means of which an act is accomplished, by an explanatory appendix, added to one of the words which depend on the principal verb. As to style, this is perhaps clumsy; but as to expression of thought, it is energetic. See the same construction, iii. 13, v. 18, vii. 50, etc." We have sought to give the force of this turn of expression in our translation [Fr.: because of their having believed]. But we have not been able to do so without a measure of violence to the emphasis. The relation between the two acts, *receiving* and *believing*, is evidently this: the second fully suffices for the realization of the first. But why is faith needed to receive the Word? Because His divine character does not fall under the sense of sight. For a thick veil hides Him from our natural view. To discern Him, a spiritual act is necessary, an act of moral perception, accompanied by a sincere surrender to the Holy Being who is its object. Such is faith.

The term by which John here expressed the object of faith is *ὄνομα*, *the name*. This word, which occurs so frequently in Holy Scripture, may be understood in two ways. Either it denotes the entirety of the external signs and acts through which the person is revealed, itself remaining inaccessible to the senses; so it is understood by Hengstenberg. Or, on the contrary, as we think, the term *name* is the adequate expression of the inmost essence of the being, in opposition to its external



manifestations. In this latter case, *the name* is not the name which men give, but that which the being bears in the judgment of God, that which defines its true nature, its absolute name. The second meaning is the only one which is suitable in a passage where the *name* is given as the object of *faith*. The true name, which is not expressed here, is that of *Logos*, ver. 14, or *Son*, ver. 18. The apostle had developed the notion of *receiving* (in the last words of the verse), but not that of *children of God*; the latter he unfolds in ver. 13.

Ver. 13. "*Which were born,<sup>1</sup> not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.*"—The past, *which were born*, or, more literally, *which were begotten*, contains a difficulty. Is regeneration, then, anterior to faith (ver. 12)? Meyer replies that the relative *οἱ*, *who*, does not depend on the last words, *them that believe on His name*, but on the principal substantive: *children of God*, by a construction *ad sensum* (the masculine *οἱ* and the neuter *τέκνα*). And, in fact, ver. 13 is only the development, in a negative and positive form, of the idea: *child of God*. And first, in the negative form, by means of three cumulative phrases. Through their antithesis with the brief *ἐκ Θεοῦ*, *of God*, which follows, they take a disdainful or even contemptuous character. Does John mean thereby to stigmatize the false confidence of the Jews in their theocratic sonship, in their title, Abraham's children? But would not the accumulation of three phrases to express the idea of theocratic birth be superfluous? And has not the prologue too high a flight, too universal a bearing, to admit of so petty a polemic? Does not John rather wish to exhibit here the contrast between the first and second creation? In conformity with the essentially different character of the two creations, there are two humanities: the one which is propagated in the natural way, the other in which life proceeds from an immediate communication of God to each personality. It is therefore ordinary generation as the basis of natural humanity which John describes in the first three phrases:

<sup>1</sup> Irenæus quotes this passage thrice in the form: *Qui natus est*, etc., thus, applying the words to Christ Himself; and Tertullian believes so strongly in the authenticity of this reading, that he ascribes the opposite reading, that of our text, to a falsification of Gnostic (Valentinian) origin. But the Received reading is found in all our critical documents, without exception.

There is a gradation. The first term: *not of blood*, defines procreation from the purely physical point of view; blood is mentioned as the seat of natural life (Lev. xvii. 11). The plur. αἱμάτων has been explained, either by the duality of the sexes or by the plurality of ancestors; but it ought rather to be interpreted like the plur. γάλαξι, in the words of Plato (*Leg.* x. p. 887 D): ἔτι ἐν γάλαξι τρεφόμενοι, the plural referring to the multiplicity of the elements which form the blood (see Meyer). The two following expressions are not subordinate to the preceding, as St. Augustine thought, who, after having referred the latter to the two sexes, applies the former, the one to the woman, the other to the man. In this case the disjunctive negation would be required: *neither . . . nor* (οὔτε . . . οὔτε). Οὐδέ, *and no more*, simply adds a negation to the other. The two latter terms therefore still designate the same fact, that of natural birth, but that while introducing the one, the factor of will swayed by the sensual imagination (*the will of the flesh*), the other, that of a will more independent of nature, more personal and manlike (*the will of man*). To whatever height the present form of the transmission of life may rise, it cannot overleap the limit traced at the first creation, that of the physico-psychical life. *That which is born of the flesh*, whatever its form, *is and remains flesh*. The higher life, which is spiritual and eternal, is the immediate gift of God. To obtain it, there is needed that divine generation by which God communicates His own nature. The two words ἐκ Θεοῦ, *of God*, taken alone, contain the antithesis of the three preceding phrases. They express by their very conciseness the beauty of that spiritual birth which is wholly free from material elements, from natural attractions, from human will, and in which the only concurring factors are, God and His Spirit on the one hand, and the faith of man on the other. But how are we to explain the virtue of that faith which fits men for being begotten of God? Not in itself is the secret of its power to be found, for it is only a simple receptivity (λαμβάνειν, *receiving*), but in its object. The apostle had already hinted this by the words: *which believe on His name*; and now he declares it expressly.

Ver. 14. " *And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us; and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten*

come from the presence of the Father, full<sup>1</sup> of grace and truth." —The coming of Christ in the flesh had already been mentioned, ver. 11, but from the viewpoint of His relations to Israel, and as the object of that people's unbelief. John here proclaims the same fact, but from the standpoint of His relation to faith, and consequently to all mankind. Hence the difference between the two verbs: *He came* (ver. 11), alluding to the prophecies which had announced him to Israel, and *He became* (ver. 14), which refers to His full entrance into human life. Thus regarded, therefore, there is no tautology in this repetition of the fact of Christ's advent. It seems to us as if we saw taking its course before our eyes the history of the development of faith in the heart of a Jew like John or the other apostles. They witness the Messianic manifestation and public ministry of Jesus (ver. 11); far from being partners in rejecting the Messiah, they receive Him, and find through faith in Him the privileges of adoption and regeneration, in which they soon see men of every nation participating (vv. 12, 13); and then it is that, returning upon themselves, and sounding the object of their faith, they discover its sublime grandeur: "If through faith in Him we have been born of God, it is because in Him the Son has been made flesh of our flesh. The Son of God has become our brother; and therefore in receiving Him we are made children of God." Thus the idea of the national Messiah was gradually transformed in their minds into that of the divine Saviour of humanity. The copula *καί*, *and*, has therefore a sort of emphasis here. It might almost be translated: "*It is because* the Word became flesh!" It is *the object* of faith which John finally describes in all its grandeur to explain this marvel: made children of God. We cannot persuade ourselves that his thought is better apprehended by Luthardt, when he thus explains *καί*: "*and to tell the whole truth;*" or by Lücke, when he finds in it the following gradation: "Not only did He come to His own, but He even appeared visibly." Meyer, almost at one with us: "John cannot refrain from expressing also the *how* of that appearing which had such saving effects (vv. 12, 13)."

The emphasis is not on the subject: *the Word*, though this

<sup>1</sup> D and some Fathers read: *πληρη* (agreeing with *δοξαν*); and Augustine: *pleni* (according to a variation *πληρους* ?), to be referred to *unigeniti*.

name is emphatically repeated instead of the simple pronoun, but on the predicate: *became flesh*. This creative Word, to whom everything owes its existence, who created us men, Himself became a member of our humanity. The word *flesh* denotes that human nature whose mode of existence the Logos fully appropriated to Him. The term simply denotes the soft parts of the body, which, by means of the nerves and blood-vessels with which they are pervaded, are found to be the seat of physical sensibility. Thus it is that, by metonymy, the term can designate not only the body, but our entire human being, because the law which controls it in its natural state is precisely sensibility to pleasure and pain. "*For that he also is flesh,*" is said of man before the deluge, Gen. vi. 3. This phrase describes a race which in its determinations consults nothing else than the love of pleasure in all its forms. This desire of happiness and dread of suffering are not in themselves pernicious, and still less criminal instincts. They are, on the contrary, precious means for preserving man from innumerable injuries and losses of which otherwise he would not be conscious. Yet more, without this double natural sensibility, man would never be able to offer to God anything except "sacrifices which cost him nothing." He himself could never become "a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God" (Rom. xii. 1), and so fulfil his noblest destiny. On the other hand, we cannot forget that in the existence of those two natural sensibilities is found the possibility of temptation and sin. Such is the condition to which the eternal Word has consented to descend. The word *flesh* therefore signifies, first, that the Word left the immaterial condition of divine being to take a body, and to enclose Himself, like the creature, within the limits of time and space. But the meaning of the word *flesh* is not exhausted by the idea of body. Since Zeller's work (*theol. Jahrb.* 1842), it is customary among critics of the Tübingen School to ascribe to John a theory according to which the Logos borrowed only His body from humanity, while Himself filling toward this body the part which is filled by our *spirit*. But we have just proved that the word *flesh* may designate the entire human person (*spirit, soul, and body*, 1 Thess. v. 23), and we have explained the reason of it. And in the passage before us it *must* be so.

What could the expression possibly mean: "The Word became flesh," taken in the sense of "became body"? In reality, according to the view defended by Zeller, the Word simply became the *spirit* animating a body, but did not Himself *become* body. John must have said: "He *took* a body." Moreover, how could Jesus speak (John xii. 27) of His *soul*, and of His soul as *troubled*? How (xi. 33 and xiii. 21) could it be said that He "groaned *in His spirit*," that He was "troubled *in His spirit*," which would signify, according to Zeller's view, that Jesus groaned in the Logos! that He was troubled in the Logos! And when John relates, xix. 30, that Jesus gave up His spirit into the hands of His Father, that must signify that Jesus gave up the Logos into the hands of God! The evangelist could not write such absurdities. Evidently, according to him, Jesus possessed, along with a human body, a human soul and a human spirit. He was a whole man, and this is the meaning of the word: *became flesh*. The word *flesh* is not meant simply to denote the visibility or corporeity of Jesus (de Wette, Reuss, Baur), and as little the poverty and weakness of His earthly manifestation (Olshausen, Tholuck). It denotes the *completeness of His human nature*, in virtue of which He could suffer or enjoy happiness, be tempted, struggle, learn, make progress, love, pray, exactly *like us*; comp. Rom. viii. 3. The phrase *ἄνθρωπος ἐγένετο*, *became man*, would not have expressed this idea so exactly. It would have described Jesus as a determinate human personality; but this personality might have reserved for Himself an exceptional position. This idea John wished to set aside, in order to assert the complete homogeneity of His nature and mode of being with ours. The word "*flesh*" was the one which best suited this purpose. Moreover, Jesus called Himself *man*, *ἄνθρωπος*, in the full sense of the word, John viii. 40; and the name which He chose to give Himself above all others: *the Son of man* (i. 52 and elsewhere), implies this notion.

It is impossible to imagine a greater contrast than that which is contained in the two words: "the Word," and "flesh." What notion will unite them, and thus fill up the gulf between them? It is the notion which is expressed by the verb *ἐγένετο*, *became*. The natural meaning of this verb *become*, when

it has a substantive for its attribute, is certainly the transformation of the subject's mode of existence; comp. ii. 9: "the water *that was made* wine (τὸ ὕδωρ οἶνον γεγενημένον)." Baur and Reuss refuse to apply the natural sense here. The one asserts that, according to our Gospel, the Word remains in full possession of all His divine attributes, and consequently does not *become* flesh, but *clothes Himself* with flesh as with an accidental covering. The second also maintains that, with John, "the incarnation is something accessory;" that in this act "the Word loses absolutely nothing of what He possessed;" that incarnation is an "exaltation in respect of humanity, but not a humiliation in respect of him" (v. ii. p. 456). This critic, however, is constrained by evidence to make the following admission: "There is nothing except the word *became* which positively affirms that when He came He changed the form of His existence" (p. 451). We must add: this word *become*, interpreted as it is by the evangelist himself in all the passages which we have just quoted, proves that the change goes to the very root of the mode of existence.

It is a curious fact that Protestant orthodoxy, whether Lutheran or Reformed, has also refused till now to accept the meaning of this word "became" in all its strictness. It is evaded, in the former case, by means of the theory of the *communicatio idiomatum*, in virtue of which the divine subject, the Word, chose somehow at will, and at every moment, between the two modes of divine and human existence, transferring alternatively to the one the attributes of the other; in the latter case, by asserting more strictly the distinction between the two modes of being, but placing them purely and simply in juxtaposition in the same subject. Neither the one nor the other of these views, which are, besides, open to so many objections from a theological standpoint, corresponds to the real meaning of the word "to become." The proposition: "The Word became flesh," can only, as it seems to me, signify one thing, viz. that the divine subject entered into the human mode of being at the cost of renouncing His divine mode of being. The personal subject remained the same, but He exchanged the divine state for the human state; and if at a later time He recovers His divine state, it is not by abandoning the human,—He has too seriously appropriated it to

Himself,—but by exalting the latter to the height of the former. The contents of the proposition of John are not, therefore, two opposite states co-existing in the same subject, but:—a single subject passing from one mode of being to another, which He will gradually transform so as to render it in the end capable of possessing all the attributes of the former. John's teaching, thus understood, is in entire harmony with Paul's. This apostle says in substance, Phil. ii. 6–8 : “He who was in the form of God . . . *He emptied (anéanti) Himself*, having taken the form of a servant and become like to men ;” and 2 Cor. viii. 9 : “Though He was rich *He became poor*, that ye through His poverty might be made rich.” These passages express, in a form completely independent of John's, the same identical conception : incarnation by deprivation (*κένωσις*). We shall see that the whole gospel history, and especially the delineation of our Lord's person as drawn by John, notwithstanding all the assertions to the contrary made by M. Reuss, is fully at one with the theme of the prologue thus understood.

Moreover, it is evident from the central proposition of the prologue, that John did not at all regard the Logos as an impersonal principle existing in the divine understanding, as Beyschlag views it, but as a living personality. “A principle,” says Meyer rightly, “which is made flesh would be, as regards John, an impossible conception.” Thus is confirmed the conclusion which we had already drawn from the second proposition of ver. 1.

The Word did not merely enter into human life ; He remained in it, and appropriated it completely to Himself ; such is the meaning of the proposition following. The word *ἐσκήνωσεν* literally signifies, *dwelt in his tent*. Some critics (Meyer, Reuss, etc.) see an allusion here to a technical term in the religious philosophy of the later Jews, the word *Shekinah* (from *שָׁבַע*, *to dwell in*), which denoted the visible forms whereby Jehovah sometimes manifested His presence in the finite world. The idea which must in this case be attached to *σκηνοῦν* would be the following, according to M. Reuss : “The terrestrial life of the Word was an unceasing revelation of the Deity.” This idea is beautiful and rich. But does not the term *σκηνοῦν*, *to live in a tent*, especially with

the adjunct *ἐν ἡμῖν*, *among us*, rather contain an allusion to the tabernacle in the desert, which was, so to speak, Jehovah's tent, Himself a pilgrim among His pilgrim people? To this conformity between the sort of habitation adopted by Jehovah and that of His people in the desert, there corresponds the entire community of nature and of mode of being between the incarnate Word and men, His brethren. That flesh in which He lived was the tent, like to ours, in which He camped with us. The word *σκηνοῦν* consequently denotes all the relations which He sustained with his kindred,—relations varied and familiar, like those which a pilgrim maintains with the other members of his caravan. It is as if John had said: "We ate and drank at the same table, slept under the same roof, walked and travelled together; we knew Him as son, brother, friend, guest, citizen. To the end He remained faithful to the path on which He entered when He was made flesh." Perhaps we must also connect with this term the notion of a *transient* sojourn, such as that which is made in a tent; having come to the world, it was only to pass through it. This expression finally alludes to the divine majesty with which Jehovah manifested Himself in the tabernacle; so from the bosom of His terrestrial dwelling-place, the Word shot forth rays of divine glory before the eyes of His travelling companions. In this last idea is found the transition to the proposition which is to follow.—The regimen *ἐν ἡμῖν*, *among us*, might refer to men in general. But taken in connection with the term *σκηνοῦν*, *to live in a tent*, and with the following verb: *we beheld*, the pronoun has necessarily a more restricted sense. It relates to the immediate witnesses of the earthly life of Jesus, who sustained toward Him the familiar relations comprised in the notion of life in common. The expression of the general feeling of the church will not come till later, vv. 16–18.

According as the spectacle presents itself to the mind of the evangelist, and in the words *among us* takes the character of the most personal recollection, it becomes in him the object of a delightful contemplation. The phrase is broken; from being the subject the Word becomes the object, while the author's person and the persons of his companions take the place of subject: "*and we beheld His glory.*" How naturally



does this sudden change of construction betray the eye-witness! We observe an analogous but reversed change in the first verses of his first Epistle: "*That which we have heard, which we have looked upon of the Word of life,—for the life was manifested,—that which we have heard, which we have looked upon, declare we unto you.*" In the Epistle, where John speaks in his own name, he naturally starts from his personal impression; then he interrupts himself to put the object on the scene, and he returns finally to his impression. In the Gospel, on the contrary, where he writes as a historian, he starts from the fact: "*The Word was made flesh;*" then he interrupts himself to depict the unspeakable joy of those who were witnesses of it; and, as we shall see, after giving utterance to this feeling, he returns to the fact in the last words of the verse. The word *θεᾶσθαι*, to contemplate, is richer and fuller than *ὁρᾶν* (to see, perceive). The one has regard to enjoyment, the other to knowledge. Baur and Keim refer the word *contemplate* to the spiritual life of Jesus which all believers enjoy. This is a manifest violence to the thought of the writer, in whom those critics are unwilling to recognise a witness, but whom, nevertheless, they cannot make up their minds to regard as an impostor. Besides, the parallel, 1 John i. 1–3, does not leave the smallest doubt regarding the meaning of the expression *contemplate*. Undoubtedly the bodily eye does not suffice to enjoy such a spectacle; to secure this experience, the witness must possess an inner sense. But it is evident that bodily sight was the necessary means of that contemplation of which the author here speaks (see *Intro. I. p. 91*). The object of contemplation was the *glory* of the Word. The glory of God is the display of His perfections before the view of His creatures. The glory of the Word consists of the characteristics in which the perfection of the Word shone in His human life. John will speak of them immediately. Meantime, he characterizes this glory by declaring that it was a glory *as of the only-begotten Son*. The conjunction *ὡς, as*, here expresses a comparison, not between two similar things, but between the fact and the idea: "A glory such as might be expected in . . .," or "such as could only belong to . . ."  
 —The word *μονογενής, only-begotten Son*, necessarily includes the idea of filiation, and not merely that of excellence or

preference. This appears from the relation of—γενῆς to πατήρ. M. Reuss himself acknowledges that the word includes not only a moral but a *metaphysical* idea. The first part of the word (*μονο*, *only*) contrasts this Son with the children spoken of in ver. 12. The latter become sons by adoption, and in virtue of that oneness which the only-begotten Son establishes between Himself and them by His incarnation. As to Him, He is Son in a sense in which no other being is. Some critics connect the name *only-begotten Son* with the *eternal generation* of the Logos (Meyer); others, with the fact of the *incarnation* (Hofmann). There might be added to these the thought of His *supernatural birth*. Luthardt alleges that the matter in question is only that *special communion* with God as Father, in which Jesus lived during the whole course of His earthly life. The evident relation between—γενῆς and πατήρ, as it appears to me, allows no other sense than the first. But it does not follow that the regimen *παρὰ πατρός*, *of the Father*, applies to the generation of the Son. Osterwald rightly translates: “of the only-begotten Son *come from* the Father.” It would have been still more correct to say: *come from beside the Father*. The prep. *παρά* can have no other meaning. If John had meant by this regimen to express the generation of the Son, and not His coming to the earth, he would have used the prep. *ἐκ* (*out of*), or the gen. *πατρός* without a preposition. This grammatical sense is, besides, the only one which suits the context. The object is to explain, not what the Word is in Himself, but what His glory was here below: a glory of a unique kind, says John, and such as could be expected only in the Son *descending from the presence* of the Father. It was enough to approach Him to know *what Father He was from whose presence* this Man came as Son.

But how are we to reconcile the idea of such glory with the glimpse which John has just given us of the humiliation of the Logos? Are not the Tübingen and several other critics who follow them, right in accusing the evangelist of self-contradiction, when in chap. xvii. he puts into the mouth of Jesus a prayer claiming the restoration of His glory as Son, while it appears from our passage that He possessed it even when on earth? It need not be said that we cannot admit

the opinion of those who understand here by the glory of Jesus His miracles, or even the isolated fact of the transfiguration! It is something permanent in the life of our Lord which is in question. But, from the fact that our Lord possessed a glory on the earth, and even such a glory as could not be expected except in the only-begotten Son, must it be concluded that this glory was that of *His divine state* before His incarnation? Could not Jesus have stripped Himself (as His history otherwise shows He did) of omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, and yet possess, at least from the beginning of His public ministry (and it is of this period only that John here speaks), a *unique* character which distinguished Him from every other man, and revealed the Son in Him? This character was His *filial consciousness*, the inward certainty of His exceptional relation to the Father, the moral splendour which the certainty of such a bond spread over His whole person, the supreme assurance which He derived from it every moment; more particularly, as John goes on to say, the unspeakable *grace* and incorruptible truth which distinguished all His acts and words. He did not possess omnipotence in His own right,—that is evident from His praying; but by prayer He could obtain the *use* of omnipotence in the service of love, and that by coming in each case with His filial confidence to draw freely from His Father's treasures. Nor did He possess the other divine perfections; otherwise would He have been ignorant of anything, asked questions, struggled, believed, obeyed? And yet He enjoyed them sometimes as if He had possessed them, because His Father granted Him the use of them when and in what measure the task of the time demanded. This *filial* relation to the Father which was manifested in His sayings, the testimonies of His inner consciousness, and in His acts, the testimonies of the Father in His favour,—such was His glory here below. This position, glorious as it was, was not that of the divine state which He had given up. The *consciousness* of sonship is not the *state* of a son. But how could it fail to cast over Him who possessed it a reflection of that state? So the believer is even here below a child of God; he carries within him the inward consciousness of that relation,—the consciousness which he has of himself sometimes spreads a heavenly splendour over

his being. But, nevertheless, he is not yet invested with *glory* properly so called; he is a son, and consequently an heir, but not a possessor. Similarly Christ, while possessing in relation to the Father the feeling of loving and being loved as a son, and towards men the condescension and majesty which the consciousness of such a position gave Him, could nevertheless at the close of His career claim again the state of sonship which He had enjoyed from all eternity.

We have in our translation connected the last words: *full of grace and truth*, with the principal subject of the whole phrase—the Word. This is the only correct construction of the Nom. *πλήρης*, *full*. No doubt it might be taken, with Meyer, Luthardt, and so many others, as a nom. absol., connecting it either with *δόξαν*: “*glory full of grace*” . . . (hence the reading *πλήρη* in D), or rather with *αὐτοῦ*, *of Him*: “*His glory, His who was full of grace*” . . . (hence the reading *pleni* in Augustine). But those explanations, though grammatically possible, mistake the real import of this beautiful passage. Carried away by the charm of the reminiscence, the evangelist interrupted the objective description of the relations which the Word deigned to sustain toward those who surrounded Him; and now, in order to finish it, he resumes his delineation, left unfinished at the beginning of the verse. In the case of those who had *seen*, the words: “*He dwelt*,” suffice to revive the whole spectacle. But for those who had not seen, something more was needed; and this final apposition: “*full of grace and truth*,” is the last stroke finishing the portrait begun. We need not therefore, with Lücke, speak of a *parenthesis*, as if the preceding phrase had been an interposed reflection. There was no explanation in it, but an outburst of feeling. In the Old Testament the two essential features of God’s character were *grace* and *truth* (Ex. xxxiv. 6): “*abundant in grace and truth*.” The same are the two features which characterized the human life of the Word, and revealed His filial relation to the Father. *Grace* is divine love clothed in the character of condescension, of gentleness to enemies, compassion to the wretched, pardon to the guilty; it is God consenting to *give Himself*. As it is *grace* which gives life, the Word became again by this feature of His earthly life that which He was originally—the *life* of the creatures (ver. 4’

*Truth* is the reality of things adequately set in the light. And as the essence of things is the moral idea which presides over the existence of each of them, truth is the holy and good thought of God completely unveiled: it is God *revealed*. In virtue of this attribute, the Word thus became again the *light* of men (vv. 4, 5). By these two essential attributes of the character of Jesus, the witnesses of His life recognised Him as the only Son coming from the presence of the Father. Their thought was: this Being was God given, God revealed in a perfectly human existence.

As a man, after having made an important discovery, recalls with satisfaction the suggestions which first awaked his thought and put his understanding on the way, so the apostle transports himself from the time of full enjoyment to the decisive moment when he heard the first revelation, the fact of the incarnation,—a revelation not understood at first, but made clear afterwards.

Ver. 15. "*John bears witness of Him, and cried, saying,<sup>1</sup> This was He of whom I spake,<sup>2</sup> He that cometh after me is preferred (Fr. preceded me) before me; for He was before me.*" The present "*bears witness*" implies that the fact described in ver. 14 remains for ever established by this testimony. The verb *κέκραγε*, *has cried*, is added to show the fact that the testimony was rendered in express and striking terms; the use of the perf. implies that, though the herald has gone, the proclamation remains. The saying of John is quoted here solely because of its matter. At ver. 30 it will be replaced in its historical setting. It was uttered by John in the circle of his disciples the first time he saw Jesus again after having baptized Him. But the evangelist indicates that the fore-runner even on that early occasion was only quoting himself: "*This is He of whom I said.*" Indeed, when speaking as he did (ver. 30), he repeated the solemn declaration which he had made the day before in presence of a whole deputation of the Sanhedrim; comp. vv. 26 and 27. The declaration made on the first day contained, of course, only the words in the middle of our verse: "*He that cometh after me preceded me.*" Ver. 15

<sup>1</sup> N D b omit *λεγων*.

<sup>2</sup> N<sup>a</sup> B C Or. (once) read *ο εσπων* instead of *ου εσπων*. N omits these words, and adds *ος* after *ερχομενος*.

of the prologue reproduces this declaration, not in the briefer form in which it was uttered the first day (ver. 26), but in the developed form in which John repeated and applied it to Jesus on the following day (ver. 30); this is proved by the two propositions which begin and close identically in vv. 15 and 30. By this introduction and conclusion John first applied to Jesus personally before his disciples the testimony which he had uttered in public the day before: "*This is He of whom I spake*;" then he gave a very brief solution of the sort of enigma contained in this paradoxical declaration, by adding the last words: "*for He was before me.*" The only difference is, that in ver. 15 the apostle substitutes *was* for the *is* of ver. 30. The reason for this slight change is simple: the present *is* was suggested to the forerunner by the presence of Jesus, the situation of ver. 30; while in ver. 15 the imperfect *was* expresses a logical relation: "When I so spake, it *was* He whom I had in view." The testimony which the apostle here reproduces contains a play of words in keeping with the character of John the Baptist and the original style of all his discourses: "He who follows me preceded me." Here there is an apparent contradiction, intended to excite attention and stimulate the mental activity of those to whom the saying was addressed. The enigmatical form must also have contributed to impress this important declaration on the memory of the hearers.

Many commentators have understood the words: *preceded me* (in the sense of *surpassed me*), as referring to the superior dignity and excellence of Jesus as compared with John (Chrysostom, Tholuck, Olshausen, de Wette, Lücke, Luthardt). But, 1. While taking away from the saying of John even the appearance of that contradiction which it should have, the explanation robs it of all its piquancy. 2. The evident correspondence between the prepositions *ὀπίσω*, *after*, and *ἔμπροσθεν*, *in front of*, *before*, does not allow us to refer the one to time, the other to dignity. Hofmann alone, we believe, has attempted to take them *both* in the sense of dignity, and he has also failed. The evangelist intending to prove by the testimony of the forerunner the pre-existence of Christ as the Logos, the temporal sense is the only one which is appropriate. 3. As Meyer observes, the saying of John thus understood

would not have even a logical sense; for nothing in general demands that he who goes before the other should be his superior in dignity. Rather it is the contrary which happens; the herald precedes the sovereign. The two prepositions therefore relate to *time*, and John means that the Christ who appears *after* him nevertheless existed *before* him. This is the sense adopted by Luther, Meyer, Bäumllein. The perfect γέγονεν simply signifies: *was there (de facto)*; comp. vi. 25. ποτε ὧδε γέγονας, "When camest Thou hither?" This verb denotes not the eternal *essence* of the Logos, but the simple *fact* of His existence anterior to the appearance of the forerunner. Did not the Christ, by His presence and activity throughout all the Old Testament time, *precede* His forerunner? Comp. xii. 41, 1 Cor. x. 4, and the passage of Malachi iii. 1. from which John the Baptist must himself have derived the notion, as we shall see.

When repeating this word on the day following, John added, in explanation of the enigma, the words: "*For He was before me*;" literally: "He was *my first*." Some (Chrysostom, Beza, Calvin, Hofmann, Luthardt) refer this term to superiority of rank; but in this case John must have said *is*, and not *was*. Objection is taken to the tautology between this proposition and the foregoing one, if they are both taken as referring to time. This would be, it is said, to explain *the same* by *the same*. It is forgotten that there is a difference between the γέγονε, *was there*, which belongs to history, and the ἦν, *was*, which, as in the two first verses of the prologue, relates to essence: "If He *preceded* me on the stage of history, it is because He was in reality of a superior order to mine (as eternity is superior to time)." The ἦν shows, like that of ver. 1, that this being did not pass from nothingness to existence. The commentators who apply the word *first*, as we do, to time (Meyer, Bäumllein), say that the superlative πρῶτος, *first*, is here put for the comparative πρότερος, *anterior*, and quote in favour of this meaning xv. 18. But there is more in the word *first* than a simple comparison between two individuals placed in the same rank, of whom the one is merely anterior to the other. The expression πρῶτός μου, *my first*, combines two ideas: *the first* (absolutely speaking), and *first* in relation to me. And the same is the case also xv. 18; for Jesus is

not merely persecuted *before* His disciples, as one of them, their equal, but as their chief, the real object of that hatred which assails them along with Him. This explanatory proposition therefore contains what it required to embrace the solution of the contradiction presented by the preceding affirmation: Jesus can really have *preceded* John, because He belongs to the superior order on which every being depends that has appeared in time.

It is alleged that John the Baptist cannot have uttered a saying implying the pre-existence of the Messiah, and that it is the evangelist who puts it into his mouth (Strauss, Weisse, de Wette), or who modifies some declaration of the forerunner, so as to give it a meaning which it had not. We answer, first, that the enigmatical and paradoxical turn of this saying is not favourable to such a suspicion. In its very originality it bears the mark of its authenticity. Then, the evangelist quoting it *twice* in the following narrative, indicating at the same time the place and time when it was uttered, we must impute to him a rare degree of effrontery if we suppose that he invented it himself. But, it is asked, could the forerunner have risen to a conception of the person of Christ which the church reached only much later? However little John had seriously meditated on the oracle which contained the programme of his own ministry, Mal. iii. 1, he must have found in it the contents of the saying quoted by the evangelist. Jehovah, identifying Himself with the Messiah, said: "Behold, *I send* my messenger, and he shall prepare the way *before me*, the Messiah." Now, when the sending of the sent one includes his birth, as in this case, it is manifest that he who sends must *pre-exist* the sent. John the Baptist, then, did nothing more than render in his own piquant and playful style the contents of that oracle which must have been so familiar to him. As to the words of the forerunner: "He who cometh *after me*," are they not in reality the reproduction of the prophet's: "He shall prepare the way *before me*"? The forerunner, besides, had received his own revelations, the command, for example, to join with his preaching the extraordinary ceremony of baptism; it seems that there had been a sort of theophany: "*He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me,*" i. 33. And if we allow some reality



to the baptism scene, must not the saying of the Father: "*This is my beloved Son,*" have gone to open the eyes of John conclusively to the divine character of Him whom he preceded? Moreover, Isaiah had already called the Messiah "*Mighty God, Everlasting Father,*" ix. 6;<sup>1</sup> and Daniel had described Him as "coming with the clouds of heaven," vii. 13. The Rabbis themselves had not been without an understanding of what such sayings contained in regard to the person of the Messiah (comp. Meyer).

"*The Greek seeks wisdom,*" says St. Paul. The Jew does not reach the understanding of divine things by the way of investigation; he receives testimony: for he lives in a sphere of revelation. Nothing therefore more natural than the quotation of the forerunner's testimony, the official witness of the Messiah, in the prologue. But what completely explains the quotation is, the part which the forerunner's declaration seems to have played in the life of the author himself. He had just been relating his own experience, v. 14; and if it be true—as it must be if the author is the Apostle John—that he personally heard this testimony from the mouth of the Baptist, and that this saying formed the starting-point of his faith, and of that of the church in general, how could he avoid encasing it, like an incomparable jewel, in this solemn preface? We do not take into account here the absurd readings of the principal Alexandrine MSS. (Σ B C). To the testimony of the apostles, and to that of John the Baptist, there is joined, finally, that of the whole church.

Ver. 16. "*And<sup>2</sup> of His fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.*" The word *fulness* connects this verse with the epithet *πλήρης*, *full*, at the end of ver. 14. The fact being, that the testimony of the church is in a still more direct relation to that of the apostles than to that of the forerunner. A numerous group of authorities, mostly Byzantine, read *καί*, *and*, at the beginning of the verse; while the

<sup>1</sup> We know not how many different senses have been sought for these expressions. What would be said if orthodox writers indulged in like violence?

<sup>2</sup> Instead of *καί*, which is given by T. R., with A E F G H Γ Δ Α Π Syr<sup>cop</sup>, Syr<sup>sch</sup>, Syr<sup>p</sup>. It<sup>aliq</sup>, and the most of the Mnn., there is read *οτι* in Σ B C D L X, It<sup>aliq</sup>, Cop. some Mnn. and several Fathers, in particular Or. (thrice).

Alexandrines read *ὅτι, because*. The Greco-Latin authorities are divided. Griesbach, Lachmann, Tischendorf, Meyer, and modern critics in general, prejudiced as they are in favour of the Alexandrine text, uphold the second reading. Meyer gives a strange proof in its support. The reading *and* proceeded, according to him, from the erroneous idea that ver. 16 is a continuation of the Baptist's discourse. But it is precisely to the reading *because* that the suspicion of this unfortunate origin applies. For the logical particle *because*, much more than the simple *and* of ver. 16, forms the continuation of ver. 15. The connection by *καί, and*, being much looser, easily admits of our detaching this verse from ver. 15, and connecting it, as is evidently the author's intention (comp. the word *fulness* with the word *full*), with ver. 14. It certainly does not follow from this that ver. 15 is only a parenthesis. The three testimonies are simply placed in juxtaposition, and this is the force of the particle *καί, and, and further*. The origin of the Alexandrine reading *because* is easily explained. We know that the Gnostic Heracleon had regarded vv. 16 and 17 as still belonging to the Baptist's discourse. Origen, far from contesting this explanation, extends it even to ver. 18. Other Greek Fathers shared this view, at least in regard to ver. 16. Is it not clear that it was under the influence of this opinion that the *and* was transformed into *because*, perhaps with the help of the *ὅτι, because*, which begins the following verse? As to this opinion in itself, it is untenable, for the words, *all we*, ver. 16, imply the existence of the church, and because the past tenses *ἐγένετο, came*, and *ἐξηγήσατο, declared*, vv. 17 and 18, suppose the ministry of Jesus to be closed.

The *fulness* of which John speaks is the inexhaustible riches of grace and truth (ver. 14) which flowed from the Word made flesh. The following sayings develop those two ideas: ver. 16, that of grace; ver. 18, that of truth; they are both united in the transition saying, ver. 17. The term *fulness, πλήρωμα*, denotes that with which an empty space is filled. The force of this word in our context is so simple, so evidently determined by its connection with ver. 14, and the choice of the word is so naturally accounted for by the epithet *πλήρης* at the end of that verse, that it is difficult to understand how

several modern critics (Schwegler, Hilgenfeld) have been able to turn it into a weapon against the authenticity of our Gospel, by deriving it from the Gnostic doctrine of the Valentinian *plerôma*. It was this sect, on the contrary, which drew its nomenclature from the prologue of John, and substituted a mythological sense for the simple meaning belonging to all the terms: *grace, truth, fulness*, in our passage (see Introd. p. 218 et seq.). Comp. besides, Rom. xv. 29, where Paul uses the expression: *πλήρωμα εὐλογίας, fulness of blessing*, exactly in the same sense as John in our passage. In the word *all we*, are embraced all the individual believers mentioned in ver. 12,—that is, the whole church. It is remarkable that the verb, *we have received*, has no *regimen*; arising from the fact that the matter in question was not such or such a blessing received, but above all, the act of *receiving* itself: “We have all had the privilege of drawing from that inexhaustible source.” By the subsequent appendix, *and grace for grace*, the apostle characterizes less the object than the *mode* of receiving. The *καί, and*, signifies, “And that in the *way* which I am going to describe.” The terms, *grace for grace*, which are often translated: *grace upon grace*, contain a sort of play on words. In reality, the preposition *ἀντί, for, in exchange for*, strictly characterizes the legal system. Under the law, a grace is received *in exchange for* some desert. But in the new order of things, it is a grace received which becomes our title to receive a new grace. In no other way could the method of complete gratuitousness be better expressed. It was therefore of set purpose that John wrote this *ἀντί, in exchange for*, instead of *ἐπί, upon*, which would simply have designated one grace *added* to another, as in Phil. ii. 27, and ordinarily. There is a boldness in this application of the very formula of the opposite dispensation to the economy of grace, which betrays the paroxysm of exultation. He thereby invites his readers to make every grace received a motive to be urged before the Lord for obtaining a greater favour; and that without ever fearing to exhaust the fulness placed within our reach in the Word made flesh. Chrysostom and Beza understand by the grace granted in exchange for preceding grace, the New Testament substituted for the Old; but how could the latter be here called *grace*, when in the verse follow-

ing it bears the name of *law*, in opposition to *grace* itself? In the following verse, the experience thus described, ver. 16, is explained by the very essence of the new order of things which has appeared in Christ.

Ver. 17. "*For the law was given by Moses : grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.*" Here we again meet with the paratactic form characteristic of the Hebrew ; a writer of Greek origin would certainly have indicated the contrast between the two propositions of this verse by the particles *μέν* and *δέ*. The gospel dispensation is opposed to the law as *grace* and as *truth*. The gospel, so far as it is *grace*, offers and gives ; the law commands and demands. Now, as the real essence of God cannot consist in demanding, it follows that the law can only be a transitory, pedagogical phase of the revelation of God, and that the new order of things, that of *grace*, can alone be that of the full revelation of God, of *truth*. The subtle explanation of Bengel, *Lex iram parans* (in opposition to *grace*) *et umbram habens* (in opposition to *truth*), would be more in keeping with the context of Col. ii. 16, 17, than with that of John's prologue. The word *ἐδόθη*, *was given*, implies the external and positive institution of the law ; the word *came* denotes *grace* and *truth* appearing historically in the very person of Him who is the essential source of those blessings (ver. 4), and then becoming realized in His life and communicated through Him. Moses may disappear, the law remains nevertheless ; it is only *given* by him. But take away Jesus Christ, and *grace* and *truth* disappear ; for these gifts have *come* by Him, they are closely united to His person. "John," says Bengel, "chooses his expressions with the rigour of a philosopher." Let us rather say, with that energetic precision which is the constant characteristic of the inspired style.

It is at this point of the prologue that the apostle for the first time pronounces the great name so long expected, *Jesus Christ*. In proportion as the history of the mercies of the Word toward humanity unfolds before his view, the spectacle inspires him with terms ever more concrete and more human. The *Logos* of ver. 1 appeared as *light*, ver. 5 ; as *Son*, ver. 14 ; in ver. 17, He is at length called *Jesus Christ*,—in the same way as the *God* of ver. 1 receives the name of *Father*, in relation to the only-begotten Son, ver. 14, and becomes *the*

*Father* absolutely, that is, the Son's Father and ours, in ver. 18. Through the incarnation and human life of Jesus, this whole celestial world draws near to us, and takes for us life and reality.

Ver. 18. "As to God, no man hath seen Him at any time; the only-begotten Son,<sup>1</sup> which is<sup>2</sup> in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." After having developed the first of the two features which constitute the divine character of the glory of Christ, ver. 16, and having conjoined them to ver. 17, to contrast them with the law, the apostle now develops the second: truth, and thus finishes the description of the πληρωμα, the fulness, ver. 16a. Truth, in the eyes of John, as we have seen, is God perfectly revealed and known. The absence of any connecting particle between vv. 17 and 18 supposes a very intimate logical relation between the verses. This relation consists precisely in the identity of truth and the knowledge of God. In Jesus came truth, because He possesses and brings the adequate revelation of the Divine Being. The knowledge of God cannot be the result of a philosophical investigation. Our understanding seizes only certain isolated rays of the revelation of God, dispersed in nature and conscience; it does not succeed in uniting them into one whole, still less in ascending to the living focus from which they emanate. The natural or theocratic revelations, the visions even granted to the saints of the Old Testament, contained only an approximate manifestation of the divine being, as is admirably expressed by the word of the Lord to Moses, at the time when He promises to show him His glory: "Thou shalt see my back parts; but my face shall not be seen" (Ex. xxxiii. 23). For "there shall no man, in his state of pollution, see God and live" (xxxiii. 20). No one, therefore, either within or without the theocracy, obtained the privilege of acquiring that complete and living knowledge of God, of which sight is the emblem. The word *God*, though the object of the verb, stands at the head of the sentence. It

<sup>1</sup> While T. R. reads *ο μονογενης υιος*, with 13 Mj. Syr<sup>cur</sup>, It<sup>pl</sup>erique, Or. (once) and almost all the Mnn., we find the reading *ο μονογενης θεος* in  $\aleph$  B C L, Syr<sup>sch</sup>, Cop. Clem. Or. (twice), and other Fathers. Elsewhere, Or. reads *υιος θεου, υιος του θεου*, readings which are not found in any document.

<sup>2</sup>  $\aleph$  omits *ο ων*.

is the principal idea.—The perf. *ἑώρακε*, *hath seen*, rather denotes the result than the act of vision: “There is no one here below who can speak of God as *having seen Him de visu*.” The full truth, therefore, does not exist on the earth outside of Jesus Christ. It really *came* with Him, as has been said, ver. 17. The second part of ver. 18 states the reason of it. The reading *ὁ μονογενῆς υἱός*, *the only-begotten Son*, is certainly the true one; that of the Alexandrines, *God the only-begotten Son*, despite the authority of the *Vatic.*, has not been admitted by almost any modern editor, and the support of the *Sinait.* will not procure it for the future any better welcome. It savours too much of later dogmatics. The fact that it is found in Clement of Alexandria and in Origen (twice) indicates its origin. The quality attributed to Jesus, of being the perfect revealer of the Divine Being, is founded on His intimate and perfect relation to God Himself: “*Who is in the bosom of the Father.*” Such is virtually the relation between the partic. *ὁ ὢν*, *who is*, and the verb *ἐξηγήσατο*, *hath declared*. Bäumlein rightly says: “That *who is* proves that Jesus *can* really reveal God. It is equivalent to an *inasmuch as He is* (*ἄτε ὢν*).” We can explain in two ways the image used here by John. Either it is borrowed from the position of two-neighbour guests at a feast (xiii. 23); or, what appears more suitable to the context, it is derived from the attitude of a son seated on his father’s knees and leaning on his bosom. In any case, it expresses complete openness. He who occupies this unique place understands the Father’s most secret thoughts. We can see from the term *κόλπος*, *bosom*, that the mystery of the Son is a matter, not of metaphysics, but of love. The omission of *ὁ ὢν* in the *Sinait.* is condemned unanimously by the other documents. Hofmann, Meyer, Luthardt (2d ed.), refer this present participle to the state of Jesus Christ now since His ascension; and the prep. *εἰς* is explained, according to Meyer, by the idea of His *return to* this state. But it is obvious that in this sense this partic. *which is*, could not justify the: “*He hath declared*,” which refers to the terrestrial life of Jesus. Meyer answers, that His elevation *confirms* the truth of His teaching. This is a mere evasion; there is no natural connection between Christ’s present state of glory and His ministry of teaching while He

was here below. This present partic. can therefore only refer to a state which preceded or accompanied the earthly ministry of Jesus. It may be applied (like the analogous expression of ver. 1: ἦν πρὸς) to the divine state of the Logos before the incarnation. A man who does not rank among commentators—Napoleon—has expressed himself thus: “Christianity says with simplicity, *No man hath seen God, except God*; that is a saying of profound meaning.” This saying indicates the relation between our ὁ ὢν, *which is*, and the verb ἐξηγήσατο, *hath declared*, better than many theologians have been able to grasp it. Yet the eternal relation of the Son to the Father could not directly influence His religious teaching here below; for He spoke on the earth as a man. If He had spoken of God as God, His language would have been incomprehensible. Then all that the Son has revealed of God on the earth must have passed through His human consciousness. But this human consciousness, especially after the fact of His baptism, was that of *the Son*; and thereby He possessed, as no other, the necessary organ for knowing God as His Father. Finally, if account is taken of the fact that His earthly teaching was completed by the Holy Ghost whom He sent after His ascension, we recover in this way the truth contained in the explanations of Meyer and Hofmann; and we thus reach the full interpretation, that of Lücke, which applies the pres. partic. ὁ ὢν, *which is*, to the *permanent* and indestructible relation between the Son and the Father. This relation may have passed through very different phases; but it has never been completely interrupted for a moment (iii. 13). The use of the preposition of motion, εἰς, *towards*, with the verb of rest, ὢν, *which is*, arises from the fact that the regimen, “*the bosom of the Father*,” denotes in reality, not a place, but a life. The Son *is* there only because He plunges into it by His unceasing action; it is so with every state which consists in a moral relation. It was the meaning of the phrase already referred to, ἦν πρὸς (ver. 1). The substitution of εἰς for πρὸς, in our verse, arises from the difference between a strictly local regimen (κόλπος) and a personal regimen (θεός). The pron. ἐκεῖνος is here, as usually in John, exclusive, “He, and He alone.” To explain the use of the word ἐξηγεῖσθαι, it does not seem to us natural, whatever Meyer may say, to have

recourse to the technical application of the word among the Greeks, who used it to denote the explanation of divine things by the *ἐξηγηταί*, the men officially charged with this function. The simplicity of John's style excludes this association, which is not necessary to explain the expression. The understood object of *ἐξηγήσατο*, *hath declared*, is undoubtedly the first word of the verse, *Θεόν*, *God*, the influence of which makes itself felt to the end. But John did not express it with the view of calling attention, as at ver. 16, to the verbal notion rather than to the object of the action: "He, even *He hath declared!* truly declared!" His teaching about God alone deserves the name of interpretation. Meyer prefers to supply as the object: the contents of what He has seen in God.

We see from the word *πατρός*, *of the Father*, that the truth brought into the world by the Son does not consist of a collection of new metaphysical ideas about God, but rather of the revelation of His Father-character. To make this revelation, it was sufficient for Jesus to reveal Himself as the Son; for to prove Himself Son, is to teach the world what it never would have suspected: that God is essentially a Father. And if He is Father in His inmost essence, and in virtue of an eternal relation, how could His relations to His creatures fail to have also a paternal character? Such is the new explanation which the Son has given of the Divine Being, and which He alone as the Son could give. It is the initiation of the earth into the deepest secret of heaven: God is from all eternity *Father*,—that is to say, *love*. Outside of this divine interpretation contained in the life and sayings of Jesus, every idea which man forms of God is imperfect or imaginary, an idea, and, up to a certain point, an *idol*, according to John's own expression (1 John v. 21).

All, therefore, that man would have found on the pathway of obedience in communion with the Logos his Creator, he recovers by the way of faith in the person of Jesus Christ. The word diffused life: Jesus brings it to us again in the form of grace. From life there sprang up light: Jesus gives it back to us under the name of truth. God-given, God-manifested: such are the blessings which prove the real presence in Jesus Christ of the Divine Logos revealed in the first verses of the prologue. The church, by receiving from



His those incomparable gifts, can herself attest as well as those first witnesses the identity of the Person of the Logos with that of Jesus Christ, and, joining her testimony to the choir of the apostles and to that of the prophets, the one represented by the evangelist, the other by the forerunner (vv. 14, 15), can bear witness, on the foundation of a living experience, to the fact, without which both life and light for man disappear: the incarnation of the word, the union consummated in Christ between God and man.

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## GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON THE PROLOGUE.

### I. THE PLAN OF THE PROLOGUE.

Three thoughts appear to us to sum up this so remarkable piece, and to mark its progress: the *Logos*, the Logos *misunderstood*, the Logos recognised and *received*; in other words, the Logos (vv. 1-4), unbelief (vv. 5-11), and faith (vv. 12-18). Between the first and second part ver. 5 forms the transition, as between the second and third vv. 12 and 13. The relation between the last and the first is indicated externally by the similarity of the expressions in vv. 18 and 1; it may be formulated thus: He whom the church knows and possesses as her Redeemer, is no other than the eternal Logos, the life and light-giving principle of the universe, the creator of all things. By faith in this Incarnate Word the church is restored to her normal relation, to this principle of life for the universe and of light for man.

This plan seems to us preferable to that which Luthardt maintains in his second edition: three parts or cycles, each containing, although from a somewhat different point of view, a summary of the whole Gospel history: vv. 1-5, 6-13, 14-18.

There is something on the face of it improbable in this thrice repeated summary of one and the same history. Besides, Luthardt is obliged himself to acknowledge that in the first cycle faith is not a subject in question,—which

is, however, one of the essential factors of the Gospel history, —and that, in the third, unbelief is as little a subject in question, though one of the most decisive elements of this history. Finally, is it not contrary to all exegetical probability to give to the *δέ*, *but*, of ver. 12, the only adversative particle of the prologue, an altogether secondary sense, instead of regarding it as indicating the great contrast between unbelief and faith?—and then to draw the line of demarcation between the second and third part at ver. 14, which runs so strictly between vv. 12 and 13?

Very far, then, from admitting three cycles, each presenting *the whole* of the history, we hold to three cycles, each presenting *one* of the three factors of the history. The entire narrative will rest precisely on the relation of those three factors, and the prologue thus appears introducing, as it were, on the scene the personages of the drama which is to follow, presented in their highest signification.

## II. INTENTION OF THE PROLOGUE.

What is the object of this introduction? Has it regard to speculation or faith?

We here meet with three opinions: the first ascribes to the author a purely speculative aim; the second supports a strictly practical intention, but one complicated with metaphysical prepossessions; finally, according to the third, the author, while ascending to the highest principles of Christian knowledge, proposes no other aim than that which he himself professes (xx. 31): "*That ye might believe*," and which demanded, above all, that the object of faith should be revealed in all its grandeur.

1. The Tübingen School is the most thoroughgoing exponent of the first view. According to it, the author unfolds in the prologue the idea which is the *metaphysical basis* of the following narrative, or rather, which is its real source. The speculative idea of a mediator between the infinite God and the finite world was found by the author in the sphere in which he lived, expounded in the prologue, and illustrated by means of the almost wholly fictitious narrative which follows.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Comp. pp. 96, 97; 98, 99; 106 et seq.; 173-180; 261, 262.

If the results to which exegesis has brought us are well founded, this mode of regarding the prologue is untenable. We have seen in reality that the notion of the Logos does not prepossess the author for itself, but solely in relation to the historical appearing of Jesus. The thesis, "*The Word was made flesh,*" is not set down for the sake of this one, "*In the beginning was the Word;*" it is this, on the contrary, which is subservient to the former. John does not come to invite his readers to a metaphysical walk amid the depths of the divine essence, in order to discover a being called the Logos; he simply wishes to lead them to put such confidence in the historical Christ, that they may through Him have access to the riches of God Himself. It is not the person of Jesus which is at the service of the thesis of the Logos; if Jesus receives this title, it is that men may attach themselves to Him as the perfect Mediator.

Nothing is more fitted to indicate the opposition between the speculative intention ascribed to the prologue by Baur and the real aim of this whole passage, than the explanation which this critic gives of ver. 14. The proposition, "*The Word was made flesh,*" in which we have found the central word of the prologue, holds, according to Baur, a wholly subordinate place; it expresses merely the historically insignificant phenomenon of the *visibility* of the Word; salvation is not attached to this fact; the latter only serves to make its sweetness a little more *felt*. This explanation demonstrates, better than all proofs, the contradiction which exists between the idealism of the Tübingen theologian and the serious realism of the evangelist.

2. M. Reuss has avoided such an exaggeration. He acknowledges that the essential tendency of the prologue is pre-eminently practical; that John wishes to guide his readers to faith. But while unfolding with this intention the object of faith, he adds thereto a speculative thesis. "It was not his concern at all to make one metaphysical theory prevail over another; speculation with the apostle was not an end, but a means." He only sought to explain to himself philosophically the contents of his faith, and the notion of the Logos was only the means with which contemporaneous philosophy furnished him for gaining his end. The invitation to faith

became thereby transformed under his pen into an initiation of his readers into Christian Gnosis. This is also the result reached by Lücke's study.

This view, while saving, on the one hand, the practical and apostolical character of the prologue, accounts, on the other, for the use of the term Logos, which seems to belong to the language of philosophy.

It would follow from this view that John blended in one unique whole the elements drawn from the teaching of Jesus and those which he borrowed from the metaphysics of Philo. But we must then reject the authenticity of the Gospel, which M. Reuss does not do. Is it conceivable that an apostle could have offered to the faith of the church a Christ resulting from such an amalgam? If John proposed to fix in writing the theory of the Logos which had rendered to him personally the high service of interpreting his faith to him, could he not at least content himself with doing so in the epistolary form which he knew and used? Was it allowable for him to work out with this view the composition of a gospel?

M. Reuss seems to regard this procedure as unconscious and innocent. Unconscious? But it has long been matter of remark that John avoids putting the term Logos in the mouth of Jesus. He was therefore conscious of the difference between what he held from His teaching and what proceeded from another source. Innocent? On this point history has pronounced, and its sentence is severe. History says in substance, that of all the writings of the New Testament, the Gospel of John above all, and of all the parts of this Gospel, the prologue above all, have paved the way for *Jesuolatry*, and thereby for eighteen centuries kept Christianity in the condition of a mitigated paganism. Julian the apostate knew this when he said, "It was John who declared that the Word was made flesh, . . . and he ought to be regarded as the source of all the mischief."<sup>1</sup> Such is the result of those innocent speculative vagaries of John! He is the apostle who with his own hand threw into the dough of the Gospel the leaven of idolatry, and this leaven immediately raised the dough,

<sup>1</sup> Cyril, *Cont. Julian.*, quoted from A. Nicolas, *Etudes philos. sur le christianisme*, t. iv. p. 117.

falsified the doctrine, vitiated the worship in spirit and in truth, and changed the Christian life at its springs. Not till the present day has the world begun to awake from this infatuation, and to recognise the true culprit pointed out by Julian! Thus it is that the promise of the Master has been verified, "*He that heareth you heareth me!*"

In short, the explanation of M. Reuss severs the theory of the Logos, as an accidental excrescence, from John's religious faith. But it is easy, on the contrary, to assure ourselves that this alleged speculation forms the basis of the apostle's faith in its most essential and vital elements. FOR JOHN, JESUS IS THE LOGOS, OR HE IS NOTHING. If the unbelief of the Jews is in his eyes a thing so monstrous, it is because in rejecting Jesus they have rejected the Logos. If faith saves and regenerates us, it is because it puts us in communion through Jesus with the Logos made flesh. Now, how could the metaphysical formula have so swallowed up in the heart of John the living object of his faith, Jesus personally known and loved, that the latter was nothing in his eyes without the former! He, the witness of that Life, the table companion, the intimate of that Master, *he* could have gone so far in his speculative mania as to place the vivifying force of the Gospel no more in that person Himself, but in the philosophical conception which he had formed of Him! This supposition is a moral impossibility.

The prologue, therefore, rightly understood, does not in the least justify such a view: it is a preface intended to initiate the reader in the true essence of the fact which is about to be related; it reveals its august character, solitary grandeur, and vital importance. The prologue is like that technical term which the composer places at the head of a musical piece, to indicate to the performer the accent and time which it requires. To raise the mind of the reader to the height of the drama which is about to unfold before his view; to make him feel that here is not a history which he may confound with others, and set aside, after having read it, to pass to another; that it contains the secret of the life of humanity, and so of his own; that the doctrines are nothing less than rays from the absolute Word; that, accepted, they will become his salvation; rejected, his death; that unbelief in regard to

Jesus is God cast off; faith, God received and possessed: such is the real intention of the prologue. This piece is the commentary on the name *Gospel*; it proclaims the highest message of God to earth. It transports the reader at the first line into the divine sphere to which this history belongs.

Thus John, in writing this introduction, has not gone beyond his part as an apostle, and his book is really from the first word to the last an appeal to faith, nothing more and nothing less. Our conviction of this truth will be thoroughly established as we account for the origin of the notion and the term *Logos*, and as we prove that the borrowings from contemporaneous metaphysics, which are ascribed to the apostle, are in reality only loans which are made to him.

### III. THE IDEA AND TERM LOGOS.

The three questions which we have to resolve are these: Whence did the evangelist derive the *notion* of the *Logos*? What is the origin of this extraordinary *term*? What is the reason of its *use*?

First of all we establish a fact, viz. that the prologue does not contain a *thought* which goes beyond Christ's own testimony in the fourth Gospel, and the teachings of the Old Testament explained by this light. B. Weiss<sup>1</sup> mentions two principal points in which the prologue seems to him to go beyond the testimony of Christ: 1. The notion of the Word, by which John expresses the pre-historic existence of Christ; 2. The creating function which is attributed to that Being. But do not the entire contents of the first propositions of the prologue flow from the following sayings put by John into the mouth of Jesus: "*What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before?*" vi. 62; "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am,*" viii. 58; "*And now, O Father, glorify Thou me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the creation of the world,*" xvii. 5; "*For Thou lovedst me before the creation of the world,*" xvii. 24.

Meantime let us leave aside the *term* *Logos*, to which we shall return. If Christ existed personally before the creation, as He affirms in those sayings, could He exist otherwise than

<sup>1</sup> *Johanneischer Lehrbegriff*, 1862.

with God and in God, as the prologue says? And as to His creating function, was it not enough to connect the thought of the eternal existence of the Logos in God with the saying, "*Thou lovedst me before the creation of the world,*" to be aware that He who speaks thus cannot have remained a stranger to the work which brought the world out of nothing. This is the necessary inference from v. 17, "*As the Father worketh hitherto, I work also,*" comp. v. 19 and 26.

The other assertions of the prologue are deduced with the same ease from the discourses and acts of Jesus in the Gospel: ver. 4 ("*In Him was life*" . . .) from v. 26: "*As the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself;*" ver. 9 ("*That was the true light*") from viii. 12 and ix. 5: "*I am the light of the world . . . He that followeth me shall have the light of life;*" ver. 7 ("*John came for a witness*") from i. 34: "*And I saw, and bare record, that this is the Son of God,*" and from v. 33: "*Ye sent unto John, and he bare witness unto the truth.*" The prologue expresses the idea of the presence and activity of the Logos in the world generally, and in the theocracy in particular (*His house, and His own*), previously to His incarnation, vv. 10 and 11. This idea flows directly from what Jesus teaches in chap. x. as to how the voice of the Shepherd is recognised by *His sheep*; and that not only by those who are already in the Old Testament fold (ver. 3), but also by those who are not of that fold (ver. 16), the children of God scattered throughout the world (xi. 52). The contrast between carnal birth and divine generation, which plays so conspicuous a part in the prologue (ver. 13), is expressly taught by Jesus in the saying (iii. 6): "*That which is born of the flesh is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*" The reality of Christ's humanity, so forcibly asserted in the prologue (ver. 14), is one of the fundamental ideas of the entire narrative. In no Gospel, perhaps, so much as the fourth, does the purely human side of our Saviour's person and affections come into view. He is worn out with fatigue (iv. 6); He thirsts (iv. 7); He weeps over His friend (xi. 35); He is moved and even agitated (xi. 33, xii. 27). At the same time, His glory, *full of grace and truth*, His *Son* character, of which the prologue speaks so admirably (vv. 14-18), appears in the narrative of all the manifestations of

Jesus in act and word: in the account of His entire dependence (vi. 38 et seq.), of His absolute docility (v. 30, etc.), of His unlimited intimacy with the Father (v. 20), of the greatness of the works which He receives power to do, as to quicken and judge (v. 21, 22), of His perfect assurance of being heard, whatever He may ask (xi. 41, 42), of the adoration which He accepts (xx. 28), and which He demands even as the equal of the Father (v. 23). The testimony of John the Baptist, quoted at v. 15, is borrowed textually from the following narrative (i. 27, 30). The idea of the gift of the law as a preparation for the Gospel (ver. 17), flows from v. 46, 47. Ver. 18, which closes the prologue, reproduces almost textually the saying, vi. 46: "*Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He which is of the Father, He hath seen the Father.*" Finally, the terms *Son* and *only-begotten Son* are borrowed from vi. 40: "*This is the will of the Father, that every one which seeth the Son,*" . . . from iii. 16 (which John certainly puts into the mouth of Jesus): "*God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son,*" and from iii. 18: "*Because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God.*"

The sayings ascribed to Jesus in the course of the narrative thus contain all the ideas expressed in the prologue, or at least their immediate premises. We cannot even except the idea of creation by the Word. There remains only the term *Logos*, used by John to designate the Son in His pre-existent state. Undoubtedly it is this term, used in the philosophical language of the time, which has led to the author of the prologue being transformed from a disciple of Jesus into a disciple of Philo.

We shall not return upon the subject, which we have already considered in the Introduction (p. 174 et seq.), of the relations between the view of John and the system of Philo. We shall confine ourselves to summing up the differences which distinguish and even contrast them.

1. The word *λόγος*, in John, signifies, as in the biblical text, *word*. In Philo, it signifies, as it does in philosophical language, *reason*,—a fact which leads us to suspect a certain difference of origin in the use which they make of the same term.



2. The speculation of the Logos has in Philo a metaphysical bearing. God being conceived as the absolutely indeterminate and impersonal Being, it was impossible to pass from such a Being to the finite and varied world which we behold. To explain this great fact, Philo must therefore have recourse to an intermediate agent—a *second God*, the divine reason personified, the Logos. In John, the notion of the Logos has an entirely different bearing; it is not at all necessitated by the nature of God Himself. For him God is a Father (i. 18); His essence is love (iii. 16). He puts Himself into personal relation with the world; He loves it; He determines to save it, and it is He Himself who sends into it the Logos (vi. 32). Nay more, it is He who acts as intermediate agent between the world and the Son who has become man. He *draws* men to Christ; He *gives* them to Him (vi. 37, 44). He testifies in His favour, even in the world of sense, by miracles (v. 36, 37, xii. 28). What an offence to the thought of the sage of Alexandria! In a word, the existence and activity of the Logos in John are a matter of love (i. 18, xvii. 24), not at all a logical necessity.

3. The work of the Logos in Philo is confined to the creation and preservation of the world; the thought does not even occur to him of connecting it with the salvation either of Jews or of the world, any more than with the appearing of the Messiah. In John, on the contrary, if mention is made of the creating Logos, it is only on the occasion and in view of the redemption of which this Divine Being is to be the agent; the Messianic idea finds its perfect realization in His appearing. For Philo, as for Plato, the principle of evil is matter; and hence he cannot think of making the Logos appear on the earth in a bodily form. The idea of the incarnation would have filled him with horror. In John, on the contrary, the grand fact of history is this: "*the Logos was made flesh.*" This central word of the prologue expresses the act to which everything in the past leads on, and from which everything flows in the future.

If, therefore, the rational premises are different and opposite in the two authors; if the very term Logos is used by them in different meanings,—it becomes impossible to regard the one as the disciple of the other. What remains for us is to seek.

by going back beyond both, a common source which shall explain the coincidence of expression in the diversity of views. This source is not hard to find. John and Philo were both Jews. The same Old Testament had therefore regulated their religious education. Now, there were three lines in this Holy Book converging to the notion and the term of whose explanation we are in search: 1. The appearances of *the angel of the Lord (Maleach Jehovah)*, that messenger of God who serves as His agent in the world of sense, and who is sometimes distinguished from Jehovah, and again identical with Him; comp. e.g. Gen. xvi. 7 with ver. 13; then Gen. xxxii. 28 with Hos. xii. 4, 5. God says of this mysterious being, Ex. xxiii. 21: "*My name (the knowledge of my inmost essence) is in him.*" In Mal. iii. 1 it is positively declared that the Messiah shall be no other than this Divine Person, the God adored in the temple of Jerusalem: "*Adonaï (the Lord), whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His temple, even the Angel of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, He shall come.*" Zech. xii. 10 presents the same view. The Messiah, who is to be pierced by His people, is Jehovah Himself: "*They shall look upon me whom they have pierced,*" says Jehovah. Thus, then, according to the Old Testament, this Divine Person, after having been from the beginning the agent in all the theophanies, is to finish His office as Mediator by Himself filling the function of Messiah. 2. The description of *wisdom*, Prov. viii.: "*The Lord possessed me in the beginning of His way, before His works even then*" (ver. 22). "*When He prepared the heavens, I was there*" (ver. 27). "*I was by Him, as an artificer; I was daily joyful, rejoicing always before Him; rejoicing in the habitable part of His earth; and my delights were with the sons of men*" (vv. 30 and 31). What characterizes this passage is the participation of Wisdom in the work of creation. This aspect does not come out in the doctrine of the angel of the Lord. On the other hand, the latter is a real personality, while the delineation of Wisdom in Proverbs seems to be only a poetical personification. 3. The active part ascribed to the *Word of the Lord*. This part begins with creation, and is continued in the prophetic revelations. Certain passages tend to personify this agent. It is a physician sent from heaven to heal, Ps. cvii. 20; a

divine messenger who traverses the world, Ps. cxlvii. 15; the infallible agent of the divine decrees, Isa. lv. 11.

From the time of the Babylonish captivity, the Jewish doctors associated those three modes of manifestation and action on the part of the Divine Being in the finite world, and united them in one single conception: that of a permanent agent of Jehovah in the sensible world, whom they designated by the name of *Memra* (Word) of *Jehovah* (מִימְרָא דִּי יְהוָה) (Introd. I. p. 179); leaving it impossible, I believe, to decide with certainty whether the theology of those Jewish Rabbis established a relation between this Word of the Lord and the person of the Messiah.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This expression is used along with that of *Shekinah*, in the Targums or Chaldee paraphrases of the Old Testament. The two oldest, those of Onkelos and Jonathan, were generally regarded as dating from the middle of the first century of our era. Recent works seem to bring down the compilation of them to the third or fourth century; but their compilation only. For a multitude of particulars prove that the materials go back to apostolic times. There are proofs even of the existence of compilations going back to the time of John Hyrcanus. With the Jews all is matter of tradition. The compilation in such a case is only "the consummation of the work of centuries." Comp. Schürer, *Lehrb. d. Neutest. Zeitgesch.*, pp. 478 and 479.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps in Palestine there was more disposition to fuse in one the notion of the Word and the Messianic idea than at Alexandria. There is found in the Book of Enoch (belonging to the latter part of the second century B.C.), and in one of its very parts which are almost unanimously recognised as the oldest, a strange passage, which, if the form in which we possess it is the exact reproduction of the original text, would exclude all doubt on this point. The Messiah is there represented (chap. xc. 16-38) as a white bull, which, after receiving the adoration of all the animals of the earth, transforms all those races into white bulls like itself; after which the poet adds: "And the first bull was the Word, and this Word was a powerful animal which had large black horns on its head [the emblem of divine omnipotence]." . . . Thus it is that Dillmann, in his classical work on this book, reproduces those last words. Comp. the remarkable essay of M. Wabnitz, *Rev. de Théolog.* July 1874. The Messianic application of this passage admits of no doubt (see Schürer, *Lehrbuch der Neutest. Zeitgesch.*, p. 568). As to the last words, M. Wabnitz says: "This text contains an enigma for us which will perhaps one day be resolved." We must remember, indeed, that we have the Book of Enoch only in an Ethiopic translation, evidently made from a Greek text, which in turn seems to be the version of a Hebrew or Aramaic original. Nevertheless, it seems to us that there is here a possible indication of the relation established in Palestine from a date B.C., between the Divine Being called *Memra* or *Word* and the person of the Messiah. There is no doubt of the Palestinian origin of the Book of Enoch. That of *Wisdom*, which was composed at Alexandria a century before Christ, speaks, indeed, of *Wisdom*, personifying it very forcibly. But I cannot discover in it (even in chap. vii.) the notion of a real personality, nor recognise in the delineation of the persecuted just man in chap. ii. the least allusion to the person of the Messiah.

The idea of a Divine Being, the organ of Jehovah's works and revelations in the sensible world, must therefore have been more or less familiar both to John and Philo. Such is the datum common to the two authors. From that point their ways diverge and go in opposite directions. John enters the school of Jesus, where the notion of the Word takes for him a historical and perfectly concrete value. He hears Jesus assert, that before Abraham *He is*; that the Father loved Him *before the creation of the world*. . . . How could he fail to apply to Him that idea of the Word, which in so many different ways strikes its roots into the soil of the Old Testament? The *term* Logos presents itself quite naturally to his mind to designate this Divine Being who has appeared in Christ,—first, because it is of biblical origin; and then because the Jewish doctors already apply it, as we have just seen, to that superhuman Mediator. How unnecessary it is to explain the use of the term by supposing a connection on John's part with the Alexandrian speculation, appears from the fact that the same term is used in the same sense in a book—the Apocalypse—which does not in the least bear the stamp of Alexandrine idealism, xix. 13: "And His name is called *the Word of God*." Philo, instead of proceeding, like John, on the line of the development of normal revelation, is placed at Alexandria under the influence of the Greek philosophers, especially of Platonism and Stoicism, which the Jewish school of that capital strove to amalgamate with Judaism. Those foreign masters teach him to make of the Logos a being of pure reason—*the intelligible word*, in the divine mind. As he rationalizes the Jewish meaning of the word Logos, he proceeds in the same fashion with the other terms rendered familiar to him by his Jewish education,—those of *angel*, *archangel*, *high priest*, and *son*. The scriptural reminiscences of the Old Testament throughout serve him only as materials for allegorizing in the service of conceptions which he has borrowed from Greek philosophy.

Thus are explained both the resemblances and contrasts between the two writers, without the necessity of having recourse to the imitation of either by the other—the same Jewish antecedents, but developed, on the one hand, in the direction of Christian realism; on the other, in that of the

mystic rationalism of Alexandria. In the one way the idea of the Logos becomes identified with the person of the Christ; in the other, every connecting link is broken between this idea and that of the Messiah.<sup>1</sup>

What, then, did John mean by applying to Jesus the name of the Word? To introduce into the church an Alexandrine speculation? He had no such view. He meant to designate the historical person called Jesus Christ as God's *absolute revelation* to the earth. By using this name, under which the Rabbis collected all the theocratic revelations, he meant to connect them with their living and permanent principle. At the foundation of all *words spoken* he found the *Word* whence they proceed, and under this name he proclaimed the greatness of his Master.

But the *use* of the name had no doubt a peculiar appropriateness in the sphere in which John wrote. If he composed his Gospel in Asia Minor after a somewhat prolonged sojourn in that country (see *Introd. I. p. 246 et seq.*), he must to a certainty have met with this doctrine of the Logos, which was so widely prevalent at Alexandria, and of which we find a trace perhaps in *Heb. iv. 13, 14*. How could it miss penetrating, with the term which expressed it, into the countries of which Ephesus was the centre? The relations between those great centres of culture, Alexandria, Ephesus, Corinth, etc., were incessant. We have an example in the New Testament itself, in the person of Apollos (*Acts xviii. 24 and 27*). Surrounded by all those Hellenes and Hellenised Jews who speculated on the relations between the finite and the infinite, and strove to fill up the gulf between the two spheres by the speculation of the Logos, John says to them in his prologue: "Come to us; the church possesses more than the notion of the Logos,—she possesses the Logos Himself in the person of Jesus Christ. *From His fulness we have all drawn, even the most ignorant of us. Believe with us, and you shall receive from Him, as we have done, grace for grace.*"<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not that Philo is an entire stranger to the expectation of the Messiah (see the already quoted treatise of M. Wabnitz, second article, October 1874, p. 153 et seq.). But with him there is no point of contact between the idea of the Logos and the Messianic person.

<sup>2</sup> Compare Neander, *Gesch. d. Pflanzung d. Christl. K.*, t. ii. p. 549.

Thus John has contrived to place the healthy and quickening *realism of Christianity* in opposition to the *hollow idealism* which he found amid his surroundings.

#### IV. THE TRUTH AND IMPORTANCE OF THE CONCEPTION OF THE PERSON OF JESUS EXPRESSED IN THE PROLOGUE.

If the prologue of John does nothing more than sum up the testimony which Jesus bore to Himself, expressing it in a striking formula calculated to impress it deeply on the consciousness of the church, there can be nothing more erroneous than to contrast it with the teaching of the Synoptics and of St. Paul, and to represent it as the final result of a series of different Christological conceptions raised chronologically the one upon the other. On the contrary, John's teaching is the purest and most normal, and at the same time the most rich and elevated expression of the consciousness which Christ had of Himself (see *Introd. I. pp. 3-5*).

Could this consciousness be only the height of self-exaltation, as is assumed in M. Renan's work? The explanation is incompatible with the moral character of Jesus. If He indulged in self-exaggeration even to folly, how are we to understand His inward calm, His profound humility, His unalterably sound judgment, His profoundly true appreciation of all moral relations, whether between God and man, or between man and man? M. Renan's hypothesis is belied by the whole life of Jesus, and by that kingdom of truth and holiness which has gone forth from it over the world of humanity.

Or must we call in question the historical accuracy of the discourses which John has put into the mouth of Jesus? We think we have demonstrated in the *Introduction* (I. p. 134 et seq.) the full confidence which John's narrative deserves in this particular as well as in regard to facts.

There remain the objections which may be raised by the matter of John's teaching :

1. According to M. Reuss,<sup>1</sup> there is a contradiction between the prologue, which teaches the perfect *equality* of the Father and the Son (as it is professed by ecclesiastical orthodoxy),

<sup>1</sup> *Hist. de la Théol. chret.*, t. ii. p. 440 et seq.

and the numerous sayings of Jesus in the Gospel, whence there arises the idea of the Son's *subordination* to the Father. The doctrine of equality is thus, according to him, a thesis borrowed from the schools and from Philo; that of subordination is the true thought contained in the testimonies which emanated from the mouth of Christ. The exegesis of the prologue has shown that this contradiction has no existence, inasmuch as subordination is the thought of the preface as much as that of the discourses contained in the Gospel. Take for example the expressions: "*being with God*," ver. 1; "*only-begotten Son*," ver. 14; "*being in the bosom of the Father*," ver. 18; these expressions imply subordination as thoroughly as any saying of the Gospel. The mistake of M. Reuss is his confounding the forms of the Nicene Creed with the theology of the prologue.

2. Baur<sup>1</sup> does not believe in the possibility of reconciling the notion of the incarnation with that of the miraculous birth taught in the Synoptics. In the view of the latter, the person who is the subject of the Gospel history does not begin to exist till the birth of Jesus; from the incarnation point of view, on the contrary, this subject exists previously to His appearance in the flesh, and could not become afterwards anything which He is not already. But if we take in earnest the expression: *was made flesh*,—which Baur does not do,—the alleged contradiction falls of itself. The subject of the Gospel history is not the Logos continuing in His divine state, but a true man; and the fact of a real birth, miraculous or natural, becomes in such a being not only a possible, but a necessary element.

3. The most serious objection arises from the impossibility of reconciling the pre-existence of Christ with His real humanity. Thus Lücke,<sup>2</sup> while fully recognising the danger which lies in rejecting the pre-existence, nevertheless thinks himself obliged to deny the fact, because there would result from it a difference of *essence* between the Saviour and His brethren, which would not allow us to conceive either His character as Son of man or His redemptive office. This is likewise the view of Weizsäcker.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly the com-

<sup>1</sup> *Theol. Jahrb.* 1844, t. iii. p. 24 et seq.

<sup>2</sup> T. i. p. 378.

<sup>3</sup> *Jahrb. für deutsche Theol.*, vol. vii. 4th part, pp. 639 and 655-664.

munion of the Son with the Father is not merely moral ; He does not acquire His dignity of Sonship by His fidelity ; it is, on the contrary, presupposed by everything He does and says ; His fidelity maintains, but does not produce, this original relation ; it is the unacquired condition of the consciousness which He has of Himself. But, on the other hand, it must be owned that as to the superior knowledge which Christ possessed, it could not be the continuation of a previous knowledge brought by Him from above ; otherwise, it would not have that progressive character limited to the task of the moment which we recognise in it, and which stamps it as a truly human knowledge. And as to the moral task of Jesus, it would no longer, on such a condition, have anything human in it ; for where would be the moral struggle in the case of the Son if He still possessed that complete knowledge of the divine plan which He had eternally in the Father's presence ? After having striven to eliminate from the discourses of Jesus the idea of pre-existence, Weizsäcker nevertheless concludes that there are in the fourth Gospel two Christs placed in juxtaposition—the one truly man, as taught by Jesus Himself and the Synoptics—the other divine and pre-existent, that of John. In attempting to solve this difficulty, we do not conceal from ourselves that we come on the most arduous problem of theology. What we shall seek in the lines which follow is not the reconciliation of Scripture with any orthodoxy whatever, but the harmony of Scripture with itself.

Does Scripture, while clearly teaching the eternal existence of the Word, teach at the same time the presence of the divine state and attributes in Jesus during the course of His life on earth ? We have seen that the formula of John i. 14 is incompatible with such an idea. The expression, "*The Word was made flesh.*" speaks certainly of a divine subject, but as reduced to the state of man, which, as we have seen, does not at all suppose the two states, the divine and human, as co-existing in it. Such a notion is set aside by exegesis as well as by logic. The *impoverishment* of Christ, of which Paul speaks 2 Cor. viii. 9, His voluntary *self-abasement*, described Phil. ii. 6, 7, equally imply His renunciation of the divine state at the moment when He entered upon human existence. The facts of the gospel history are at one with those apostolic



declarations, as we have shown in the Introduction (I. p. 106 et seq.). Jesus no longer possesses on the earth the attributes which constitute the divine state. Omniscience He has not, for He asks questions, and Himself declares His ignorance on one point (Mark xiii. 32). He possesses a pre-eminent prophetic vision (John iv. 17, 18), but this vision is not omniscience. No more does He possess omnipotence, for He prays, and is heard; as to His miracles, it is the Father who works them in His favour (xi. 42, v. 36). He is equally destitute of omnipresence. His love even, perfect as it is, is not divine love. This is immutable. But who will assert that Jesus in His cradle loved as He did at the age of twelve, or at the age of twelve as He did on the cross? Perfect relatively, at every given moment, His love grew from day to day, both in regard to the intensity of His voluntary self-sacrifice, and as to the extent of the circle which it embraced. It was thus a truly human love. "The grace which is by one *man*, Jesus Christ," says St. Paul for this reason (Rom. v. 15). His holiness is also a human holiness, for it is realized every moment only at the cost of struggle, through the renunciation of legitimate enjoyment and victory over the natural fear of pain (xii. 25, 27, xvii. 19a). It is so human that it is to pass over into us and become ours (xvii. 19b). All those texts clearly prove that Jesus, while on the earth, did not possess the attributes which constitute the divine state, and hence He can terminate His earthly career by claiming back again the glory which He had before His incarnation (xvii. 5).

How is such a self-deprivation on the part of a Divine Being conceivable? It was necessary, first of all, that He should consent to lose for a time His self-consciousness *as a divine subject*. The memory of a divine life anterior to His earthly existence would have been incompatible with the state of a true child and a really human development. And in fact the Gospel texts nowhere ascribe to Jesus a self-consciousness *as Logos* before the time of His baptism. The word which He uttered at the age of twelve (Luke ii. 49) simply expresses the feeling of an intimate relation to God and of a filial consecration to His service. With a moral fidelity like His, and in the permanent enjoyment of a com-

munion with God which sin did not alter, the child could call God His Father in a purely religious sense, and apart from any consciousness of a divine pre-existence. The feeling of His redemptive mission must have been developed in His earliest years, especially through His experience of the continual contrast between His moral purity and the sin which He saw staining all those who surrounded Him, even the best, such as Mary and Joseph. The only healthy one in this caravan of sick with whom He was travelling, He must early have discovered His task as healer of humanity, and have inwardly consecrated Himself thereto without any reserve. Besides, there is not a saying, not a deed in the gospel history, which ascribes to the infant Jesus the consciousness of His divine nature and of His previous existence. It is to the apocryphal gospels that we must go to seek this contra-natural and anti-human Jesus. According to the biblical account, the Logos, in becoming incarnate, did therefore really put off His consciousness of His divine being, and of the state corresponding to it. This self-deprivation was the negative condition of the incarnation. Here are the positive conditions of the fact; it is enough to compare them with the well-known features of the Gospel history to judge whether they have been really fulfilled.

1. Man was created *in the image of God*, as an intelligent, free, and responsible being. Such, therefore, was the limit of the abasement to which the divine subject stooped; for He must descend to the level of man, not beneath him. He lowered Himself to the state of a human personality, destined to work out His development under the conditions determined by man's destination to the divine likeness.

2. The fundamental feature of God's image in man being aspiration Godwards, and receptivity for the divine, this characteristic must be predominant in the human development of this radically divine personality.

3. The limits of our individuality impress a *relative* character on the receptivity for the divine belonging to each of us. But, in consequence of His miraculous birth, the Logos, while entering into humanity, reproduces not the type of a determinate hereditary individuality, but that of the race itself in its essence and generality. His receptivity for the

divine, His religious and moral capacity, is thus not merely that of any individual man—it is that of the whole species which became concentrated in His person, as it had once been in the person of the father of the race. He will thus be able to receive from above not only what each individual, but what the whole of humanity, is fitted to receive and possess from God. And if this collective receptivity is absolute and infinite,—in a word, like its object,—the man who concentrates it in His person will infallibly attain to the power of saying, “*He that hath seen me hath seen the Father,*” and to possess in Himself “*all the fulness of the Godhead*” (xiv. 9; Col. ii. 9).

4. Finally, if humanity is eternally destined to share the divine state,—in other words, if the *true man*, in the divine idea, is the *God-man*,—the highest aspiration of the Logos in His human life must have been first to realize in Himself this participation of humanity in the divine state,—this is the meaning of *recovering His glory*,—and then to make all His brethren sharers of it by reproducing in them His glorified humanity. Such is the realization of the *gift* of us which the Father has made over to Him (xvii. 2), the accomplishment of our eternal predestination (Rom. viii. 29). On such conditions the entrance of a divine subject into the human state, and His development, do not appear to us to contain anything contradictory.

Let us then attempt to mark out the phases of the terrestrial development of Jesus Christ from this point of view, as well as the mode of His gradual restoration to the divine state.

By the birth of such a being as a member of the race, as *son of man*, humanity becomes restored to its normal point of departure; it is fitted again to enter upon a development which has not been falsified by sin. Up to the age of thirty Jesus fulfils this task. By His perfect obedience and constant sacrifice of self He raises humanity in His person from innocence to holiness. He does not yet know Himself; perhaps in the light of Scripture He begins dimly to forecast what He is in relation to God. But the distinct consciousness of His dignity as Logos would not be compatible with the reality of His human development and the accomplishment of the task assigned to this first period of His life. This task once

fulfilled, the conditions of His existence change. A new work opens up to Him, and the consciousness of His dignity as the well-beloved Son, far from being incompatible with the work which He has still to carry out, becomes its indispensable basis.

To testify of God *as the Father*, He must necessarily know Himself *as the Son*. The baptism is the decisive event which begins this new phase.<sup>1</sup> Anticipating the aspirations and presentiments of the heart of Jesus, the Father says to Him : "*Thou art my Son.*" Jesus knows Himself from that moment to be the absolute object of the divine love. Henceforward He will be able to say what He could not say before : "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" This consciousness of His dignity as Son, the revelation of His eternal essence, the reward of His previous fidelity, the background of all His subsequent manifestations (see the words of Weizsäcker above, p. 395), is His possession ; it accompanies Him everywhere from that hour. At the same time *the heavens are opened* to Him ; His eye pierces into the luminous abyss of the divine plans. He there beholds at every moment all that is necessary for the accomplishment of His Messianic task (v. 19, 20). He can *speak* now, for He can say : "*We testify that we have seen.*" Finally, humanity becomes elevated in Him to *spiritual* life, the advent of which on the earth demanded an organ like Him : *the Holy Spirit descends upon Him* ; with the propagation of this higher life before Him, Christ feels Himself from this moment Master of all things, and starts on His career as the Messiah and Saviour of the world.

Yet His baptism, while restoring to Jesus His *consciousness* of sonship, did not restore to Him His *filial state*, the *divine form of God* belonging to Him. There is an immense disproportion between what He *knows* Himself to be and what He *is* really. Therein there will be for Him the possibility of temptation ; therein the work of patience. Master of all, He possesses *nothing*. No doubt He lays out on His work

<sup>1</sup> Since the time the Gnostics falsified the meaning of the baptism by making it the epoch of the descent of the divine Eon upon the man Jesus, M. de Rougemont is the first who has ventured to give the fact its full importance in the personal development of our Lord. See *Christ et ses témoins*, 7e, 8e, and 9e lettres, t. i. pp. 229-296, particularly pp. 250-255.

treasures of wisdom and power which are in God, but solely because His believing and filial heart is constantly appealing to the fatherly heart of God.

It was by His ascension that His return to the divine state was accomplished, and that His position was at last raised to the level of the self-consciousness which He had from His baptism. From that time He was clothed with all the attributes of the divine state which He possessed before His incarnation ; but He was clothed with them *as the Son of man*. *All the fulness of the Godhead* henceforth dwells in Him, but humanly, and even as Paul says, BODILY (Col. ii. 9). Ten days after His personal assumption into the divine glory, He begins to impart it to His church by the communication of the Spirit, who renders her capable of being one day made a partner in the divine state which He enjoys Himself. The Parousia will consummate the work thus begun. The first word of history : "Ye shall be as gods," will thus be the last. Living images of the Logos from our creation, we shall realize at the close of our development that type of divine human existence which we at present behold in Him. Placing ourselves toward Him in the same state of receptivity in which He constantly stood toward the Father (vi. 57), we shall see His highest wish fulfilled in us : "*Father, I will that they also be with me where I am*" (xvii. 24). Thus the divine plan is presented as it has been realized in Jesus.

The true formula, then, of the incarnation, as it is embodied in the Gospel of John, is the following :—THE LOGOS REALIZED IN JESUS, IN THE FORM OF A HUMAN EXISTENCE SUBJECT TO THE LAW OF TIME AND PROGRESS, THAT RELATION TO GOD OF PERFECT DEPENDENCE AND FILIAL COMMUNION WHICH HE REALIZED BEFORE HIS INCARNATION IN THE PERMANENT FORM OF DIVINE LIFE.<sup>1</sup>

Let us cast a glance at the relation of the Logos to God Himself, before the incarnation.

<sup>1</sup> We should not like to hold M. Gess as at one with all the ideas which we here express. We know that on several points we are not wholly agreed. But, nevertheless, the point of view which we take up is in general that which he has developed in his beautiful work : *Lehre von der Person Christi*, 1856, which I had the honour to review at the time of its appearance, *Revue chrétienne*, 1857 and 1858. The first volume of the second edition is already published. Let us hope that the completion of the work will not be long delayed.

What was the form of existence belonging to the Logos in God ?

The school of Baur in our day establishes a contrast between John's conception and that of Paul on this point. Paul, they say, sets forth a Christ pre-existing as a *celestial man*, but not as a divine being; while John's conception expressly transcends this view. We have already seen that, in 2 Cor. viii. 9 and Phil. ii. 6, Paul expresses a conception of the pre-existence of Christ exactly similar to John's. Holsten himself now acknowledges this as far as the Epistle to the Philippians is concerned. He can therefore maintain a contradiction between the two apostles only by denying this Epistle to be Paul's.<sup>1</sup> And on what passage do Baur and his school found this alleged difference? On 1 Cor. xv. 47: "*The second man is from heaven;*" as if this passage, like the entire chapter, had not an *eschatological* signification! St. Paul is speaking not of the pre-existing Christ, but of Jesus now glorified, and as He will return from heaven to make His own like Him, as appears clearly from the words following in v. 48 and 49: "As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." We shall not bear the image of the pre-existing Christ, but certainly that of the glorified Christ. Paul's teaching on the pre-existence (comp. especially 1 Cor. x. 4 and viii. 6) is therefore, in an original form, and with expressions independent of those of John, identical in substance with the teaching of the latter.

When Paul calls the pre-existing Christ the *image of the invisible God*, he says the same as John when he designates Him by the name of the *Word*. These two expressions contain, above all, the idea of an operation *ad intra*, accomplished in the depths of the divine essence: God affirming, with an eternal affirmation, all that He thinks, wills, and loves, in a being who is the word of His thought, the reflection of His being, the object of His love, His Word, His image, His Son.

And this Word is not a simple *verbum volans*: He is a living being, a person who—if we could apply to God an

<sup>1</sup> *Jahrb. für prot. Theol.* 1876, first part (second article on the Epistle to the Philippians).

expression which is only appropriate to man—should be called *His realized ideal*. Let us imagine an artist giving life to the masterpiece in which he has embodied all the fulness of his genius, and having power to enter into personal relation with it: such is the relation between God and the Word. This Word can only be *divine*; for the highest affirmation of God cannot be less than God Himself. He must be *eternal*; for an affirmation which belongs to the being of God cannot have had a beginning. This Word being God's absolute *enunciation*, His only saying, His primordial and sole utterance, in which are contained all His particular utterances, every subsequent word which will re-echo in time is primarily contained in Him, and will only be realized through Him; He is the *creative word*: "In Him all things consist (*ἐν αὐτῷ συνεστηκε τὰ πάντα*)," says St. Paul also, Col. i. 17. In pronouncing the word, or, what comes to the same thing, in begetting the Son, God has expressed His whole being; and it is this Word who, in His turn, will call all beings out of nothingness. They will all be His free affirmation, as He Himself is that of God. By means of the universe, the Word displays in time the whole wealth of the divine treasures which God has eternally put within Him. Creation is the poem of the Word to the glory of the Father.

This notion of the Word as a creative principle has thus, as is admirably developed by Lange,<sup>1</sup> the greatest importance in its bearing on the conception of the universe. The universe is thus made to rest on a basis of absolute light which secures its final perfection. Blind and eternal matter, as well as fatal necessity, are banished from a creation which is the product of the Word. The ideal essence of all things is for ever saved by this view.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Christ*, vol. v. pp. 163-172; also vol. vi. pp. 266-268.

<sup>2</sup> We do not think it necessary to treat here the questions which are raised as to the internal relations of the divine persons, by the view which we have been explaining regarding the dogma of the incarnation. For the very reason that we hold the divine existence of the Son to be a matter of love (*the bosom of the Father*) and not of necessity, as with Philo, we think that, when the Word descends into the world, there to become Himself one of the beings of the universe, the Father can enter into direct relation to the world, and Himself exercise the functions of Creator and Preserver, which He commonly exercises through the mediation of the Word. Undoubtedly the Word has life in Himself, and communicates it to the world, but because the Father *hath given Him*

From this notion of the person of Christ, there follows the supreme importance of His appearance on the earth.

If He is the Word made flesh, He is the absolute revelation and communication of God to humanity, eternity come down into time, all the treasures of God brought within the reach of faith. After this gift of the Father, there is nothing *better* to wait for. There remains for humanity only one alternative: to accept Him and live, or reject Him and perish.

But if this supreme dignity of Jesus is denied, His manifestation has only a relative value; Christianity, as has been said, is no more than one of the stages of humanity.<sup>1</sup> However admirable Jesus Christ may be, humanity may and ought always "*to wait for another.*" For the path of progress is indefinite. The door remains open to an after-comer, and the church has nothing for it but to wait for the accomplishment of that terrible prophecy uttered by Jesus: "I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not; if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive!" (v. 43).

The question is therefore a vital one for the church and the world; and it is easy to understand why John has placed this prologue at the head of his narrative. Faith is not faith, that is to say, absolute or without after-thought, unless it has for its object that beyond which it is impossible to go.

Before leaving the prologue, we must again call the attention of our readers to the numerous and palpable errors of the oldest manuscripts, the Sinaïticus and the Vaticanus, especially the former, in this piece. The reader may refer to ver. 4 (*τῶν ἀνθρώπων*), ver. 5 (*ἐστὶ*), ver. 15 (*ὃν εἶπον* and *ὄς*), ver. 16 (*ὄτι*), and ver. 18 (*μονογενῆς Θεός*). We were fully warranted, therefore, in protesting beforehand against the prevailing prejudice in favour of the ancient Alexandrine manuscripts.

this privilege; and thus everything proceeds always from the Father (John v. 26). In our exposition we have kept within the limits of positive revelation, and have merely sought to show the admirable harmony of the facts which it contains.

<sup>1</sup> Lermnier.



## FIRST PART.

### I. 19-IV. 54.

FIRST MANIFESTATIONS OF THE WORD.—THE BIRTH OF FAITH.—  
FIRST SYMPTOMS OF UNBELIEF.

COMPARED with the two following parts, one of which specially traces the development of unbelief (v.-xii.), the other that of faith (xiii.-xvii.), this first part has a more general character. It serves as basis and point of departure for the two others. Jesus is declared to be the Messiah by John the Baptist; a first group of disciples is formed round Him. His glory shines forth in some miraculous manifestations in the circle of private life. Then He inaugurates His public ministry in the temple at Jerusalem. But this attempt being frustrated, He confines Himself to teaching while working miracles, and to gathering round Him new adherents by means of baptism. Finally, observing that even in this more modest form His activity gives offence to the dominant party at Jerusalem, He retires to Galilee, after sowing by the way the germs of faith in Samaria. This summary is enough to justify the title which we have given to this whole first part, and to show its mixed character as compared with those following.

The evangelist himself seems to have meant to divide it into two cycles by the well-marked correlation between the two remarks: ii. 11 and iv. 54, placed, the one at the end of the narrative of the marriage at Cana: "*This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him there;*" the other, which concludes this entire part, after the healing of the nobleman's son: "*This is again the second miracle that Jesus did, when He was come out of Judæa into Galilee.*" By the evident correspondence of those two sayings, the evangelist shows that there were in those first times of the ministry of

Jesus two sojourns in Judæa, which both ended in a return to Galilee, and that each of those returns was signalized by a miracle wrought at Cana. This evidence of the historian's mind ought to be our guide. We therefore divide this first part into two cycles: the one comprising the facts related i. 19—ii. 11; the other, the narratives ii. 12—iv. 54. In the first, Jesus, introduced by John the Baptist to His ministry, carries it out without going beyond the inner circle of His first disciples and His family. The second relates His first steps in His public ministry.

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## FIRST CYCLE.

### I. 19—II. 11.

This cycle embraces three sections: 1st, The testimony rendered to Jesus by John the Baptist, i. 19—37; 2d, The first personal manifestations of Jesus and the faith of His first disciples, i. 38—52; 3d, His first miraculous sign, ii. 1—11. The facts related in these three sections cover a week, which, as Bengel has remarked, may be considered the counterpart of the final passion-week. The one might be called the Messianic bridal week; the other is the time of separation which was announced from the beginning by Jesus: "*When the bridegroom shall be taken away, then shall the friends of the bridegroom fast.*"

## FIRST SECTION.

### I. 19—37.—THE TESTIMONIES OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

These testimonies are three in number, and were given on three successive days (see vv. 39 and 35: "*The next day*"). These three days, ever memorable to the church, had left an ineffaceable impression on the heart of the evangelist. On the first he had heard the forerunner solemnly proclaim before a deputation of the Sanhedrim that the Messiah was present,

but unknown by every one except John himself (ver. 26); and this saying had sent a thrill through him as well as through the assembled multitude. On the morrow, a day more important still, Jesus had been pointed out personally by His forerunner as the Messiah; and faith, trained by the declaration of the preceding day, had enlightened with its first ray the heart of John and that of all the Baptist's hearers. Finally, on the third day, in consequence of a new declaration given forth by his first master, John had left him to join the new Master whom he pointed out to him.

Why did the author choose the first of those three days as the starting-point of his narrative? If it is true that the object of his narrative, as we have concluded from his own declaration, xx. 30, 31, is to account for the manner in which the faith was formed which the apostles now proclaim throughout the whole world, and that in order to develop the same faith in his readers, we cannot but own that here is really the normal starting-point for his history. Faith did not at all begin with John's baptism, not even with the baptism of Jesus. The three days which are here described by the evangelist were not merely the birthdays of his own faith and of that of the apostles, but of faith in general within the bosom of humanity. The Messiah *proclaimed*, then *pointed out*, finally *followed*: such is the course of the narrative.

### I. *First Testimony.*—Vv. 19-28.

When unfolding the contents of faith in his prologue, the apostle had produced a testimony given by John the Baptist which contained, as Baur well says, "the idea of the absolute pre-existence of the Messiah," and consequently the real thought of the prologue, that of Christ's divinity. It is that testimony, quoted at ver. 15, which he now proceeds to relate, indicating the place and day when it was delivered. Rather we should say the days; for the testimony is not merely that of the first day (vv. 26 and 27). It is also and especially, as we have already seen, that of the day following (ver. 30). When repeating, on the latter day, his declaration of the previous evening, the forerunner completed it, and gave it forth exactly as it is reproduced in the prologue.

Ver. 19. "And this is the record of John, when<sup>1</sup> the Jews sent<sup>2</sup> priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask Him, Who art Thou?" It is strange to find the narrative beginning with *and*. But this is explained by the connection which we have just indicated between the following narrative and the testimony quoted ver. 15. The narrative strikes its roots, so to speak, into the prologue. Is not the faith expressed in the saying of ver. 15 exactly that whose origin and development the history is about to trace? *Καὶ αὕτη* may be thus paraphrased: "And this is the tenor of the record." . . . What gave to this declaration of John the Baptist a peculiar importance was its official character. It was given forth in presence of a deputation of the Sanhedrim, and in reply to an express question proceeding from that body, the religious head of the Jewish nation. The Sanhedrim, of whose existence we find no earlier traces than in the times of Antipater and Herod (Josephus, *Antiquities*, xiv. 9. 4), was no doubt a continuation or renewal of a more ancient institution. We are reminded of the tribunal of seventy elders established by Moses (Num. xi. 16). Under Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xix. 8) there is also mention made of a supreme tribunal sitting at Jerusalem, and composed of a certain number of Levites, priests, and fathers of Israel. Comp. probably also Ezek. viii. 11 et seq.: "*Seventy men of the ancients of the house of Israel.*" In Maccabees (1 Macc. xii. 6; 2 Macc. i. 10, iv. 44, etc.) the body called *γερονσία*, *senate*, plays a part similar to that of those ancient tribunals, though we cannot establish a historical continuity between those institutions. In the time of Jesus, this senate, called the *Sanhedrim*, was composed of seventy-one members, including the president (Tract. *Sanhed.* i. 6). These members were of three classes: 1st, The *chief priests* (*ἀρχιερεῖς*),—a term which probably denotes the ex-high priests and the members of the highest sacerdotal families; 2d, The *elders* of the people (*πρεσβύτεροι, ἄρχοντες τοῦ λαοῦ*),—a term which undoubtedly comprehends the other members in general, not only of the laity, but also priests or Levites; 3d, The *scribes* (*γραμματεῖς*), specially denoting experts in the law, or professional jurists. The high priest

<sup>1</sup> Origen reads *πότες* once; elsewhere, *οσι*.

<sup>2</sup> B C, It<sup>all</sup>, Syr., and other vss. add after *απιστησαν*: *αρος αυτου*

presided *ex officio*.<sup>1</sup> The Sanhedrim had till now winked at the work of John the Baptist. But seeing that things were daily taking a graver turn, and that the people began even to ask if John were not the Christ (comp. Luke iii. 15), they thought themselves bound at length to use their powers, and to put him to an official examination about his mission. Jesus (ver. 33) refers to this step, which at a later period formed the ground of His own refusal to reply to a similar interrogatory (Matt. xxi. 23 et seq.). The Mishna says expressly, that "the power of judging a *tribe*, a *false prophet*, and a *chief priest*, pertains to the tribunal of the seventy-one."—*Sanhed. i. 5*. The designation "*the Jews*" plays an important part in the fourth Gospel. This name, according to its etymology, properly denotes only the members of the tribe of Judah; but after the return from the captivity it was applied to the whole people, because the greater part of the Israelites who returned belonged to this tribe. It is in this general sense that we find it ii. 6: "*After the manner of the purifying of the Jews;*" ii. 13: "*The Jews' passover;*" iii. 1: "*A ruler of the Jews.*" In this political sense the term may even be extended to the Galileans: vi. 52. But the name in our Gospel takes a religious signification. The author attaches to it the notion of a more or less pronounced antipathy to Jesus and His cause; and that quite naturally, for the centre of the hostility to which Jesus was subjected was at Jerusalem, and in the province of Judea. From this odious sense which the author attached to the name of Jew, it has been attempted to prove that he could not himself belong to this nation.<sup>2</sup> But after the destruction of Jerusalem, the Jewish nation, politically regarded, ceased to exist; and John, belonging himself in faith to a new community, could well speak of the Jews, in a religious sense, as of a body which had become alien to him. The Judæo-Christian apostle is still more severe in the Apocalypse to his old fellow-countrymen, whom he calls "*the synagogue of Satan*" (iii. 9). The words, *from Jerusalem*,

<sup>1</sup> The old view, according to which the Sanhedrim had an elective president and vice-president (the *Nasi* and the *Av-Beth-Din*), seems now to have been refuted by Kuenen and Schürer. See *Lehrbuch der neutest. Zeitgesch.*, by Schürer, sec. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Fischer, *Tübinger Zeitschrift* 1840, and so Hilgenfeld. We have refuted this objection in the *Introd.* p. 171.

depend not on the word *the Jews*, but on the verb *sent*. The intention of this regimen is to bring out the solemnity of the course taken; it proceeded from the centre of the theocracy. Levites were joined with priests. It has often been thought that they played only the part of officers. But in several passages of the Old Testament (2 Chron. xxii. 7-9, xxxv. 3; Neh. viii. 7), it appears that it was the Levites who were charged with instructing the people in the law; whence Hengstenberg has concluded, not without reason, that the scribes so often mentioned in the New Testament belonged generally to this order, and that in this character, and consequently as members of the Sanhedrim, some of them figured in the deputation. The question which they put to John the Baptist refers to the expectation, at that time reigning in Israel, of the Messiah, and the extraordinary messengers who were to precede His coming. "*Who art thou?*" signifies in the context: What expected person art thou? We shall see in ver. 25 what perplexity this question was fitted to cause John if he refused to declare his title.

Origen, who, as we have seen, placed the last three verses of the prologue in the mouth of John the Baptist, believed, consequently, that the following testimony (ver. 19 et seq.) was a new one later than that of vv. 15-18. He therefore put a period after the word *John*, undoubtedly converting these first words: "*And this is the record of John,*" into an appendix to the preceding testimony. Then, with the *ὅτε*, *when*, or the *τότε*, *then* (for so he thought he might modify the text), he began a new proposition, the main text of which was to be found at ver. 20: "*he confessed.*" But the *καί*, *and*, before this verb, renders such a construction impossible. For never is the copula *καί* in John the sign of the apodosis, not even in vi. 57. As to the change of *ὅτε* into *τότε*, it is entirely arbitrary. We shall see afterwards the consequences of all those exegetical errors of Origen. The words *πρὸς αὐτόν*, *to him*, added by some of the Alexandrines, are justly condemned by Tischendorf, Meyer, etc. Meyer is wrong in making the *καὶ ὁμολόγησε* still depend on *ὅτε*. This construction would make the sentence drag heavily.

Ver. 20. "*And he confessed, and denied not; and con-*

fessed,<sup>1</sup> *I am not the Christ.*"<sup>2</sup> Before stating the contents of John's answer, the evangelist indicates its characteristics: it was ready, frank, and categorical. The first "*he confessed*" indicates in effect the spontaneity and eagerness with which the declaration was made. The same thought follows in a negative form, "*he denied not*," to show that he did not for an instant yield to the temptation which he might have had to deny. Finally, the second "*he confessed*" is added to the first in order to attach to it the profession which follows. This remarkable form of narrative (comp. i. 7, 8) can only be explained from a regard to people who, in the circle in which the apostle lived, were inclined to give to the person of John the Baptist a higher importance than belonged to his real dignity. According to the reading of the Alexandrines and of Origen, we must translate: "*It is not I who am the Christ.*" This answer would be suitable if the question had been: "*Is it thou who art the Christ?*" But the question was simply, "*Who art thou?*" and the true answer is consequently that which is found in the T. R.: "*I am not the Christ;*" that is to say: "*I am something, no doubt, but not the Christ.*"

Ver. 21. "*And they asked him, What then?*"<sup>3</sup> *Art thou*<sup>4</sup> *Elias?* *And he saith, I am not. Art thou the prophet?* *And he answered, No.*" Several commentators understand the question  $\tau\lambda$  *oũv* (*what then?*) in the same sense, or nearly the same, as the preceding: "*What art thou, then?*" But it is unnatural to take the neuter  $\tau\lambda$  in this sense. De Wette finds in these words only an adverbial phrase: "*What then!*" This sense is insipid. Rather, with Meyer, we must understand  $\acute{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\acute{\iota}$ : "*What is the matter? What extraordinary thing, then, is passing?*" This form of interrogation betrays impatience. Malachi had announced (iv. 5) the coming of Elias as the herald of the great Messianic day; and we know from Justin's *Dialogue with the Jew Trypho*, that according to a popular opinion the Messiah was to remain hidden till pointed out and consecrated by this prophet. Several passages

<sup>1</sup> L omits  $\kappa\alpha\iota$ , and  $\aleph$ , Syr<sup>cor</sup>, Or. the second  $\kappa\alpha\iota$   $\alpha\mu\lambda\omicron\lambda\omicron\gamma\eta\sigma\alpha\tau$ .

<sup>2</sup>  $\aleph$  A B C L X  $\Delta$ , It<sup>plerique</sup>, Cop. Or. (thrice) read  $\epsilon\gamma\omega$   $\sigma\upsilon\tau$   $\epsilon\mu\iota$ , while eleven other Mj. and the T. R. place  $\epsilon\mu\iota$  before  $\epsilon\gamma\omega$ .

<sup>3</sup> B reads  $\sigma\upsilon$   $\sigma\upsilon\tau$   $\tau\epsilon$  (*What art thou, then?*).

<sup>4</sup>  $\aleph$  B L reject  $\sigma\upsilon$  after  $\epsilon\mu$ .

of the Gospels (Matt. xvi. 14; Mark vi. 15) prove that some other prophet of the ancient times besides was expected to reappear—Jeremiah, for example. Of these expected personages there was one who was specially designated *the prophet*. Some distinguished him from the Messiah (John vii. 40, 41); others confounded him with the Messiah (vi. 14). The personage in question was undoubtedly the one to whom the promise applied given in Deut. xviii. 18 (the prophet like unto Moses). Of course the people did not think of a second Elias or a new Moses in the spiritual sense, as when the angel says of John the Baptist (Luke i. 17): "*He shall go before Him in the spirit and power of Elias.*" It was the person himself who was to reappear in flesh and bone. How could the Baptist have affirmed in this literal sense his identity with one or other of those ancient personages? As to entering into the domain of theological distinctions, he could not; and it was not in keeping with his character. His answer, therefore, on this point also must be negative.

Vv. 22, 23. "*They said, therefore, unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.*" The deputies had now exhausted the suppositions furnished by the generally received Messianic programme. It only remains to them to put to John a general question which forces him from the negative attitude which he has been maintaining: "*Who art thou?*" that is to say: "What personage art thou?" The extraordinary conduct of John in Israel formed a sufficient ground for this question. John answers with a saying of Isaiah, which is at once the explanation and proof of his mission. The meaning of the prophetic passage is this: Jehovah is on the point of appearing to manifest His glory. At the moment preceding His appearance, without any one showing himself on the scene, a voice is heard which invites Israel to prepare the way by which her Lord is to come. The event in question in this description is not the return from the captivity: it is the Messianic appearance of Jehovah. As in the East, before the arrival of a sovereign, the roads were made straight and level, so Israel is to prepare for her divine King a welcome which



shall be worthy of Him; and the function of the mysterious voice is to engage her on this preparatory work, lest the signal grace which is approaching should turn to judgment. John applies this saying of Isaiah to himself the more willingly, that it falls in perfectly with his desire to keep his person out of view, and to let nothing appear except his message: "*a voice.*" The words *in the wilderness* may be connected, in the Hebrew as well as in the Greek, either with the verb which precedes: *cry*, or with that which follows: *make straight*. The sense is the same in either case, for the order sounds forth in the place where it is to be executed. The connection with the preceding verb is more natural, especially in the Greek. Wilderness in the East denotes uncultivated spaces, those vast tracts which serve for pasture, and which are crossed only by winding paths, and not by roads worthy of a sovereign. Such is the emblem of the moral state of the people; Jehovah's entrance is not yet prepared for in their hearts. A collective and national repentance can alone pave the way for Him. By fixing his abode in the wilderness, the forerunner meant to indicate more clearly, by this literal conformity to the prophetic emblem, the *moral* fulfilment of the prophecy. Does the form of quotation: "*as said*" . . ., belong to the narrative of the evangelist or to the Baptist's own answer? In favour of the second alternative, it may be said that the forerunner had more need himself to prove his own claims at that time than the evangelist had so long after. To speak thus was, on the part of John, to deliver his mandate and to declare his marching order. It was to proclaim to those deputies, experts in the knowledge of the law and the prophets, that if he was not *personally* any one of the expected personages, his mission was nevertheless directly connected with the near appearance of the Messiah. This was all which, from a moral point of view, it concerned the Sanhedrim and the people to know. Both were forewarned.

The preceding examination bore on the general *rôle* of John the Baptist. The deputation subjects him to a second and more special one relative to the *rite* of baptism introduced by him. The evangelist prefaces this new phase of the interview by a remark relating to the religious character of the members of the deputation.

Ver. 24. "*And they which*<sup>1</sup> *were sent were of the Pharisees.*" If we translate thus according to the T. R., which is supported by the majority of the Mjj., all the Mnn., and most of the vss., making the participle ἀπεσταλμένοι, defined by the art. οἱ, the subject of the phrase, the object of this remark can only be to explain the question which follows. It is the constant habit of John thus to supply, at every succeeding stage, the circumstances fitted to explain the narrative; comp. i. 41, 45, iv. 30, ix. 14, xi. 5, 18, xiii. 23, etc. The Pharisees being the ultra-conservatives in Israel, none would be more offended than they at the innovation which John took the liberty of making by introducing baptism. Washings, no doubt, formed part of Jewish worship. Some even allege that Gentile proselytes were subjected to a complete bath on occasion of their passing over to Judaism. But the application of this symbol of entire pollution to the members of the theocratic people was so strange an innovation, that it must have awakened in the highest degree the susceptibility of the authorities who were the guardians of religious rites, and very specially that of the party most attached to tradition. Besides, the Pharisaic element predominated in the deputation which the Sanhedrim had chosen. We see also how skilfully planned was the course of examination: first of all, the question of his mission; thereafter, only that of the rite. The order of the narrative thus admits of a perfectly natural explanation; but Origen, still led astray here by the false interpretation which he had given of the end of the prologue, imagined that in ver. 24 an entirely new deputation was introduced, different from that of ver. 19; and that this deputation was sent exclusively by the Pharisees. He therefore translated: "*And there were also there some sent of the Pharisees.*" The art. οἱ should in this sense be rejected. And hence, no doubt, has arisen the reading of the Alex. mss. which reject this word. But this explanation is inadmissible. It would assume that the deputies mentioned, ver. 24, remained there like mutes during the whole of the previous interview, which is absolutely improbable. And even after the alteration of the true text, to which it is obliged to have recourse, it still remains grammatically very forced.

<sup>1</sup> N A B C L and Or. reject *οἱ* before ἀπεσταλμένοι.

Ver. 25. "And they asked him,<sup>1</sup> and said unto him, *Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not the Christ, nor Elias, neither the prophet?*"<sup>2</sup> The strictest guardians of rites conceded to the Messiah or to any one of His forerunners the right of innovating in the matter of observances; and if John had declared himself one of those personages, they would have contented themselves with demanding his credentials, and would have kept silence about his baptism, which would be authenticated along with his mission. Indeed, this very verse seems to prove that, founding on such sayings as Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, and Zech. xiii. 1, the Jews expected a great national lustration to inaugurate the kingdom of the Messiah. John the Baptist having expressly repudiated the honour of being one of the expected prophets, the deputation was entitled now to put to him the question: "*Why baptizest thou then?*" In the *then* there is included the connection of ideas which we have just established. According to the reading of the T. R., *neither, nor*, the thought is this: "The supposition that thou art the Christ being set aside, thy baptism can be explained only on this, that thou art one or other of the two expected forerunners; if, then, thou art *neither* the one *nor* the other, why . . . etc.?" It was not easy to apprehend this delicate meaning of the *disjunctive* negation; and the difficulty gave rise to the Alex. correction οὐδέ, οὐδέ, *nor, moreover*, which is only to add negation to negation. The position of John the Baptist in relation to this question, after his previous answer, was difficult:

Vv. 26, 27. "John answered them, saying. *Yea, I baptize with water:*<sup>3</sup> *there standeth*<sup>4</sup> *one among you,*<sup>5</sup> *whom ye know not; He*<sup>6</sup> *it is, who, coming after me, is preferred before me,*<sup>7</sup> *whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose."* This

<sup>1</sup> ⲛ rejects πρωτησαν αυτον και (the copyist has confounded the two και).

<sup>2</sup> Instead of ουτι ουτι, which is read by the T. R., after the most of the Mjj. and Mnn., the reading in A B C L and Or. (six times) is ουδι ουδι.

<sup>3</sup> ⲛ alone: εν τω υδατι, instead of εν υδατι.

<sup>4</sup> B L T<sup>b</sup>: στανει (stat); ⲛ G: στανει (stetit); T. R. with all the others: εστηκειν.

<sup>5</sup> After μισος, T. R. reads δε, with all the authorities, except ⲛ B C L and Or. (ten times), who reject this word.

<sup>6</sup> T. R. reads after οιδατε, αυτος εστιν, with 13 Mjj. the Mnn. It. Vg. Syr. Or. (once); these words are rejected by ⲛ B C L T<sup>b</sup>, Syr<sup>cor</sup>, and Or. (six times).

<sup>7</sup> After αρχομενος, T. R. adds ος εκπροσθεν μου γελουειν, with the same authorities nearly; these words are rejected by the same authorities which reject αυτος εστιν.

answer has been judged somewhat obscure and embarrassed. De Wette thinks even that it does not correspond with the question. The generally received explanation is this: "My water-baptism does not in any case impinge on that of the Messiah, which is of an entirely different nature; it prepares for it merely." Thus John is represented as in a way apologizing to the Sanhedrim for his baptism in name of the more important baptism, that of the Spirit, which is to be carried out by the Messiah. But, in the first place, this would be to evade the question proposed; and de Wette's criticism would be well founded. For the baptism of John was attacked in itself, and not because of its relation to that of the Messiah. Then the words *ἐν ὕδατι*, *with water*, would require to be placed first: "It is *only with water* that I baptize;" and the Spirit-baptism would necessarily be mentioned in the following proposition as an antithesis. Finally, it would not be in keeping with the Baptist's character to seek to shelter himself under the insignificance of his function, and to pass off his baptism as an inoffensive novelty. Everything is full of dignity, solemnity, and even threatening, in this reply, when rightly understood. It is meant to exhibit the gravity of the present situation, into the mystery of which he alone is initiated, and in which he has a part so important to play. It is the continuation of his call to repentance, ver. 23: "*Make straight the way of the Lord*," as well as the answer to the question of the Pharisees. In the very fact that he announces to them the *presence* of the Messiah in the midst of them, their question is resolved. If the Christ is there, He is known by him and him alone,—the Messianic time has come; he is its initiator, and his baptism is thereby justified. This conviction of the grandeur of the situation and of his function is expressed with energy in the *ἐγώ*, *I*, placed first, not as is thought in contrast to the Messiah,—for the entirely different baptism of the latter would require to be mentioned thereafter,—but in this sense: "You ask me why I baptize? I do so, not without knowing why: it is because He is there, mark it well, He for whom you wait!" Therefore *ἐγώ*: "*I*, who know the situation of affairs." We have rendered the force of this pronoun by the affirmation *yea!* Such, also, is the reason why the verb *I baptize* is placed before the regimen: *with water*. The

antithesis between water-baptism and Spirit-baptism is entirely foreign to this passage. According to this view, the *δέ*, *but*, ought undoubtedly to be rejected, as it is by the Alex. This adversative particle has crept in under the sway of the supposed antithesis between the two baptisms. The *but* might yet be supported in this sense: "I baptize with water, and I know well myself that it is a grave matter! *But* I am not doing so lightly; for He *is* present, He who should come." This sense appears somewhat forced. The words *among you*, accompanied, as they no doubt were, with a significant look, by which the forerunner seemed to search in the crowd for Him of whom he was speaking, must have produced profound emotion. The term *ἔστηκεν* or *στήκει*, *He stands there*, is more dramatic than *He is there*. The important words are these: *Whom ye know not*. The accent is on the word *ye*, in opposition to John himself, who knows Him. Thus he and his baptism are accredited together. This saying necessarily assumes that the baptism of Jesus was an accomplished fact at the time when John was speaking. For it was in this very act that, agreeably to the divine promise (ver. 33), the Messiah had been revealed to him. He himself declares, vv. 31, 33, that up till that time he did not know Him. We must not therefore place the baptism of Jesus, as Olshausen and Hengstenberg do, on that day or on the day following, or, with Ewald, between vv. 31, 32, and Bäumlein, between vv. 28, 29. As little is it necessary to identify this testimony with the declarations of John, reported by the Synoptics, and which preceded the baptism of Jesus. There, he said vaguely, "There cometh one after me." Here the prophecy takes quite a different character; "He is present, and I know Him." Here, then, is the first testimony which refers to the person of Jesus directly; it is the true starting-point of faith in Him. What are we to think of the omission of the words: *He it is* (*αὐτός ἐστι*), and: *who was before me*, by the Alex.? A critical prejudice exists which regards the shortest reading as the most exact. This rule is far from being always true. So in this case I suspect the Alexandrine text of being mutilated by a hand which thought it was purifying it. And that hand is no other than Origen's, already guilty of so many mistakes in this chapter. Distrusting the text, such as he found it repro-

duced in his time (see p. 321), and in consequence of certain parallels between John and the Synoptics, such as this: "*whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose,*" he regarded this testimony as the reproduction of that of the Synoptics, and rejected as an interpolation (arising from ver. 15) all that went beyond it. The words: *He it is*, of the T. R., serve to recall the declarations which had preceded the baptism of Jesus, and to establish the identity of the personage indicated here with the Messiah, long announced by John. It is the same with the expressions: "*He who cometh after me,*" and: "*He of whom I am not worthy*" . . . By the expression: "*to unloose the latchet of the sandals,*" John means to designate the humble office of a slave. On the pleonasm of *οὐ* and *αὐτοῦ*, Bäumlein rightly says: "imitation of the Hebrew construction." Philologists debate the question whether the form *ἄξιός ἔνα* implies a weakening of the sense of the conj. *ἔνα*, which would here become a simple paraphrase of the infinitive (*worthy to unloose*),—so Bäumlein,—or whether this conjunction always preserves the notion of intention (Meyer). The first rests on the usage of the later Greek and on the *νά* of modern Greek, which, with the verb in the subjunctive, takes the place of the infinitive. Nevertheless, we think, with Meyer, that the notion of intention is never altogether lost in the *ἔνα* of the N. T.

Ver. 28. "*These things were done in Bethany,<sup>1</sup> beyond Jordan,<sup>2</sup> where John was baptizing.*" The notice (ver. 28) is certainly not suggested to John by a geographical interest; it is inspired by the solemnity of the preceding scene, and by the extraordinary gravity of this official testimony addressed to the representatives of the Sanhedrim and of the entire nation. It was to this declaration, indeed, that the saying of the prologue applied: "*That all men through Him might believe.*" If the people had been open to faith, this testimony, proceeding from such a mouth, would have sufficed to kindle this divine fire in Israel. As to the difference of the two readings, *Bethany* and *Bethabara*, Origen himself relates that

<sup>1</sup> The reading *Βηθανια* is found in almost all the Mjj., the most of the Mnn. It. Vg. Cop. Syr<sup>ach</sup>, etc. Only the Mjj. K T<sup>b</sup> U Δ Π, some Mnn. Syr<sup>ant</sup>, read with T. R. *Βηθαβαρα*.

<sup>2</sup> N, Syr<sup>ant</sup>, add *σολομων* after *Ιερδανου*.

almost all the old MSS. read Bethany, but that having sought a place of that name on the banks of the Jordan, he had not found it, while a place was pointed out called Bethabara, where tradition alleged that John had baptized. It is therefore almost certain that the reading *Bethabara* was substituted for the original reading *Bethany* in a certain number of documents, and that the substitution is the work of Origen. The Roman war had made a host of ancient localities disappear even to the very name. In the time of Jesus there existed undoubtedly two Bethanys, as there were two Bethlehems, two Bethsaidas, two Antiochs, two Ramas, two Canas. Different etymologies are given of the name of Bethany, such as *place of dates* or *of poverty*, etc. These meanings may suit the Bethany near Jerusalem; as to the Bethany near the Jordan, it is more probable that its name is derived from *Beth-Onijah* (אֲנִיָּה, *navis*), *place of the ferry-boat* (see Introd. p. 102). This last sense would almost coincide with that of Bethabara, *place of the ford*. Bethabara is named in Judg. vii. 24. This name was perhaps connected with the passage of the children of Israel at this place on their entry into the land of Canaan.

## II. *Second Testimony.*—Vv. 29-34.

How are we to explain the fact that the deputies of the Sanhedrim left John without asking him who the person was to whom he referred? Either they did not care to know, or they despised the man who spoke to them in such a way. In either case, their unbelief would date from this event. After their departure the forerunner remained with his disciples and the multitude who had been present at the scene, and from the morrow onwards his testimony took a more categorical character. He no longer said simply, "The Messiah has come," but, seeing Jesus approaching, he said, "There He is!" He characterizes Him first as to His work (ver. 29), then as to His person (ver. 30); he relates afterwards how he came to know Him, and on what foundation the testimony rests which he gives to Him (vv. 31-33); finally, he shows the importance to his hearers of the act which he has just performed in unburdening himself before them of such a message (ver. 34).

Ver. 29. "*The next day he<sup>1</sup> seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*" The very next day after that on which John had proclaimed the presence of the Messiah among the people, Jesus approached His forerunner, who recognised Him and declared Him to be the Messiah. The words: *coming to him*, have perplexed commentators. Some have wrongly understood: to be baptized (see above). Baur saw in them no other meaning than the following: to receive John's testimony, and naturally found in this detail a proof of the purely ideal character of the narrative. But what does the fact assume? What is perfectly simple — namely, that Jesus, after having been baptized, previously to this meeting had removed from John for a certain time, and after the interval He returned on this very day to His forerunner. Now this is exactly what is confirmed by the synoptical account. Jesus, after His baptism, had in fact retired to the solitude of the desert, where He passed several weeks, and it was now that He reappeared to begin His work as Redeemer. That with this intention He should return to the presence of John, is of all things the most natural. Was it not he who was to open up the way for Him to Israel? and was it not beside him that He might hope to find the instruments who were indispensable to Him for the accomplishment of His task? Jesus Himself (x. 3) describes John as *the porter* who opens the door of the fold to the shepherd, so that he has not to climb over the wall of the enclosure like the robber. The words: *coming unto him*, are therefore perfectly in keeping with the situation, and do not at all refer to a simple walk invented as a basis for the testimony which follows. Comp. Lücke, who also connects this detail with the account of the temptation.

On the one hand, the designation which John used to point out Jesus as the Messiah must certainly have been intelligible to those who surrounded him; on the other, it must be in accordance with the impression which he had himself received on the occasion of his first meeting with

<sup>1</sup> The words • *ἰωάννης* of the T. R., which are omitted in a large number of Mjj. and Mnn., as well Alexandrine as Byzantine, and in most vss., are one of those additions, frequent in the Byzantine text, which have been brought about by the necessities of reading in public worship.



Jesus. To fulfil the first of these conditions, the expression : “*the Lamb of God,*” must contain an allusion to some saying or deed of the Old Testament usually referred to the Messiah. The interpretation of the term which best satisfies this condition is certainly that according to which John the Baptist here reminds his hearers of the *Servant of the Lord*, described Isa. liii. Before the polemic against the Christians had driven Jewish commentators to another explanation, they referred the passage Isa. lii. 13–liii. 12 to the Messiah. This is the unanimous admission of Kimchi, Jarchi, Aben Ezra, and Abarbanel. The last mentioned says : “Jonathan, the son of Uziel, referred this prophecy to the Messiah who is to come ; and this is also the opinion of our sages of happy memory.” (See Eisenmenger, *Entdeckt. Judenth.* II. Th. p. 758 ; Lücke, vol. i. p. 406.)<sup>1</sup> We need not demonstrate here the truth of this explanation, and the insoluble difficulties which beset every contrary interpretation. It is enough for us that it prevailed among the ancient Jews. Thence it follows that the Baptist’s allusion could easily be understood. The *Servant of the Lord* is represented in that chapter as “*bearing on Himself alone the iniquity of us all,*” and described in ver. 7 in these words : “*He is led as a lamb to the slaughter, as a sheep before her shearers is dumb.*” From those two sayings of Isaiah taken together there results directly the designation used on this solemn occasion by John the Baptist. Some commentators have alleged that the word *lamb*, both here and in Isaiah, denoted only the perfect gentleness of Jesus, His patience under suffering, without any reference to the idea of sacrifice. So Gabler : “Here is the man full of gentleness, who will patiently bear the ills to which He shall be subjected by human perversity ;” and Kuinoel : “Behold the innocent and pious being who will take away wickedness

<sup>1</sup> Comp. especially Wünsche, *die Leiden des Messias*, 1870, p. 55 et seq. By a multitude of rabbinical sayings he furnishes proof that the passages Isa. lii. 13–liii. 12, Zech. ix. 9 (*lowly, riding on an ass*), and xii. 10 (“*on me whom they have pierced*”), were from time immemorial unanimously referred to the Messiah and His expiatory sufferings. The very attempt to distinguish between two Messianic personages, the one *the son of Joseph* or Ephraim, whose lot is to suffer ; and the other *the son of Judah*, to whom the glory is ascribed, is only a later expedient (dating from the second century ; comp. Wünsche, p. 109) to reconcile this undisputed interpretation with the idea of the glorious Messiah.

from the earth;" Ewald, nearly the same. But none of those explanations sufficiently accounts for the art.  $\acute{o}$ , *the known, expected lamb*, nor brings out the relation established by the text between the figure of the *lamb* and the act of *taking away sin*. Some commentators have supposed that the figure used by John was borrowed, not from Isa. liii., but from sacrifices generally in which the lamb was used as a victim. But those sacrifices had not a relation to the Messiah special enough to make the name of which John makes use in this case sufficiently clear. There is but one sacrifice which could correspond in any degree to this condition, that, namely, of the paschal lamb. It is true, but mistaken in our opinion, that the expiatory character of the paschal sacrifice is denied. "*The blood*," saith the Lord (Ex. xii. 13), "*shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are; and when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you.*" How, after such a saying, can it be maintained that the blood of this lamb had no expiatory value? "The paschal sacrifice," Hengstenberg rightly says, "was the basis of the whole sacrificial system, the basis of the ancient covenant itself. . . . Hence it possessed certain characters which the ordinary expiatory sacrifices had not—for example, the sacramental feast, the emblem of communion with Jehovah. And this it is which has led commentators astray on the matter." But is it necessary to choose between the allusion to Isa. liii. and the reference to the paschal lamb? Did not Isaiah himself borrow from the sacrifice of the paschal lamb the essential features in his picture of the Lord's Servant suffering for the expiation of the sins of the people? The two explanations are not, therefore, contradictory; we need not even reject wholly the explanation given by Gabler, Ewald, etc.; for it is indubitable that of the clean animals used as victims the lamb was that which, by its characteristic innocence and gentleness, presented the emblem most fully corresponding to the part of the Messiah, as it is here described by John the Baptist. Nevertheless, we persist in thinking, with Meyer, in opposition to Olshausen, Luthardt, Hofmann, that it is essentially on the delineation of the fifty-third of Isaiah that this expression rests; comp. Matt. viii. 17; Luke xxii. 37; Acts viii. 32; 1 Pet. ii. 22, et seq. The complement  $\tau\omicron\upsilon$  Θεοῦ, *of God*, is the gen.

of possession ; in this sacrifice it is not man who offers and sacrifices ; it is God who gives, and who gives of His own. Comp. 1 Pet. i. 19, 20 ; Rom. viii. 32. But after all those facts have been taken into account, the need is still felt of explaining the choice of the term by some personal impression on the mind of the forerunner. And for this end it suffices to recall what must have passed between Jesus and him on occasion of the baptism. Every Israelite, before receiving this seal, required to *confess his sins* to John the Baptist (comp. Matt. iii. 6). Jesus on presenting Himself, like every other Jew, should have done what every neophyte did. How was this possible ? Not being able to confess His personal sin, He unfolded, no doubt, that of Israel, that of the world as He understood it, before the astonished view of John. This description, traced with the unequalled holiness, love, compassion, and gentleness of Jesus, must have made a deep impression on John, whose knowledge and love were beneath the level on which stood this unknown pilgrim. And no doubt it was this contrast, vividly felt between himself and Jesus, which, amid all the Messianic designations which the Old Testament might have furnished him, led him to prefer this : “ *The Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*” It is remarkable that this title *Lamb*, under which the evangelist learned to know Jesus for the first time, is that by which the Saviour is designated preferentially in the Apocalypse. The chord which had vibrated at this decisive hour within the very depths of his being, continued to vibrate within him to his latest breath.

Commentators are not at one about the meaning of the word *ἀλφειν* (*to lift, lift away*) in our passage. Some hold that it expresses the notion of expiation. In this case we must translate : “ *Who bears the sin of the world.*” Comp. Isa. liii. 4 : “ *He hath borne our griefs.*” Ver. 6 : “ *The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*” Ver. 11 : “ *He shall bear their iniquities,*” etc. Others allege, 1 John iii. 5 : “ *Ye know that Jesus Christ was manifested to take away our sins (ἵνα ἄρῃ),*” and find here rather the sanctification of the world ; they translate : “ *Who bears away the sin*” . . . If John had thought specially of the act of expiation he would probably have used the term *φέρεω, to bear*, which the LXX.

employ in the passages quoted. He is thinking, therefore, rather of the removing of sin ; but how could he forget that, agreeably to the whole fifty-third of Isaiah, to which he is referring, this end can only be reached by means of expiation ? To remove the burden from those on whom it presses, He must needs charge Himself with it. The first explanation, therefore, contains the second. The pres. part. *αἴρων*, *bearing away*, might be explained as the present of competency. But it is simpler to regard it as a historical present in this sense, that all the holy life of Jesus, from its beginning, was the condition of the efficacy of His expiatory death. In any case, this participle is in direct connection with *τοῦ Θεοῦ*, *of God* : “The Lamb whom God sends with the task of taking away.” . . .

The burden to be removed is designated in a way which is imposing and sublime : *the sin of the world*. This substantive in the singular, *the sin*, presents the apostasy of humanity in its profound unity—that is, if we may so speak, *sin in the mass*, including all the sins of all the sinners on the earth. Do they not all spring from one and the same root ? We must beware of understanding by *ἀμαρτία*, as de Wette does, *the punishment* of sin. This word embraces at once the punishment, the guilt, and the sin itself. It follows from the words : *of the world*, that the Baptist extends the influence of the Messianic work to the whole of humanity. This idea has been regarded as too universalistic in such a mouth, and set down as due to the evangelist. It is certainly astonishing to find a scruple like this raised by authors who apply the fifty-third of Isaiah to the Jewish people suffering for the *sins of the Gentiles* ! Had it not been said long before to Abraham : “In thy seed shall *all the families of the earth* be blessed” ? And did not the still more ancient promise made to Adam : “*The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent*,” contain the idea of the most absolute universalism ? The very mission of the prophets was to maintain this universalistic tendency within the bosom of theocratic particularism ; prophetism was the counterpoise put by God Himself to the exclusiveness which might be engendered by the reign of the law. And who really are *the kings and the many nations* (*Gojim rabbim*), Isa. lii. 15, who are made to exult by the

expiatory sacrifice of the servant of the Lord, if they are not Gentile kings and all the nations *of the world*? Comp. on this point the decisive and magnificent prophecy, Isa. xix. 24, 25. Are we to suppose the Baptist to have been surpassed in clearness of vision by Isaiah, he who was *more than a prophet*? And what are we to suppose the meaning of that threatening or promise which the Synoptics put into his mouth, if it signifies anything: "*God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham*"?

It has been objected to the explanation which we have just given of this verse, that the idea of a suffering Messiah was not popularly known in Israel, as is proved by the passage John xii. 34, where the people say that "the Christ abideth for ever." But the Messianic explanation of Isa. liiii. was admitted by all ancient Jewish theology. This incontestable fact excludes the supposition that the idea of a suffering Messiah was foreign to the general conviction, though the expectation of the glorious Messiah was naturally the dominant thought in the carnal mind of the people. Prophecy was full of contrasts of which it gave no solution; and the contradictory elements existed side by side in the national sentiment.

The forerunner, after describing the Messiah's work, points to the person of Jesus, in spite of its humble appearance, as corresponding to the contents of his declaration of the day before.

Ver. 30. "*This is He of whom*<sup>1</sup> *I said, After me cometh a man which preceded me; for He was before me.*" Not only does this saying apply to Jesus, now *present*, the testimony pronounced in His absence (vv. 26, 27), but it is also intended to resolve the enigma which it contained. The solution, which the forerunner now adds for the sake of the well-affected circle surrounding him, is contained in the words: *for He was before me*. The eternal pre-existence of the Messiah really explains His actual presence and action previously to the appearance of John within the bosom of the theocracy (see on ver. 15). The sense as well as the authority of the documents supports the Received reading *περί* (and not *ὑπέρ*). The word *ἀνὴρ*, *this man*, is here suggested to John by the sight of the definite person whom he has before his eyes. Lücke and Meyer

<sup>1</sup> Instead of *απὸ* (*touching*), ✨ B C and Or. (twice) read *ὑπέρ* (*in favour of*).

think that in ver. 30 the forerunner is referring not to the preceding testimony (vv. 26 and 27), but to some other previous saying, which is neither reported in our Gospel nor in the Synoptics. But is it conceivable that the evangelist, quoting two declarations, the one after the other, the second of which begins with the words: "*This is He of whom I said*" . . ., had no intention by this latter to recall the former? The error of those two commentators arises from the fact that at ver. 27 they admitted the incomplete reading of the Alex., which, by rejecting the words: *who was before me*, renders this declaration so different from that of ver. 30, that it cannot be the reproduction of the other, and all the more that the last words, added on the second occasion to explain the enigma, render the difference still greater.

In vv. 31–33 the Baptist relates the circumstances which authorize him thus to bear testimony to the redeeming mission and divine greatness of the man before him:

Ver. 31. "*And neither did I know Him: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.*"<sup>1</sup> The word *καρῶ*, and *neither I*, placed first and repeated as it is ver. 33, has necessarily a peculiar emphasis. It is related to ver. 26 ("*whom ye know not*"): "*And neither did I know Him at that time (before His baptism).*" It clearly follows from this that the words *οὐκ ᾔδειν, I knew Him not*, refer to the knowledge of Jesus as the Messiah. This meaning is likewise proved by the explanation which follows in this same verse, and which bears solely on the manner in which the Messiah was to be revealed. But, it will be asked, could John, the son of Zacharias and Elizabeth, be ignorant of the miraculous circumstances which had signaled his own birth and that of Jesus? And if he did not know them, how happens it that in Matthew's account, on seeing Jesus coming to him asking to be baptized, he answers: "*I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to me*" (iii. 14)? Who else than the Messiah could the Baptist regard as holier than himself? The first question is generally answered by saying that the accounts given by John's relatives were not sufficient to give him a *divine* certainty, such as that on which his testimony needed to rest. This answer is well founded.

<sup>1</sup> B C G L P T<sup>b</sup> A Or. reject *τω* before *υδατι*.

But there is more: John the Baptist having lived in the deserts till the time of his showing to Israel (Luke i. 80), might, no doubt, have heard his parents relate the peculiar circumstances of his birth and the birth of Mary's son. But he did not know the latter personally. Otherwise, in virtue of those very accounts, he must have known Him also as *the Messiah*. And if he did not know Him *personally*, how much less could those accounts tell upon the idea which he formed of His Messianic dignity at the hour of His baptism? And such is the full sense of the words: *I knew Him not*. Thereby alone is the testimony given to Jesus by John raised above every suspicion of partiality or arbitrariness. But then how are we to explain John's answer to Jesus in Matthew: "*I have need to be baptized of Thee*"? Must we place it, according to the Gospel of the Hebrews, and as Lücke will have it, *after* the baptism, and that in opposition to our first Gospel? It has been thought, and not without ground, that at the moment when Jesus presents Himself to John, the view of one whose countenance sin had never tarnished arrested the forerunner, and drew from him the exclamation so strangely out of keeping with his mission. We think that we can answer the objection more satisfactorily. We have already observed that, according to Matt. iii. 6 and Mark i. 5, John's baptism was preceded by confession of sin on the part of the neophyte. A confession like that which the forerunner then heard from the mouth of Jesus might easily convince him that he had to do with one who hated and condemned sin, as he had never felt and condemned it himself. Thus is explained the exclamation of John, without the necessity of supposing any previous personal relation between him and Jesus.

The logical connection between the two propositions of the verse is easily established, when it is remembered that the revelation of the Messiah to Israel implied above all His manifestation to John himself, who was charged with the mission of proclaiming Him. The Synoptics assign to the ministry of the Baptist a more general object: to prepare the people for the kingdom of God by repentance; and here a contradiction has been alleged between them and our Gospel. But the latter also admits this general object; see ver. 23:

"To make straight the way of the Lord." Only John is here concerned to set forth that which forms the culminating point of his ministry, the proclamation of the person of the Messiah. All his work rightly seems to him to be concentrated in this supreme act. The article  $\tau\omega$  before  $\upsilon\delta\alpha\tau\iota$ , erroneously rejected by the Alex., has a certain dramatic force: "If I have come baptizing with *that element* (pointing to the Jordan), it is only with the view of manifesting Him who is to baptize with a higher element." A whole scene was therefore supposed between the two propositions of ver. 31, that of the revelation of the Messiah to John himself. This blank is filled up by the following verses:

Ver. 32. "And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like<sup>1</sup> a dove, and it abode<sup>2</sup> upon Him." This declaration is introduced with special solemnity by the words: *And John bare record*. For it is here, as Hengstenberg says, that we find the *punctum saliens* of the whole ministry of John the Baptist, his Messianic testimony strictly so called. With what sense did John see? With the eye of the body, or with the inner sense? This is to ask whether the fact mentioned here passed only in the spiritual world or also in the external world. In Mark's account (i. 10, 11) it is evidently Jesus who, at the moment when He goes up from the water, sees the heavens open and the Spirit descend on Him; the same in Matthew (iii. 16, 17), whatever may be said by the majority of commentators. In Luke the narrative is completely objective: "*It came to pass . . . that the heaven was opened*" . . . (iii. 21, 22). He, moreover, remarks that the event happened in answer to the prayer of Jesus. But the Baptist is not excluded by the Synoptics from participating in the vision which John ascribes to him. Matthew's account indirectly associates him in it by the form of the divine declaration: "*This is my Son*" (not as in Mark and Luke: "*Thou art my Son*" . . .). Besides, none of the four Gospels associates any other witness with this scene. If, then, the fact transpired in the sensible world, we must hold that Jesus and John were alone at that moment, which is not improbable,

<sup>1</sup> Instead of  $\omega\sigma\tau\iota$ , which is read by T. R. with 8 Mjj.,  $\aleph$  A B C and 8 Mjj read  $\omega\varsigma$ .

<sup>2</sup>  $\aleph$  reads  $\mu\epsilon\iota\omega\sigma\tau\iota$  instead of  $\mu\epsilon\iota\omega\sigma\tau\iota$ .



as they were in the wilderness. However this may be, the fact related xii. 29 proves that an external phenomenon, even if others were present, would have produced in them only a vague wonder, and would not have had in their minds the signification which it might have for Jesus and for John himself (comp. also Acts ix. 7 and xxii. 9). As to the inward communication, it was addressed simultaneously to Jesus and to John, as is shown by the two forms of the divine address: *Thou art*, and *This is*; and the *objective* reality of the communication is definitely guaranteed by the circumstance that it was perceived at one and the same time by the two witnesses. In the following way we may conceive of the relation between the perception of Jesus and that of John: the divine communication strictly so called (the address of the Father and the communication of the Spirit) passed between God and Jesus; the latter had knowledge of the fact not only from the impression He received of it, but also from a vision which rendered it sensible to Him. John shared in this symbolical revelation of the spiritual fact. The voice, which sounded in the ear of Jesus in the form: "*Thou art my Son*," was heard by him in the form: "*This is my Son*." Neander denies that a symbolical vision could find place in the life of Jesus. But this rule is not applicable before the time of the baptism.

Here, then, we must distinguish two things: 1st, The real fact, which consisted in a new gift bestowed on Jesus, and which the narrative indicates in the words: *the Spirit descending and abiding on Him*; and 2d, The symbolical representation of the fact, intended for the consciousness of Christ Himself and for that of John, who was to bear witness of it: *the heavens opened, the form of a dove*. The divine address belongs at once to the fact itself and its sensible representation.

*Heaven*, as we behold it with the bodily eye, is the emblem of a state perfect in holiness, knowledge, power, and happiness. Consequently it is in Scripture the symbol of the place where God manifests His perfections in all their brightness, where His glory shines fully, and whence all supernatural forces and divine revelations come down. From the azure of the skies, which is rent, John sees descending a luminous form

like a *dove*, alighting and abiding on Jesus. This symbol of the Holy Spirit cannot be explained by any analogy borrowed from the Old Testament. In the Syrian religions the dove was the image of the force of nature which broods over all beings. But this analogy is too remote to explain our passage. Matt. x. 16, where Jesus says: "*Be ye harmless as doves,*" has no direct connection with the Holy Spirit. We find some passages in the Jewish doctors where the Spirit who *moved on the face of the waters* (Gen. i. 3) is associated with the Spirit of the Messiah, and compared to a dove brooding over its young without touching them (see Lücke, p. 426). This comparison, so familiar to the Jewish mind, probably explains to us the form of the divine revelation. The emblem admirably suited the decisive moment of the baptism of Jesus. In reality, the matter in question was nothing less than a new creation, the consummation of the first. Humanity was passing at that moment from the sphere of natural life into that of spiritual life, with a view to which it had been created at the first. The creating Spirit, who had, with His vivifying power, brooded over chaos to bring out of it a world full of order and harmony, was proceeding, as by a new incubation, to transform the first humanity into the kingdom of heaven. But what we have, above all, to remark here is the *organic* form which the luminous apparition takes. An organism is an indivisible whole. At Pentecost the Spirit descends in the form of "*cloven tongues*" (*διαμεριζόμεναι γλώσσαι*), which are divided among the faithful. Here is the symbol of the manner in which the Holy Spirit dwells in the church, *dividing to every man severally as He will* (1 Cor. xii. 11). But at the baptism of Jesus the fact is wholly different, and the emblem is also different. The Spirit descends upon Christ in His fulness. "*God,*" it is said, iii. 34, "*giveth Him not the Spirit by measure.*" Comp. Isa. xi. 1, 2, where the seven forms of the Spirit, enumerated in order to designate His fulness, come to rest on the Messiah. Finally, we have to remark the word *abide*, which is an exact allusion to the word *נב* in this passage of Isaiah (xi. 2). The prophets received occasional inspirations: *the hand of the Lord was upon them*. Then, retiring, the Spirit left them to themselves. So it was also with John the Baptist. But Jesus

shall not receive merely the visits of the Spirit; He is the dwelling-place of the Spirit in humanity, and the source from which He shall flow; hence the idea of *abiding* is put in close connection with that of *baptizing with the Holy Spirit* (ver. 33). The reading *ὡσεὶ*, more strongly even than *ὡς*, emphasizes the purely symbolical character of the luminous appearance. The *μένον* of the Sinait. is a correction occasioned by the preceding *καταβαῖνον*. The proposition is broken off designedly, in order to isolate and exhibit more clearly the idea of *abiding*. The construction of the acc. *ἐπ' αὐτόν* with the verb of rest *ἔμεινεν*, is dictated by the living character of the relation, as at vv. 1 and 18. Though the meaning of those symbols was evident, the Baptist feels the need of putting their signification on a yet surer ground than his own interpretation.

Ver. 33. "*And neither did I know Him: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.*" John wishes completely to banish the idea, that with his testimony he is mingling anything of his own. Not only had a sign been announced to him (ver. 31), and he had seen a sign (ver. 32), but that sign was exactly the one which had been announced. Everything like human caprice is therefore excluded from the interpretation of the sign which he gives. The repetition of the words: *And neither did I know Him*, is thus explained quite naturally. The expression *ὁ πέμψας, He that sent me*, has in it something solemn and mysterious; it evidently means God Himself, who spoke to him in the wilderness, and gave him his commission. That commission embraced—1st, The command to baptize; 2d, The promise that the Messiah should be revealed in connection therewith; 3d, The mention of the sign by which he should recognise Him; 4th, The command to point Him out to Israel. The resumption of the subject by the pronoun *ἐκεῖνος, He*, with the forcible sense which it has in John, "that one Himself, and no other," is intended to exhibit Jehovah as the being from whom everything proceeds in this testimony. The words *ἐφ' ᾧ ἂν* indicate the most unlimited possibility: "The individual, whoever he may be, on whom." The act of baptizing with

the Holy Spirit is named as the essential character of the Messiah. He can do that for which John could only prepare: the one, by the baptism of water, awakes repentance and the desire of holiness; the other, by the gift of the Holy Spirit, satisfies this desire, the most elevated within the human soul.

Vv. 32 and 33 force on us the question, "Did Jesus really *receive* anything at His baptism?" Meyer says, No, holding that this idea has no support in our gospel, and that if the Synoptics say more, it is because they contain an already altered tradition: "The real fact was solely the vision received by John the Baptist; and this vision was transformed into the event related by the Synoptics." In this view, the idea of the communication of the Spirit would be incompatible with that of the incarnation of the Logos. Lücke and de Wette think that a permanent historical fact, the development of Jesus under the influence of the Holy Spirit, was revealed to John in the passing form of the vision. According, then, to those interpreters also, Jesus received nothing at that time. John was merely made aware of the constant communion of Jesus with the Holy Spirit, in order to bear witness to it. Neander, Tholuck, Ebrard, recognise in this fact a step of progress wrought in the consciousness which Jesus had of Himself. Others—B.-Crusius, Kahnis, Luthardt, Gess—allege a real communication, but only with a view to the task which Jesus had henceforth to discharge. He received the Spirit not for Himself certainly, but for the accomplishing of His ministry, and that He might communicate to men this heavenly gift. Meyer's view as well as Lücke's is contrary not only to the narrative of the Synoptics, which is sacrificed purely and simply to a dogmatic prejudice, but also to John's. For the vision of the Baptist, if it comes from God, must correspond to something. Now John saw the Spirit not only *abiding*, but *descending*, and the one feature must have as much reality as the other. Neander's opinion is true, but defective. There was certainly effected at that time a decisive progress in the consciousness of Jesus. This is indicated by the fact of the divine address: *Thou art my Son*. But, moreover, the fact of the *descent* of the Spirit must correspond to a real gift. Finally, the opinion which admits an actual

gift, but solely in relation to the public activity of Jesus which is about to begin, is superficial. In a life so thoroughly *one* as that of Jesus was, where nothing is purely ritual, where the external is always the manifestation of the inward, the beginning of a new activity supposes a change in the inner life. If Jesus has only from the date of His baptism the power of communicating the Holy Spirit, it is because He possesses the Spirit Himself from that time quite otherwise than He possessed it formerly.

If we seize the idea of the incarnation with the same force as we see it understood and presented by Paul and John (see ver. 14 and the appendix to the prologue), it will suffice to overthrow those explanations which result from an orthodoxy more rational than biblical. If the Logos despoiled Himself of His divine state, and consented to become the subject of a truly human development,—that is to say, of the normal development originally destined for man,—the time must come for Him when, after having accomplished the task of the first Adam in the way of free obedience and love, He would see opening before Him the higher sphere of spiritual or supernatural life; and when, first of the violent who take the kingdom of heaven by violence, He would force the entrance to it for Himself and for all. Undoubtedly His whole existence had flowed past under the constant influence of the Holy Spirit who had presided over His birth. At every instar He had responded freely to the call of this divine guide, and this hourly docility had been immediately recompensed by a new spiritual impulse. The vessel was filled in proportion as it enlarged, and enlarged in proportion as it was filled. But to be under the influence of the Spirit is not to possess the Spirit (xiv. 17). With the hour of His baptism the moment came when His preceding development must pass into the ultimate state, that of His *perfect stature* (Eph. iv. 13). “*First that which is psychical,*” says Paul, 1 Cor. xv. 46, “*and afterwards that which is spiritual.*” That law must apply, if the incarnation is a reality, to the development of Jesus, even as to that of any other man. Till then the Spirit was *upon* Him (ἐπ’ αὐτό [τὸ παιδίον], Luke ii. 40); He grew under that divine influence in wisdom and grace. From His baptism onwards the Spirit becomes the principle of His psychical and

physical activity, His personal life; He can be called Himself *the Lord—the Spirit* (2 Cor. iii. 17, 18); *quickenings Spirit* (1 Cor. xv. 45).

The baptism thus constitutes a crisis in His inner life as decisive as the ascension in His outward state. The *heaven opened* represents His initiation into the knowledge of God, and His designs. The voice, *Thou art my Son*, indicates the revelation to His inmost consciousness of His personal relation to God, of His eternal dignity as Son, and thereby of the boundlessness of the divine love toward Him, and toward mankind on whom such a gift is bestowed. He comprehends fully the name Father as applied to God, and can proclaim it to the world. The Holy Spirit, now become his personal life, makes Him the principle and source of life to all men. Nevertheless, His glorification is not yet; natural life, both of the soul and body, still exists in Him as such. Only after His ascension will His soul and body be completely spiritualized (*σῶμα πνευματικόν*, 1 Cor. xv. 44).

But, it will be asked, does not the gift of the Holy Spirit repeat the work of the miraculous birth? By no means; for, in the latter case, the Holy Spirit acts only as the life-giving force in the stead and place of the paternal principle. He awakes to the activity of life the germ of a human existence deposited in the womb of Mary, and prepares for the Logos, deprived of His divine state, the instrument in which he is to realize His earthly development; in the same way as on the day of creation the human soul, the breath of God the Creator, came to inhabit the body previously prepared by God from the dust of the earth (Gen. ii. 7).

Several modern theologians, in imitation of some Fathers, think that the Logos, or the Christ, is confounded with the Spirit by John. But every one will acknowledge as certain the truth of the remark made by Lücke: "No more could it be said, on the one hand, 'The Spirit was made flesh,' than it could be said on the other, 'I saw the Logos descend on Jesus.'" The distinction, which is scrupulously respected by John even in chap. xiv.—xvi., where M. Reuss regards it as sometimes wholly effaced (*Hist. de la Chrét.* t. ii. p. 533 et seq.), is this: The Logos is the principle of objective revelation, and, after the incarnation, that revelation itself; while the

Spirit is the inner principle by which we assimilate the revelation. Hence it happens that, without the Spirit, revelation remains a dead letter to us, and Jesus a historical personage with whom we do not enter into communion. It is by the Spirit alone that we appropriate the revelation contained in the word and person of Jesus. And so, from the time that the Spirit performs His work in us, it is Jesus Himself who begins to live within us. As, through the Spirit, Jesus when on earth lived by the Father, so through the Spirit the believer lives by Jesus (vi. 57). This distinction of functions between Christ and the Spirit is firmly maintained throughout our whole gospel.<sup>1</sup> This solemn testimony given, the forerunner expresses the feeling of comfort with which the fulfilment of his great task inspires him.

Ver. 34. "*And I (myself), I have seen, and have borne record, that this is the Son of God.*"<sup>2</sup> The two perfects, *I have seen* and *I have borne record*, indicate facts accomplished once for all and remaining. The divine herald has done his work; it is for the people now to do theirs—to believe. The *ὅτι*, *that*, depends undoubtedly on both verbs. John in reality beheld in the baptism scene the divinity of Jesus. The term *Son of God* characterizes a being as representing the Deity in a peculiar function. It is applied in the Old Testament to angels, judges, kings, and finally, to the Messiah: "*Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee*" (Ps. ii. 7, 12); which does not at all mean that the mode of representation is identical in every case. An ambassador represents his sovereign, but certainly otherwise than the son of the latter, who in the case of this Sovereign represents His Father. Ver. 30 proves that the Baptist is here taking the word son in the highest sense which can be attached to it. As to his hearers, the term could only produce in them a vague impression of mysterious greatness and divine majesty. The words, *and I myself*, express very energetically the gravity of the testimony borne by the very man whom God had called to this mission.

<sup>1</sup> Hilgenfeld, identifying the descent of the Holy Spirit at the baptism with the coming of the Eon Logos into the man Jesus (according to the Valentinians), finds here a trace of Gnosticism. This idea has not the slightest support in the text.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of ο υιος του θεου,  $\aleph$  reads ο εκλεκτος του θεου. It is the only document which has this obviously untenable reading.

III. *Third Testimony.*—Vv. 35–37.

Vv. 35, 36. “*Again, the next day after, John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking upon Jesus as He walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God!*” Holy impressions, great thoughts, and an indescribable expectation, doubtless still filled, on the following day, the hearts of those who had heard the words of the forerunner. On the morrow, John was at his post, ready to continue his ministry as the Baptist. There is nothing to warrant de Wette’s supposition, that the two disciples who stood with him had not been present at the scene of the preceding day. Far from favouring this idea, the brevity of the following testimony gives it the character of a reference to that of the day before. The expression ἐκ τῶν μαθητῶν, *of his disciples*, implies that he had a considerable number of them. Of those two disciples, the one was Andrew (ver. 40); it is difficult to think that the other was not the author of the account. All the little details which follow have a special value only for him to whom they recalled the most decisive and happy hour of his life. That his person is kept anonymous, while all the other disciples are named, confirms this conclusion (Introd. p. 256 *et seq.*). There is a certain difference, in the relation of Jesus to John, between this day and the day before. Then, He came to John as to the person who was to introduce Him to future believers. Now, the testimony is borne; He has nothing more to receive from His forerunner than the souls whom His Father has prepared for Him; and, like the magnet which is passed through the sand to attract metal filings, He confines Himself to approaching the group surrounding the Baptist, to decide the *coming to Him* of some of those who compose it. The conduct of Jesus is thus perfectly intelligible, and regulated on God’s plan. The church is not torn, she is gathered from the tree of the theocracy.

As Jesus enters into the plan of God, the Baptist enters into the thought of Jesus. A tender and respectful scruple might keep the two disciples beside their old master. The Baptist himself frees them from this bond, and begins to realize the saying which from that moment becomes his motto: “*He must increase, but I must decrease.*” The term ἐμβλέψας indi-



icates a penetrating look, which searches its object to the very depths (see ver. 42). The practical meaning of John's new declaration was evidently this: "Go to Him." Otherwise, to what purpose this repetition, which adds nothing to the testimony of the day before, but, on the contrary, abridges it? Only the invitation is expressed in the indirect form of an affirmation regarding the person of Jesus; because, as Luthardt says, attachment to Jesus was to be in them a matter of liberty and personal impression, and not of obedience to their former master.

Ver. 37. "*And the two disciples heard him speak,<sup>1</sup> and they followed Jesus.*" The saying of John took the form of an exclamation rather than of a direct address to the disciples; but they understood it. It is very evident that, to the evangelist's mind, the words, "*and they followed Jesus,*" conceal under their literal sense a profoundly symbolical meaning. This first step in the following of Jesus decided their entire life; the apparently accidental bond which was that hour formed was in reality an eternal bond.

We have yet to examine three questions which have been raised by criticism in regard to those testimonies of the forerunner.

I. Baur and Keim<sup>2</sup> allege that the narrative of the fourth Gospel is so planned as to exclude, by its silence, the fact of the baptism of Jesus by John; and that because it would have been contrary to the dignity of the Logos to receive the Holy Spirit. Hilgenfeld frankly acknowledges the opposite (*Einv.* pp. 702 and 719): "The baptism of Jesus," he says, "is *assumed*, not related. . . . It is not related, but mentioned as an accomplished fact, in the Baptist's second testimony, ver. 31 et seq." It is *assumed* in reality by vv. 32 and 33, for the meaning of the divine sayings quoted in them is to this effect: "Among the Israelites who shall present themselves for thy baptism, one will appear on whom, *while baptizing Him*, thou shalt see the Spirit descend. He it is . . ." Holtzmann has recognised the inevitable bearing of this passage.<sup>3</sup> But the fact is not *related*, it is true. Why? We have given the reason: because the starting-point of the narrative is posterior to this event. But if the forerunner, in the testimonies quoted by John, declares only what is *personal* to him in the baptism scene, it is not because the evangelist wishes

<sup>1</sup>  $\aleph$  and B place *αυτου* before *λαλουτος*.

<sup>2</sup> Keim (i. p. 520): "The fourth Gospel wholly ignores a baptism of Jesus by John."

<sup>3</sup> *Zeitschr.* of Hilgenfeld, 1872, p. 156 et seq.

thereby to deny the truth of the synoptical accounts ; it is because the one concern of the Baptist here was to *authenticate* the so important theocratic act, which he was carrying through in bearing Messianic testimony to Jesus. With this intention he had nothing else to mention than what he had *seen himself*. The correlation of the two *κἀγώ*, and *I*, vv. 31 and 33, with that of ver. 34, clearly reveals this intention. As to the theory of the Logos in our Gospel, if it had the import ascribed to it by Baur and Keim, it would exclude from the history of Jesus many other facts which are, nevertheless, related at full length by our evangelist.

II. It has been thought inconceivable, that after such a sign and such declarations the Baptist could have addressed this question to Jesus from the depths of his prison : “ *Art thou He that should come, or do we look for another ?* ” (Matt. xi. 3.) Strauss has drawn from this apparent contradiction an argument for denying the baptism scene. It is of course impossible to allow the view of some Fathers, who think that the forerunner only wished to strengthen the faith of his disciples by eliciting from Jesus the positive declaration of His Messianic character. The terms of the synoptical narrative will not bear this meaning. With more reason, one might allege, as Meyer does, the depression into which the sufferings of the prison had brought the forerunner ; or say, with Lücke, that John could not understand the patient and humble course of the work of Jesus ; and finally add, with Bäumlein, that besides the prophet there was yet in John the natural man, and that to the day of the former there might succeed the day of the latter. We may give, and, with Beyschlag and Keim himself, we ought to give, weight to the expressions of Jesus relative to John, which prove that there had been really in him at a given time a lively faith in Jesus, followed by a relapse more or less serious,—a relapse precisely characterized by the saying of Jesus : *to be offended in me* (Matt. xi. 6). Yet, with all that, we feel that at bottom a difficulty remains ; unless, with Keim, we so reduce what took place between John and Jesus at the Jordan, that it amounts to almost nothing at all. Let us seek to find a more satisfactory solution. And—1st, Let us recognise that John’s faith in the divine mission of Jesus, even when he addressed Him with this question, remained intact. What proves this is that it is *He* whom he asks. His superior dignity to his own, and the reality of His mission, are not even then a matter of doubt with John. 2d, Let us remember what we said (ver. 31) of the dubiety which characterized the prevalent opinion relatively to the *prophet* like unto Moses, who should precede the Messiah, according to Deut. xviii. 18. Some identified him with the Messiah Himself (comp. John vi. 14, 15 : “ This is of a truth that prophet . . . They would come and take Him to *make Him a King* ” ) ; others distinguished those two personages, regarding the latter only as the Christ properly so called, *the King* in the political sense. These no doubt ascribed the *spiritual* side of the national restoration to the first, and the realization of the great *political* programme to the second. John, proceeding originally on the first view, which from vi. 14, 15 seems

to have been the most widely spread, had ascribed both offices to Jesus. But, while watching from the depths of his prison the slow and modest progress of the Messianic work as He was conducting it (*τὰ ἔργα τοῦ Χριστοῦ*, *the works of the Christ*, Matt. xi. 2), he began to question whether the second interpretation of the prophecy was not the true one, and whether the two functions were not distinct,—the one, that of the spiritual Messiah, bringing pardon and the gift of the Holy Spirit to Israel, and accompanying this holy activity only with unobtrusive miracles; the other, that of the political Messiah, establishing on this religious and moral foundation, once laid, the external kingdom, the Israelitish monarchy, and that by manifest judgments and acts of power of an entirely different nature. Jesus would thus not have ceased to possess in the eyes of John the Messianic dignity, the sign of which he had beheld at His baptism. The only question with him would be, whether Jesus was the only one, or whether after Him there would come a second, charged with the other part of the work. This is precisely what is expressed by the form of the question in Matthew: “Do we wait (not *for another*, *ἄλλον*, but for) a second, *ἕτερον*?”—an expression which implicitly recognises the Messianic character belonging to Jesus.<sup>1</sup> 3d, This distinction of the two Messianic functions, mistaken by John, was not a wholly false solution. Does it not correspond substantially to the difference between the Lord's first and second advent? To the one belong salvation and the sending of the Spirit; to the other, judgment and the kingdom. The Jewish literati were led, like John, by the apparently contradictory prophecies of the Old Testament, to a distinction analogous to that which presented itself to the mind of the prisoner of Machærus. Buxtorf (*Lexicon Chaldaic*, p. 1273) and Eisenmenger (*Entdeckt. Judenth.* p. 744 et seq.) quote a number of rabbinical passages distinguishing two messiahs, the one called the *son of Joseph*, or Ephraim, “to whom they ascribe the predicted humiliations of the Messiah;” the other, whom they name the *son of David*, “to whom they refer the prophecies of glory.” The former will make war, and perish,—to him belong sufferings; the latter will raise him up, and shall live eternally. “Those who shall escape the

<sup>1</sup> The expectation of a great prophet, who is not expressly designated as the Messiah, may be established from the writing, entitled the *Assumption of Moses*, composed in the years following the death of Herod the Great (comp. Wieseler, *Stud. u. Kritiken*, 1868, and Schürer, *Lehrbuch*, etc., p. 540). In this work, which contains the most faithful picture of the spiritual state of the Jewish people at the very date of the birth of Jesus, there is announced (c. 14, trans. Latin, published by Ceriani) the coming of a *supreme messenger*, *nuntius in summo constitutus*, whose hands shall be filled, to work out the people's deliverance. Moses himself receives only the name of *great messenger*, *magnus nuntius* (c. 18). This envoy will therefore be the final prophet, a Moses raised to the highest power. No other royal and Messianic title is ascribed to him. And it is even probable that the author, who was a zealot, did not admit a personal Messiah, and rather expected a kingdom of God which should be organized as a democracy (Schürer, p. 571).

sword of the former, shall fall under that of the latter." "The one shall not bear envy against the other, *juxta fidem nostram*," says Jarchi finally (*ad Jes. xi. 13*). These last words attest the high antiquity of this idea.

III. M. Renan (*Vie de Jésus*, p. 108 et seq.) draws a fancy sketch of the relation between "those two young enthusiasts, full of the same hopes and hates, who could make common cause and mutually support one another." Jesus arrives from Galilee with "a small school already formed,"—where did the writer find any such thing either in John or the Synoptics? it is historical divination;—John gives a full welcome to "this swarm of young Galileans," though they do not attach themselves to him, and form a separate group round Jesus. "There are not many examples, it is true," remarks M. Renan himself, "of the head of a school eagerly welcoming the person who is to succeed"—or rather supplant him. But "is not youth capable of any self-sacrifice?"—No; the manner in which the Baptist, at the moment when his star is most brightly in the ascendant, retires all at once, to leave the field open to one younger than he, and till then wholly obscure, is not to be explained by the natural generosity of youth. Conscious of his divine mission, John could not retire except before the divine revelation of a higher mission. The Baptist's conduct in relation to Jesus, as attested by our four evangelists, remains, to the historian who does not here recognise the work of God, an insoluble problem. Before closing, a word more on a fancy of Keim's. This critic alleges (i. p. 525) that, contrary to the Synoptic narrative (comp. especially Luke iii. 21), our Gospel makes Jesus *the first* of all who appear at the baptism of John.<sup>1</sup> He forgets to quote his proof. We have established that John i. 19–28 assumes the priority of the baptism of Jesus and of the Baptist's ministry in the Synoptics. But *sic volo, sic jubeo!*

## SECOND SECTION.

### I. 38–51.—BEGINNINGS OF THE WORK OF JESUS.—

#### BIRTH OF FAITH.

The testimony related in the first section was the condition of faith. We now see the birth of faith itself. It was in the outset the acceptance of divine testimony. But testimony is only a provisional bond between the believer and the object of faith. Faith only becomes living in the heart by direct contact with its object. That this contact may be effected, Jesus must manifest Himself to it; and then, from being

<sup>1</sup> "Das vierte Evangelium kehrt die Dinge um, und lässt Jesum zuerst auf der Stelle sein."

living, it immediately becomes fruitful. The believer in his turn bears witness, and thus becomes the link of union between new hearts and Jesus. Such is the significance of the following narratives. They fall into two groups: the first, embracing what refers to the three earliest disciples, Andrew, John, and Peter (vv. 38-42); the second, what relates to Philip and Nathanael (vv. 43-51).

### I. *First Group.*—Vv. 38-42.

We have just named John. Almost all the adversaries of the authenticity of our Gospel themselves own that the author, in writing as he does here, wishes to pass himself off as an apostle. Even Hilgenfeld says: "Andrew and an anonymous person, who is assuredly John."

Ver. 38. "*Then<sup>1</sup> Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto Him, Rabbi (which is to say, being interpreted, Master), where dwellest Thou?*" Jesus, hearing steps behind Him, turns round. He sees the two youths following, with the desire of accosting Him, but without venturing to take the first word. He anticipates them: "*What seek ye?*" This question, like so many other concise and profound sayings of Jesus contained in this piece, has a meaning beyond its immediate sense. He who puts the question knows that the seeking of Israel and the sighs of humanity tend to Him. The disciples, by replying: "*Master, where dwellest Thou?*" modestly express their desire of speaking with Him in private. The title *Rabbi* is undoubtedly much inferior to that which the testimony of John revealed to them as His due. But for the moment they would not dare to use another. And this title expresses, further, in a delicate way their intention to offer themselves as His disciples. The translation of the name, added by the evangelist, proves that the author writes for Greek readers.

Ver. 39. "*He saith unto them, Come and see.<sup>2</sup> They came and saw where He dwelt, and abode with Him that day: it was about the tenth hour.*" The disciples asked Him where His

<sup>1</sup> 6 Mj. and 30 Mnn. reject *de*.

<sup>2</sup> T. R. reads *dece*, with *de* A and 13 other Mj., almost all the Mnn. It. Vg. Cop.; while B C L, some Mnn. Syr. and Or. read *dece*.

abode was, that they might visit Him there; Jesus invites them to follow Him at once (*ἔρχεσθε*, imper. pres.): "Come now." The reading of the Vaticanus: "Come and ye shall see," is unnatural. There is no ground for resting so much on the idea of seeing. Where did Jesus dwell? In some grotto on the bank of the Jordan, or in a caravansary, or in a friend's house? We cannot tell. As little do we know what was the subject of their conversation. But we know its result. The exclamation of Andrew, given ver. 41, is the enthusiastic expression of the effect produced on the two disciples. When we consider what the Messiah was in the mind of a Jew, we understand how profound must have been the impression received, to lead them without hesitation to proclaim this poor and unpretending man to be the Messiah. In the remark: "and abode with Him that day," there is expressed all the sweetness of that memory which was still living in the heart of the evangelist at the time when he wrote. The *tenth hour* may be understood in two ways: either as four o'clock in the afternoon, if we reckon the hours here as they were generally reckoned among the ancients, beginning with six o'clock in the morning,—we shall see that this is the most natural interpretation of the passages iv. 6, 52, and even xix. 14; or as ten in the morning, if we reckon according to the practice of the Roman Forum, which has passed to modern nations, starting from midnight. Rettig and Ebrard have attempted to apply this mode of reckoning to John's Gospel. If, at the first glance, the second explanation better accounts for the words, *that day*; on the other hand, this expression is harmonized with the former by the contrast which it forms with the idea of a simple visit, such as the two young men had proposed to make to Jesus. Instead thereof, the conversation was prolonged to the end of the day.<sup>1</sup> This notice has sometimes been applied

<sup>1</sup> To the kindness of M. André Cherbuliez we owe the following notices: Ælius Aristides, a Greek Sophist of the second century, a contemporary of Polycarp, whom he may have met in the streets of Smyrna, relates in his *Sacred Discourses* (book 5), that on his arrival in the city he had a dream during the night, in which the sun, rising over the public square, ordered him to hold that same day a declamatory *séance* in the common hall at *four o'clock*. This hour could only be, according to the manner of the ancients, *ten o'clock in the morning*, the hour which Xenophon calls that of the *πλήθυνα ἀγορά*, in which the whole population frequents the public square. So he found the hall quite filled. In the

to the time when they *left* Jesus, not to that when they entered His abode. But in this case John would certainly have added *ὅτε ἀπῆλθον*, *when they went away*. It is the hour at which he *found*, not that at which he *left*, that the author meant to indicate. Faith is no sooner born of testimony, than it propagates itself by the same means.

Vv. 40, 41. "*One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He first<sup>1</sup> findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias (which is, being interpreted, Christ).*" The author at this point of the narrative names his companion Andrew. He designates him at the same time as Simon Peter's brother. It might be thought that he does so simply with a view to the calling of Peter, which is about to be related; but comp. vi. 8, where the same thing is repeated, and where it is impossible to allege a motive of this kind. The fact is remarkable. For Simon Peter has not yet figured in the narrative. Peter is therefore treated from the first as the most important personage. Let it also be remarked, that this mode of designating Andrew supposes the Gospel history to be already known to his readers. Did Peter's visit to Jesus take place the same evening? The affirmative follows almost necessarily, from the exact enumeration of the days in this piece. See *the next day*, vv. 29, 35, 43, and also ii. 1. The two disciples left Jesus for some moments, and Peter, brought by Andrew, might find Him yet before night.

How are we to explain the expressions "*first*" and "*his own brother*"? These words have always presented a difficulty to commentators. In reality, they contain a slight mystery, like others in which the narrative of John, at once so subtle and simple, abounds. It is ordinarily supposed that the two first book, God having commanded him to take a bath, he chose the *sixth* hour as the most favourable to health. Now it was winter, and it was a cold bath which was in question. The hour was therefore *mid-day*. What leaves no room for doubt on this head is, that he says to his friend Bassus, who keeps him waiting: "*Seest thou the shadow is already turning?*" The custom of the Greeks of Asia Minor at this period is therefore well established by those instances. Langen has alleged a passage of the *Acts* of Polycarp's martyrdom (c. 7). But this passage appears to us insufficient to prove the opposite of the fact, which comes out so clearly from the words of the Greek rhetorician.

<sup>1</sup> Instead of the Received reading *πρῶτος*, A B M T<sup>b</sup> Π, some Mss. Syr. read

disciples went in search of Simon each his own way, and that it was Andrew who succeeded first in finding him. But the adj. τὸν ἴδιον ("his own brother") would in this case be only a periphrasis for the possessive pron. *his* (Lücke, de Wette, Baumlein). He was first in finding, because he knew better the habits of *his* own brother. This explanation is far from natural. The relation of the two epithets is explained more simply, and the delicacy of the expression appears still better, if we hold that the two disciples set themselves to seek *each his own* brother—that is, the one Peter, the other James. Of the two, Andrew was the first who succeeded in finding *his*. From this sense it follows that James had come with John, even as Peter with Andrew, to the baptism of the forerunner. James is not named, as John himself is not, and as we shall find that their mother, Salome, is not (xix. 25). This delicate touch in the narrative, which reveals the endeavour of the anonymous disciple to find his brother also, is an inimitable evidence of his identity with the author of the Gospel. The reading *πρῶτος* is fully justified by this interpretation. The *πρῶτον* is either an awkward correction, or a mistake arising from the τὸν which follows. The term *Messiah* (from מָשִׁיחַ, *to anoint*) was very popular; it was used even in Samaria (iv. 25). The translation *Χριστός* again supposes Greek readers. John had twice employed the Greek term *Χριστός* directly (vv. 20–25); but here he reproduces the Hebrew title, as he had done at ver. 38, and as we shall find him doing again, iv. 25, to preserve the dramatic character of his narrative.

Ver. 42. "And<sup>1</sup> he brought him to Jesus. Jesus looked on him, and said, *Thou art Simon the son of Jona:*<sup>2</sup> *thou shalt be called Cephas, which is, by interpretation, a stone.*" The pres. *he findeth*, and *he saith* (ver. 41), were descriptive; the Aor. *he brought*, expresses the rapidity with which this act followed the finding. The look signified by ἐμβλέπειν, denotes that penetrating glance which reaches to the very source of the individuality. This word explains the following apostrophe. Jesus has penetrated to Simon's natural character, and discovered in it the elements of the future Peter. We need not

<sup>1</sup> N B L reject καὶ before ηγγισεν.

<sup>2</sup> N B L It<sup>al</sup> Cop. read ἰωα σου instead of ἰωα, which is read in all the other Mss. and in almost all the vss.



suppose that Jesus knew the names of Simon and his father *miraculously*. Andrew, on presenting his brother, must have named him to Jesus. Instead of *Jona*, we should probably read *John*; the Received reading is undoubtedly a correction taken from Matt. xvi. 17, where the word 'Ιωνᾶ can only be an abbreviation of 'Ιωάννου. A change of name generally characterizes a change of life or position. Gen. xvii. 5: "*Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram (exalted father), but Abraham (father of a multitude).*" Gen. xxxii. 28: "*Thy name shall be called no more Jacob (supplanter), but Israel (conqueror of God, in lawful combat).*" The Aramaic word cepha, כֶּפֶה (Hebrew, קֶבֶה), signifies *rock*. By this name Jesus characterizes Simon as one strong and decided enough to be the support of the new world which He is about to create. There was assuredly, in the physiognomy of this young fisherman, accustomed as he was to brave the dangers of his profession, an expression of masculine energy and power of origination. By bestowing on him a new name, Jesus takes possession of him, and consecrates him, with all his natural qualities, to the work which He will confide to him.

Baur regards this passage as a fiction borrowed from Matt. xvi. 18, and placed here to exhibit in Jesus the omniscience of the Logos. But the ἐμβλέψας, *having beheld him (fixedly)*, is not in keeping with such an intention; and as to the saying: "*Thou art Peter,*" Matt. xvi., it proceeds on the very supposition of a preceding one, in which Jesus conferred on him this surname. Each time Jesus starts from what is, to announce what is to be; here: *thou art Simon*, thou shalt be Peter; in Matthew: *thou art Peter*, thou shalt be what the name denotes. Proceeding on the fact that Peter is here mentioned third, Hilgenfeld, acting the part of prosecutor, argues for the conviction on which he is bent, saying: "*Peter is thus deprived by John of the position of the first called!*" And thus he finds a proof of the evangelist's ill-will to this apostle. As if the very designation given to Andrew (ver. 40), his eagerness to seek Simon, and the noble surname given to the latter, without any such honour being bestowed on the two others, did not at once make Simon the principal personage after Jesus! Comp. besides, vi. 68 and xxi. 15-19.

A contradiction has been alleged between this account and

that of the calling of the same disciples in Galilee, following on the miraculous draught (Matt. iv. 18-22; Mark i. 16-20; Luke v. 1-11). De Wette, Brückner, and even Meyer, regard reconciliation as wholly impossible; they decide for the narrative of the fourth Gospel. According to Baur, on the contrary, it is our account which is a fictitious composition. Lücke thinks that the two narratives may be harmonized. John's, referring to the calling of the disciples to *faith*; that of the Synoptics, to their vocation as *preachers* of the gospel, according to the saying: "*I will make you fishers of men.*" The first opinion seems to us to be untenable. If the two accounts narrated the same fact, altered in the Synoptics, how should everything be so completely different in the two scenes? The place: here, Judea; there, Galilee. The time: here, the first days of the ministry of Jesus; there, a later period. The persons: in the Synoptics there is no mention either of Philip or Nathanael; on the other hand, James, who is not named here, is expressly mentioned there. The situation: here, a purely simple meeting; there, a fishing. Finally, the mode: here, a spontaneous attachment; there, an imperative call. If the two accounts refer to the same event, Baur's opinion is in reality the more natural. The only difficulty is to explain how the author of the fourth Gospel, in face of the synoptical tradition received throughout all the church, could attempt of all things to create a new history of the calling of the principal apostles! Lücke's opinion is therefore the only admissible one. It is in itself perfectly probable. After having returned to Galilee (ver. 44), we know that Jesus went back for a time to the bosom of His own family, which transferred its domicile to Capernaum (Matt. iv. 13; John ii. 12; comp. Mark iii. 31). Why may He not have left His disciples also to return to the bosom of their families (Peter was married), to summon them at a later date to accompany Him in His ministry? The very readiness with which the young fishers follow His call in the Synoptics, forsaking at His first word their family and work to associate with Him, implies previous relations between Jesus and them. The synoptical account thus assumes that of John instead of excluding it. The narrative of the Synoptics having for its main subject the public ministry of Jesus, their writings could

not omit so important a fact as the calling of His oldest disciples to the ministry of preaching. The fourth Gospel, describing rather the development of apostolic faith, required, on the contrary, to put into relief the scene which we have just been studying; for it had been the point of departure in this development. The solution of most questions relating to the harmony of the Gospel writings, depends on the exact determination of the special aim of each of them.

## II. *Second Group.*—Vv. 43–51.

The following account seems to be composed, by its conciseness, to baffle him who attempts to explain the events from an external point of view. Does ver. 43 express the *intention* only to set out for Galilee? Or does it indicate a real departure? Where and how did Jesus find Philip and Nathanael? Were they also in Judea among the disciples of John the Baptist? Or did He meet them on His arrival in Galilee? Evidently an account like this can proceed only from a man preoccupied above all with the spiritual element in the history which he relates, and who consequently merely sketches as slightly as possible the external side of events. Such is the general character of the narrative of the fourth Gospel.

Vv. 43 and 44. "*The day following He<sup>1</sup> would go forth into Galilee, and findeth Philip; and Jesus saith unto him, Follow me. Now Philip was of Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter.*" The natural meaning of the Aor. ἠθέλησεν, *would (willed)*, is to denote a realized wish. The words: "*He would go, and He findeth,*" are therefore equivalent to: "*At the moment when He decided to go, He findeth . . .*" The simple juxtaposition of propositions is frequently found in John (Introd. p. 189). This mode of expression cannot be reconciled with the idea that Jesus did not meet Philip till later, on the way to or in Galilee. Philip was in the same quarter with Andrew, John, and Peter, and no doubt for the same reason. It was important for Jesus to surround Himself chiefly with men who had undergone the preparation got from the ministry and baptism of John. The notice of ver. 44 is

<sup>1</sup> T. R. here reads ο Ἰησοῦς with 5 Byz., and rejects it with four of them in the following proposition.

introduced here to indicate that it was through the instrumentality of the two brothers, Andrew and Peter, that Philip was brought into contact with Jesus. On the other hand, the term *He findeth*, is incompatible with the idea that they had positively brought him. At the time of starting, Jesus probably found him conversing with his two friends; on which he invited him to join Him along with them. The words: "*Follow me*," therefore simply signify: "Accompany me on this journey." But Jesus knew well what would result from this bond once formed; and it is impossible to suppose that this invitation had not in His view a higher bearing. The verb *ἠθέλησεν*, denoting a deliberate resolution, leads us to ask what was the motive which decided Jesus to start for Galilee. Hengstenberg thinks that He wished to act in accordance with the prophecies, pointing to Galilee as the theatre of the Messianic ministry. This explanation would give an artificial air to the conduct of Jesus. According to others, He wished to keep His sphere of action apart from that of the Baptist; or, yet more, to remove from the seat of the hierarchy, which had just shown itself unfavourably disposed toward His forerunner. The subsequent narrative, ii. 12–22, leads to another solution. Jesus must inaugurate His Messianic ministry at Jerusalem. But for that He must await the solemn period of the feast of Passover. Previously, therefore, He resolved to repair to His family, and so close the first part of His earthly existence, the period of his private life.

Ver. 45. "*Philip findeth Nathanael, and saith unto him, We have found Him of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth,<sup>1</sup> the son of Joseph.*" The part taken by Philip in the calling of Nathanael is like that of Andrew in the calling of Peter, and of Peter and Andrew in that of Philip. One lighted torch serves to light another; and thus faith is propagated. Luthardt finely points out the dull and complicated form of Philip's profession, those long considerations, that Messianic certificate in full form, which contrasts with the lively and unembarrassed style of Andrew's profession (ver. 41). The same characteristics reappear vi. 1–13, and perhaps also xii. 21, 22. From the fact that

<sup>1</sup> T. R. with E F G H K M U V Γ Δ Η: Ναζαρεθ; ⚭ A B L X: Ναζαριτ; Δ: Ναζαρεθ; Θ: Ναζαρε (see my *Comm. on Gospel of Luke*, 2d ed. vol. i. pp. 88, 89).

Philip designates Jesus as the *son of Joseph* and a native of *Nazareth*, Strauss, de Wette, and others conclude that the fourth evangelist did not know or did not allow the miraculous origin of Jesus and His birth at Bethlehem: as if it were the evangelist and not Philip who was speaking here; and as if, after exchanging a dozen words with Jesus, Philip could have been in full possession of the most intimate circumstances of His birth and infancy! Andrew and Peter could not have informed him, for they were ignorant of them themselves. The place of Nathanael's calling is not indicated. The most probable supposition is, that Jesus and His disciples met him on the journey. Philip, who was his fellow-citizen, —Nathanael was a Galilean, of Cana (xxi. 2),—became the link of union between Jesus and him. Nathanael was perhaps returning home from the vicinity of John the Baptist; or he might be going, like all his devout fellow-countrymen, to be baptized by him. He had just been resting for some moments under the shade of a fig-tree, when he met Jesus and his companions (comp. ver. 48). There is no ground for Ewald's supposition, that the meeting took place at Cana. The very circumstantial account of Nathanael's calling leads to the belief that he was afterwards one of the apostles; this is the case with all the disciples mentioned in this passage. This appears further from xxi. 2, where the apostles are distinguished from simple disciples, and where Nathanael is placed among the former. As this name does not figure in the lists of the apostles (Matt. x. 3; Mark iii. 18; Luke vi. 14; Acts i. 13), it is generally held that Nathanael is no other than Bartholomew, whose name is joined with Philip's in almost all those catalogues. Bartholomew being only a patronymic (son of Tolmai or Ptolemy), there is no difficulty in this supposition. As to Späth's hypothesis, that Nathanael is a symbolical name (the word signifies *gift of God*), invented by the later author to designate the Apostle John, it is one of those fancies of modern criticism which does not even need to be refuted by its incompatibility with xxi. 2.

Ver. 46. "*And Nathanael said unto him, Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth? Philip saith unto him, Come and see.*" According to Meyer, Nathanael's answer alludes to the reputation for immorality which attached to the town of

Nazareth; according to Lücke and de Wette, to the smallness of the place. But there is no historical evidence that Nazareth was a place of worse fame, or less esteemed, than any other township of Galilee. Nathanael's answer requires no such suppositions. Is it not much better to connect this answer with the saying of Philip? Nathanael, not remembering any prophecy which assigns to Nazareth so important a part, is astonished; all the more because Cana is only a league distant from Nazareth, and because it is difficult for him to imagine this little neighbouring village raised all at once to so lofty a destiny. Every one knows the petty jealousies which frequently exist between village and village. The expression, *any good thing*, is evidently a litotes: "anything so eminent as such a personage." Here we observe for the first time a peculiarity in the narrative of John. It seems that the author takes pleasure in recalling certain objections to the Messianic dignity of Jesus, leaving them without any reply, because every reader acquainted with the Gospel history made short work of them at the moment; comp. vii. 27, 35, 42, etc. At the time when John wrote, every one knew that Jesus was not really of Nazareth. Philip's answer, "*Come and see*," is at once the simplest and profoundest apologetics. To every upright heart Jesus proves Himself by showing Himself. This rests on the truth expressed in ver. 9. Comp. iii. 21.

Ver. 47. "*Jesus saw*<sup>1</sup> *Nathanael coming to Him, and saith of him, Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!*" Nathanael is one of those upright men who have only to see Jesus to believe in Him; Philip knows it well. Jesus also, on seeing him, recognises and signalizes this quality in him. Searching him with His glance, as He searched Simon, He makes this reflection aloud *in regard to him* (περὶ αὐτοῦ): "*Behold . . .*" We may refer the adverb ἀληθῶς, *indeed*, either to ἴδε: "*Behold really*," or to Ἰσραηλιτῆς: "*A man who is truly an Israelite*." In the former case, the words, *in whom there is no guile*, would have no relation to the national Israelitish character, and would refer to Nathanael's personal character. In the second case, they would, on the contrary, define the notion of the true Israelite. This second sense is more natural, both grammatically and logically, and it corre-

<sup>1</sup> R alone reads ἴδεν . . . λαλῶν.

sponds better to the importance of the title *Israelite*, and to the original meaning of the name. The name of *Israel* (*conqueror of God*), as is known, was substituted for that of *Jacob* (*supplanter*), which indicates deceit and trickery, to characterize the triumph of righteousness in the patriarch in consequence of his wrestling with the Lord. The lawful struggle with God, by means of humiliation and prayer (Hos. xii. 4, 5), replaced the use of perverse means. The absence of guile is therefore the character of his true spiritual descendants.

Ver. 48. "*Nathanael saith unto Him, Whence knowest thou me? Jesus answered and said unto him, Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig-tree, I saw thee.*" This reply, in which Nathanael seems to appropriate to himself such a eulogy, has been criticised as wanting in modesty. But he wishes simply to know on what ground Jesus judges him thus. If account is taken of the extraordinary effect produced on Nathanael by the answer of Jesus (ver. 49), it must contain in his view the proof of a supernatural knowledge which Jesus has of him. Lücke connects this knowledge solely with the inward state of Nathanael. Meyer, on the contrary, applies it only to the external fact of his sitting under the fig-tree. But if we are to understand the relation of this saying of Jesus, on the one hand to His previous declaration (ver. 47), on the other to Nathanael's exclamation (ver. 49), it is indispensable to conjoin both views. Not only does Nathanael recognise that he was seen by Jesus in a place where His natural sight could not reach, but he feels that this stranger's eye has penetrated him to his inmost depths, and that it is only in virtue of this penetration that He can give him the title with which He has just accosted him. If Nathanael was preparing to receive the baptism of repentance, serious thoughts must have filled his heart. What had passed in him at that period of self-concentration? Had he made the loyal confession of some sin to God (Ps. xxxii. 1, 2), or taken a holy resolution—made a vow, for example, to repair some wrong? However that may be, on hearing the word of Jesus, he feels himself penetrated by a look which must somehow participate in the omniscience of God Himself.

The words, *being under the fig-tree*, may refer grammatically either to what precedes: "before that Philip called thee under

the fig-tree," or to what follows: "I saw thee under the fig-tree." The second is the more natural sense: the situation in which Jesus saw him is more important than that in which Philip called him. The construction of ὑπό, followed by the acc. (τῆν συκῆν), with the verb of rest, is explained by the fact that to the local relation there is joined the moral notion of taking refuge. I saw, denotes a view like that of Elisha (2 Kings v.). In Jesus, as in the prophets, there was a higher vision, which may be regarded as a partial association with the perfect vision of God. At this word Nathanael feels himself penetrated with a ray of divine light.

Ver. 49. "Nathanael answered and saith unto Him,<sup>1</sup> Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel." By the title *Son of God*, he expresses the transport which seized him on the discovery of this intimate relation between Jesus and God, of which he has just had experience. Lücke, Meyer, and most others, hold that this title is here the equivalent of *Messiah*. They think this proved by the following term: *the King of Israel*. But this is the very circumstance which excludes the alleged synonymy. If the two titles had the same meaning, the second would require at least to be joined to the former in the way of simple apposition, while the repetition of the pron. and verb σὺ εἶ, *Thou art*, before the second title, excludes this synonymy, which, besides, would only amount to an awkward tautology. And further, the title *Messiah* does not express with liveliness and freshness the immediate impression experienced by Nathanael. From its very nature it is the product of an act of reflection, and could only occur here second. To speak generally, we believe that this equivalency of the two terms, *Son of God*, and *Messiah*, has no existence, and that it is impossible to quote a single valid example of it. It is one of those numerous traditional fictions which should be summarily disposed of by a correct exegesis. The word *Son of God* expresses in the mouth of Nathanael the feelings, still very vague, it is true, but immediately resulting from what has just passed, of an exceptional relation between Jesus and God. But vague as this impression is, it is nevertheless rich and full, like everything which is matter of feeling, more even, perhaps, than if it were already

<sup>1</sup> B L reject καὶ λέγει αὐτῷ; S reads καὶ εἶπεν.



reduced to a dogmatic formula. As Luthardt observes: "Nathanael's faith will never possess *more* than it embraces at this moment," the living person of Jesus. It will only be able to possess it more distinctly. The gold-seeker puts his hand on an ingot; when he has coined it, he has it better, but not more. The two titles complete one another: *Son of God* bears on the relation of Jesus to God; *King of Israel*, on His relation to the chosen people. The second title is the logical consequence of the first. The personage who lives in so intimate a relation to God, can only be, as is alleged, the *King of Israel*, the Messiah. This second title corresponds to that of *Israelite indeed*, with which Jesus had saluted Nathanael. The faithful subject has recognised and salutes his King. Jesus is conscious that He has just taken the first step in a new career, that of miraculous signs, of which His life till then had been completely destitute; and His answer breathes the most elevated feeling of the greatness of the occasion.

Ver. 50. "*Jesus answered and said unto him, Because I said unto thee that<sup>1</sup> I saw thee under the fig-tree, thou believest; thou shalt see<sup>2</sup> greater things than these.*" Since the time of Chrysostom, most commentators (Lücke, Meyer, etc.), editors, and translators (Tischendorf, Rilliet) give to the words, *Thou believest*, an interrogative sense. They put into this question either the tone of surprise (Meyer), because of a faith so quickly formed, or even that of rebuke (de Wette), as if Nathanael had believed before having sufficient proofs. The answer of Jesus has, however, more dignity when it is taken as an affirmation. Jesus recognises and approves the nascent faith of Nathanael; He congratulates him upon it; but He promises him a succession of miraculous manifestations rising in wonder, of which he and his fellow-disciples shall be witnesses, and which shall develop his new-born faith. This saying proves that from that day Nathanael remained with Jesus. Till now, Jesus had spoken to Nathanael alone: "*Thou believest; . . . thou shalt see.*" What He now declares concerns all present.

Ver. 51. "*And He saith unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto*

<sup>1</sup> N A B G L, Syr., etc., read *οτι* before *ειδον*.

<sup>2</sup> T. B. reads *οψει* (Attic form). All the Mjjs., with the exception of U R, read *οψει*.

*pu*, *From this time forward*<sup>1</sup> *ye shall see heaven open, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man.*" We meet for the first time with the formula, *Amen, amen*, which is found twenty-five times in John (Meyer), and nowhere else in the N. T. Thence is derived the title of Jesus, *The Amen* (Rev. iii. 14). This word (from אָמֵן, *firmum fuit*) is, properly speaking, a verbal adjective, *firm, worthy of faith*; it is used as a substantive (Isa. lxv. 16): בִּגְלוֹתֵי אֱמֶת, "by the God of truth." It also becomes an adverb in a great number of O. T. passages, to signify, with a declaration: that remains sure; with a promise: let it be realized! This adverb is doubled, as in John, in the two following passages: Num. v. 22: "*Then the woman* (accused of adultery) *shall answer, Amen, amen;*" Neh. viii. 6: "*All the people answered, Amen, amen.*" This repetition implies a doubt to be overcome in the mind of the hearer. The supposed doubt arises sometimes, as here, from the greatness of the thing promised; sometimes from a prejudice which struggles against the truth asserted (for example, iii. 3, 5).

The omission of ἀπ' ἄρτι, *from this time*, though supported by three old Alex. Mjj., is condemned by almost all moderns. So late as 1859, Tischendorf said: "*cur omissum sit, facile dictu; cur additum, vix dixeris.*" The Sinaiticus has led him to change his opinion (8th ed.). The word is decidedly authentic; witness its very difficulty. It was referred to real appearances of angels (so Chrysostom); now such facts are not mentioned till about the end of Jesus' life.—There is a close connection between the two ideas: heaven open, and the angels ascending and descending. By the abode of Jesus here below, the communication between heaven and earth is reopened, and the relation between the inhabitants of the two spheres recommences; for earth and heaven are no longer two, but one whole (Eph. i. 10; Col. i. 20). The second phrase proves that Jesus is thinking of Jacob's vision (Gen. xxviii. 12, 13). The ladder on which the angels ascend and descend represents, in Genesis, the protection of divine providence, and of its invisible agents vouchsafed to the patriarch. What is about to pass under the eyes of His

<sup>1</sup> B L, It. Cop. Or. omit ἀπ' ἄρτι, which is read by T. R. with all the other Mjj., the Mss. Syr., etc.

disciples will be the highest realization of that vision. Jesus cannot understand by this the few appearances of angels which took place about the end of His life. Independently of the words, *from this time forward*, it is a continuous phenomenon which is in question. Most moderns, going to the opposite spiritualistic extreme, see here only the emblem of the heavenly character of our Lord's daily activity; as Lücke and Meyer say: "The symbol of living communion between God and the Messiah, in which the divine forces and revelations are concentrated." M. Reuss: "Angels are the divine perfections common to the two persons. . . . The literal interpretation would here be as poor as absurd." Luthardt (after Hofmann): "The personal (?) forces of the Divine Spirit." If the interpretation of the Fathers was too narrow, that of the moderns is too wide. There is not a single passage where the spiritual activity of Jesus is referred, even symbolically, to the ministry of angels. It is derived from the Spirit (ver. 32, iii. 34); or, more usually still, from the Father dwelling and acting in Jesus (vi. 57). Angels are the instruments of divine power in the domain of nature (see the angel of the waters, Rev. xvi. 5; of the fire, xiv. 18). This saying refers, therefore, to phenomena which, while passing in the domain of nature, are due to a causality superior to the laws of nature. Can Jesus characterize His miracles more clearly without naming them? It is also the only meaning which falls in with what has passed at that very moment between Nathanael and Him: "Thou believest because of this miracle of *omniscience*; it is only the prelude of more considerable signs." Jesus understands thereby those works of *power* of which the event following shall be the first example (*from this time forward*). This explanation is confirmed, besides, by the remarkable parallel, Matt. viii. 9, 10.—It is difficult to explain why the angels *ascending* are placed before those *descending*. Is it simply from a reminiscence of Genesis? There, undoubtedly, God would have Jacob to feel that the angels were already near him at the time when he was receiving this revelation of divine protection. According to Meyer and Lücke, Jesus would mean here also, that at the time when the *ye shall see* shall take place, this relation to heaven shall be in full activity. I rather think that the angels are here represented

by Jesus as an army grouped round their chief, the Son of man, who says to one, *Go*, and to another, *Do this*. Those servants then ascend to seek power from God; then they descend again to execute their commission.

Were not those two allusions, the one to the name of Israel (ver. 47), the other to Jacob's dream, suggested by the view of the very localities which Jesus was then passing? He was returning from Judea to Galilee, either by the valley of the Jordan, or by one of the two plateaus which it divided. Now, there it was that the places stood which were made famous by the life of the patriarch: *Bethel*, on the western plateau, the name of which was due to his mysterious dream, *Mahanaim* (the double camp of angels), and *the ford Jabbok*, on the eastern plateau, famous for an appearance of angels on the occasion of his return to Canaan, and on account of the mysterious struggle to which he owed the name of *Israel* (Gen. xxxii.). It is possible that as they passed those places, classical to every Israelitish heart, Jesus conversed with His disciples of the scenes which they recalled.

What is the meaning of the expression, *Son of man*, whereby Jesus here designates Himself to His disciples? We refer to the dissertation which follows for the examination of the general questions bearing on the origin and signification of the title. Here we have to do with it only in its relation to the context. Now it has obviously an intentional reference to the two names which Nathanael gave to Jesus, those of Son of God and King of Israel. Besides the double relation of Jesus to God and to the people of Israel, is there not in His life and person a third relation: one to the whole of humanity? It is this relation which is expressed by the third title. In adopting it as His habitual designation rather than the second, which had a very marked political and particularistic hue, Jesus wished from the first to establish His ministry on its true and wide basis already laid down by the word of His forerunner: "Which taketh away the *sin of the world*." His task was not, as Nathanael imagined, to found the Israelitish monarchy; it was to work out the salvation of humanity. He came not to finish the theocratic drama, but to consummate the history of the world.

This title formed, then, along with the others, a double

antithesis, by which it gave them completeness. It declared the relation of Jesus to *men*, as the first exhibited His exceptional relation to *God*, and the second His historical relation to the *people of Israel*. Those three relations do in reality exhaust the life and history of Jesus.

### *The Son of Man.*

Jesus here begins to designate Himself by the name *Son of man*, and it is quite probable that this was really the first occasion on which He took the title. We find it thirty-nine times in the Synoptics (by connecting the parallels; most frequently in Matthew and Luke); ten times in John (i. 52, iii. 13, 14, v. 27 [without the article], vi. 27, 53, 62, viii. 28, xii. 23, 34, xiii. 31). Regarding its meaning and origin, very different opinions prevail among modern critics. These opinions may be arranged in two principal classes.

I. Some think that Jesus is here borrowing from the Old Testament a sort of technical title fitted to designate Him either as a *prophet*,—thus it would be an allusion to the name *Son of man*, which God uses in addressing Ezekiel,—or as the *Messiah*, in allusion to Dan. vii. 13: “And I saw one *like a son of man* coming on the clouds of heaven.” This Messianic prophecy had become so popular in Israel, that the Messiah had received the name of *Anani*, אַנָּנִי, the man of the clouds. It would thus be natural to suppose that Jesus chose the term as denoting in a popular way His Messianic function; all the more that there exists a saying of Jesus in which He has solemnly referred to this description of Daniel while appropriating it to Himself, Matt. xxvi. 64: “From this time ye shall see *the Son of man* sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.” Of those two alleged allusions, the first is untenable; for it is not as a prophet that God calls Ezekiel son of man, but as a creature wholly powerless to do the divine work of which He is inviting him to become the agent—thus so far as he is *man*. Would it not be contrary to all logic to maintain that, because God in one case has called a prophet son of man, it follows that the name is the equivalent of the title prophet? <sup>1</sup>

The allusion to Daniel as the basis of this designation proper to Jesus, is admitted by almost all modern interpreters, Lücke, Bleek, Ewald, Hilgenfeld, Renan, Strauss, Meyer, etc. This is also, as it seems, the opinion of M. Wabnitz.

If the question were: Did Jesus, in thus designating Himself, associate in His mind this title, and the: *like a son of man* of Daniel? it would seem difficult to deny it, at least as to the occasion when

<sup>1</sup> Comp. the detailed refutation of this interpretation given by M. Vernes, and to a certain extent by Weizsäcker, in the article of M. Wabnitz, *Revue Théol.*, Oct. 1874, p. 165 et seq.

He proclaimed Himself the Messiah in answer to the high priest before the Sanhedrim. But that is not the question. The point is whether, in choosing this name as His own by predilection, Jesus meant: "I am the Messiah announced by Daniel," or whether it was a much more personal and profound feeling of what He was to humanity, which impelled Him to create the name spontaneously.

The following are the reasons which preclude us from regarding this title as a simple reproduction of Daniel's expression: 1st, What Jesus borrows from the Old Testament has in general only the character of accommodation. The idea itself, as well as its expression, springs up originally from His heart and mind; only to make way for it more easily to the hearts of His hearers, He readily connects it with some saying of Scripture. How can we believe that the chosen name which Jesus used habitually as His own was merely the product of slavish imitation? If anything must have found expression in the depths of His own consciousness, it is this name. 2d, Throughout the whole course of John's Gospel, Jesus carefully avoids, as we shall see, proclaiming Himself the Messiah, *Χριστός*, before the people; because He knows the political meaning commonly attached to the term, and that the least misunderstanding on this point would have been instantly fatal to His work. He uses circumlocutions of every kind to express His Messianic functions, but never the term itself. Comp. viii. 24, 25, x. 24, 25, etc. . . . And in direct contradiction to this procedure, we are to suppose that He chose a designation which had the technical meaning of Messiah in popular opinion! 3d, Two passages in John prove that the name Son of man was not generally applied to the Messiah: xii. 34, where the people ask Jesus what personage it is whom He designates by the name Son of man (see the exegesis); and v. 27, where Jesus says that the Father has committed all judgment to Him, because He is *Son of man*. Assuredly, if this expression had signified here the Messiah, the article *the* could not have been wanting. It was indispensable to designate *the* personage announced under this name. Without the article there is here a simple indication of *dignity*. God makes Him the judge of men because He is a member of the human race. Besides, let us not forget that in Daniel judgment is exercised, not as M. Renan wrongly says, by the Son of man, but by Jehovah Himself; and it is only after this act is wholly finished that there appears in the clouds the Son of man to whom dominion is given.<sup>1</sup> 4th, In the Synoptics also there are passages where the meaning Messiah does not suit the words Son of man. It is enough to quote Matt. xvi. 13, 15, where Jesus asks His disciples, "Whom say men that I the Son of man am? . . .

<sup>1</sup> It is true that in the Book of Enoch (c. 37-71) the Messiah is several times called the Son of man. But the passage is suspected of Christian interpolations (in *Herzog's Encycl.*, art. "Messie," by Oehler; Keim, *Gesch. Jesu*, ii. p. 69). In any case, were those pieces entirely authentic, the passages in John prove that the denomination was not yet current among the people.

And whom say ye that I am?" If this term had been equivalent to that of Messiah, would Holtzmann not be right in asking how Jesus, after having designated Himself a hundred times as the Son of man, could yet put this question to His disciples: "Whom do ye take me to be?" 5th, The appearance of the Son of man in Daniel's prophecy has an exclusively eschatological significance. The matter in question is the glorious establishment of the final kingdom. Now it is not easy to understand how, from such a representation, Jesus could have taken His personal name during the very period of His earthly abasement; while we can perfectly understand why this designation having been once adopted for other reasons, He made express allusion to it as it occurs in Daniel's prophecy, at the moment when, in presence of the Sanhedrim, He required to affirm His glorious return, and His dignity as the judge of His judges. Let us add, finally, that Daniel did not say, I saw a son of man, or the Son of man, but vaguely: *like* (the figure of) a son of man. Could Jesus from such an expression borrow the stereotyped name Son of man? 6th, If we are to believe the common exegesis, the term Son of God had the meaning of Messiah. If the term Son of man likewise signified Messiah, it would follow that Son of God signified Son of man, or inversely.<sup>1</sup> Now those two terms evidently express an antithesis and not an identity. They may and ought undoubtedly to be referred both to the person of the Messiah, but to designate it in two different aspects logically distinct and supplementary of each other.

II. These reflections lead us to the second class of interpretations, that which takes this title to be an expression emanating from the inner self-consciousness of Jesus, whether the feeling of His greatness or that of His abasement be regarded as ruling Him in this choice.

1. There is no need to refute the explanation of Paulus and Fritzsche: "The individual whom you see before you," *homo ille quem benè nostis*. Would Jesus have thus paraphrased more than fifty times the pronoun *I*?

2. De Wette and Tholuck see in this name which Jesus takes, the notion of the weakness of His earthly appearance. But who can believe that God gives over to Jesus all judgment because of the infirmity of His earthly appearance? v. 27.

3. Chrysostom, Grotius, and some moderns find in this name of Jesus a deliberate antithesis to His essential divine Sonship. Who else than a being strange to the human family could take for his *characteristic* name, the title, child of the race? This explanation is ingenious, but it does not correspond well to the simplicity of the feeling of Jesus.

Others incline to the side of the feeling of His glory, thus:

4. Keerl thinks that this title is applied to the Son of God, in so far as His essence is to be in God the *eternal man*. The Messiah

<sup>1</sup> To this identification, indeed, all the endeavours tend which Keim makes to attenuate the difference between those two terms, ii. p. 388.

differs from that eternal man only because He is clothed with terrestrial flesh and blood. But would not the term Son of man be wholly inappropriate to express such an idea? It would have required the first-born or archetype of humanity.

Gess<sup>1</sup> thinks that this expression designates Jesus as "the manifestation of divine majesty in the form of human life." He supports his view by the passages in which there are ascribed to the Son of man the divine functions of the pardon of sin (Matt. ix. 6), of judgment (Matt. xvi. 27, xxv. 31), of sovereignty over angels (Matt. xiii. 41), etc.,—functions which far surpass the capacities of human nature even when perfected. But what if perfected human nature in its very idea is nothing else than the participation of the creature in the divine perfections whose organ it is destined to become? In this case there is nothing in the functions enumerated which passes beyond the limits of true human nature. Besides, it seems to us impossible that the natural meaning of the expression Son of man should be to designate the divine majesty, even supposing it united to the human form. We might ask M. Gess how this explanation accords with his theory of the *kenosis*, according to which Jesus must have lived here below destitute of His divine glory.

Only one explanation appears to us to answer to all historical and exegetical demands, that which under various forms is found radically the same in Böhme, Neander, Ebrard, Olshausen, Bey-schlag, Holtzmann, Wittichen, and Hofmann, and which we defended in the first edition of this work.

We have seen that in v. 27 the term Son of man denotes, in the mouth of Jesus Himself, His participation in human nature. And is not this what is naturally signified by the term *Son of man*, which does not denote either a son of *Adam*, or the son of His *Father*, but a true son of *humanity*, a representative of the race itself. Such is the meaning of the phrase in Ps. viii. 4: "What is *man*, that Thou art mindful of him? and the *son of man*, that Thou visitest him?" Such is its meaning in the divine address to Ezekiel. It is the same (Dan. vii. 13) where the human figure is the emblem of the divine kingdom, just as the wild beasts were the types of earthly power in its various pre-Messianic phases. This emblem of a son of man admirably expresses the profoundly *human* character of the kingdom of God. All those phrases arise from the same feeling which suggested to Jesus the designation of which we are speaking. Jesus wished above all, in adopting it, to emphasize His entire homogeneity with us. He did not borrow a name ready-made, but He obeyed the instinct of His love for humanity, and the feeling of that indissoluble union with the race into which He had entered. It was the marked expression of the fact which John has declared when he says: "The Word was *made flesh*." But let us not forget that Jesus did not say: "a son of man," but "*the Son of man*." Thereby He proclaimed Himself not only a

<sup>1</sup> *Christi Zeugnis von seiner Person und seinem Werk*, 1870.



man, a true man, but *the* true man, the *normal* representative of the human type. In the very act of affirming His *equality* with us, He thus declared His absolute *superiority* over all the other members of the human race. To designate Himself thus was certainly to affirm His dignity as Messiah, but only in an implicit way. By means of it He succeeded in expressing the idea while avoiding the ordinary term, the meaning of which was falsified. Without calling Himself the Christ, He yet said to every man : " Behold me, and thou shalt see what thou shouldst have been, and what through me thou mayest yet become." This substitution of the true *idea* of the Messiah for the *word* Messiah corresponded in two important respects to the inner feeling of Jesus : First, He succeeded thereby in removing from His ministry everything like a political bearing, and in inaugurating the purest Messianic spirituality. In the second place, He freed the notion of the kingdom of God from everything like theocratic particularism. Jesus thus announced Himself as the Representative and Head not merely of Israel, but of the whole of humanity. This is what has led Böhme to say (*Versuch das Geheimniss des Menschensohns zuenthüllen*, 1839) that the object of Jesus in choosing this name was to *dejudaeize* the idea of the Messiah.

We can see with what admirable prudence Jesus acted in the choice of this name, which was undoubtedly the fruit of His inner life. His love in this, as in everything, guided Him wondrously. Perhaps His spiritual tact was directed in its choice by the most ancient of all prophecies, that which was the germ whence grew the true Messianic revelations, and which has as its salient features, on the one hand the purest spirituality, on the other the widest universality : " The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." In the phrase, Son of man, the word *man*, *ἄνθρωπος*, denotes not the individual, but the species, and refers equally to the two sexes ; now the woman's part is to represent *human nature* as such. There is therefore no great interval between the term Son of man, and this : *the seed of the woman*. Jesus would thus describe Himself as the normal man, called consequently to accomplish the grand task of humanity, that of conquering the enemy of God and men.<sup>1</sup>

Is it the feeling of greatness which predominates over that of weakness, or the reverse ? To this question, put by Keim, I answer, with Pascal : " If you abase man, I exalt him ; if you exalt him, I abase him." Does not Ps. viii. say that man's greatness consists in his very meanness in which God condescends to visit him ; as his

<sup>1</sup> In the idea which we have above expounded, there converge, as it seems to us, all the explanations which belong to this class, and which we shall hastily enumerate. Baur : " A simple man, to whom belong all the miseries which can be affirmed of any man whatever." Schenkel : " The representative of the poor." Holtzmann : " He to whom may be applied, in the highest degree, whatever may be said of any other man ;" or, " the indispensable organic centre of the kingdom of God in humanity." Wittichen : " The perfect realization of

abasement, in the glorious grace of this visitation? Those two aspects of human life, sublime in its lowliness, infinitely poor in its wealth, found in Jesus their complete realization, in His consciousness their perfectly distinct reflection; and He conjoined them indissolubly in His title Son of man.

the idea of man, with the mission to realize it in humanity." M. Colani: "The man who is the Messiah, but who will not designate Himself expressly as such." Hofmann: "The man in whom all the history of humanity must find its issue." Neander: "He who realizes the idea of humanity." Böhme: "The universal Messiah." We are surprised to find this explanation rejected off-hand by M. Wabnitz in the following words: "It will be desirable also to discard from the immediate historical sense of our title . . . etc." (p. 170, note).

END OF VOL. I