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put better than in some words of Mr. George Shillito in the booklet to which I have so often referred :

‘ Through a slowly clarifying inward vision we move to moral capacity . . . Striving towards right decisions, men and nations become great,—

“ Life’s business being just the terrible choice.”

. . .

‘ There are no short cuts out of the embarrassment created by ages of human sin, and ignorance, and catastrophe. . . .

‘ The task to which we are called is not the melodramatic and impossible performance of downing arms, but a wise, persistent, whole-hearted evangelisation of all the nations of the world.’¹

¹ *Christianity and War*, pp. 59-60.

National Contributions to Biblical Science.

IV. The Contribution of Germany to Church History: Ancient Church and Reformation.

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I.

GERMANY’S contribution to the literature of Church History is very extensive, and in two short articles one can only indicate its main content and characteristics. Even so, considerations of space have compelled the writer to limit this survey to the two most formative periods of Church History—those of the rise and development of the Catholic Church and of the Reformation.

In their treatment of Church History the Germans display no little initiative in the formulation of problems and theories relative to the subject-matter of the various periods. The discussion of these problems and theories has stimulated inquiry and has contributed to a fresh elucidation of a given theme or movement. The old method of the academic disputation has been transferred from the rostrum to the study and the press, and has expressed itself in the controversial tone of many works in all departments of German science, and not least in that of Church History. The contentious, doctrinaire spirit is at times unduly obtrusive. The method has thus its drawbacks inasmuch as the subjective element, as revealed in individual temperament and conviction, is apt to affect the objective treatment of the subject in question. As in other departments of scientific activity, it has left, as a memorial of misdirected effort, a bulky record of exploded or greatly modified theories. For instance, the Tübingen theory of

the early development of Christianity under the influence of the Jewish-Christian and the Pauline-Gentile antithesis, resulting in the synthesis of the Fourth Gospel, which is assigned to the second half of the second century. On the whole, however, the method has substantially contributed to the advancement of historical knowledge.

The Germans are strong in textual criticism. They have long realized the importance of correct texts, and have devoted immense learning and labour to the production of critical and competently annotated editions of the sources of the various epochs of Church History—particularly those of the Ancient Church and the Reformation. Equally admirable is their application of the critical spirit in the exposure of the unauthentic material in which certain periods of Church History abound. They have, further, grasped the fundamental truth that Church History is not an isolated phenomenon and can only be adequately elucidated in relation to the general history of the time. In the early period, for instance, the development of Christian thought and institutions was largely influenced by Hellenism and the constitution of the Roman Empire, and the more recent German historical literature shows ample evidence of the comprehension of this cardinal fact.

The German contribution to Church History in recent times also reveals the striving to apply to

this department of investigation the same scientific method as is observed in the treatment of secular history. There is apparent the same effort to use only critically sifted sources and to differentiate, in the scientific spirit, between fact and belief. The dogmatic method of writing Church History has thus tended, in increasing degree, to give place to the factual and scientific one except in the case of those, particularly of the extreme Roman Catholic persuasion, who still write from the dogmatic standpoint that the history of the Church, as ruled by the papacy, is the history of an infallible institution which has never essentially erred and cannot, in fact, do so.

Very remarkable is the number of German Church historians who have attempted a survey of the whole course of Christian history or covered a large part of it. Among these general histories the *Lehrbuch* or Compendium of Gieseler is still useful in virtue especially of its copious quotations from the sources. The same claim may be made for Hase's compilation. It is also still worth while to consult the more voluminous work of Neander, which extends down to the fifteenth century and, under Schleiermacher's influence, combines deep religious feeling with intimate knowledge of the sources. Baur's masterly survey, especially of the early period, gave a great stimulus to the studies of other writers and on this account has also to be reckoned with. Among the general histories written from the Roman Catholic point of view the works of Alzog, Schmidt, Hergenröther in the recent revision of Kirsch, Funk (recently revised by Bihlmeyer) are the most outstanding. Among more recent Protestant writers the handbooks of Kurtz and Moeller have had a wide circulation both in the original German and in English translations. They are, however, being superseded by fresh surveys like those of K. Müller, Achelis, Heussi, von Schubert, and the Handbook by various writers edited by Gust. Krüger, who, along with Preuschen, has contributed the first part on the Ancient Church. K. Müller's work, which reaches the seventeenth century, remains the standard guide in German for the student of general Church History, and it is regrettable that it has not hitherto found an English translator. Mirbt's collection of documents relative to the papacy and Roman Catholicism (1924) is a handy guide to the more important sources.

Turning now to the distinctive epochs of Church History, the Germans have produced a great amount of original work on the Primitive Church. For this period the New Testament writings are the primary sources, and in the critical treatment of these for

historical purposes they have taken both the initiative and the leading part. Weizsäcker's work on the *Apostolic Age* (Eng. tr., 1894) is still valuable, and Wernle's *Beginnings of Christianity* (Eng. tr., 1903-04) is brilliant, whilst Pfeleiderer (*Urchristenthum*, 1902) and Knopf's *Nachapostolische Zeitalter* (1905) still deserve the attention of the student. Wernle's 'Jesus und Paulus'¹ is a forcible refutation of Bousset's contention (*Kyrios Christos*, 1913) that Paul's Christianity was largely derived from Hellenist sources. Indispensable is the *Urchristenthum* of J. Weiss (1915), which reviews the origins with an illuminating erudition and charm of style. The latest contribution—that of Schlatter—(*Geschichte der ersten Christenheit*, 1927), which dispenses with critical notes, rather disappoints the inquiring student. Poland (*Griechische Vereinswesen*, 1909) is a valuable aid to the discussion of the question of the influence of the Guilds and Fraternities of the Græco-Roman world on the organization of the early Christian community. On the constitution of the early Church, Sohm's *Kirchenrecht* (i. 1892), Loening's *Die Gemeinde Verfassung des Urchristenthums* (1889), and Harnack's *Entstehung der Kirchenverfassung* (1910, Eng. tr. 1910) are of great value. Harnack is at issue with Sohm, who maintains that the primitive community, as a purely spiritual body, was not, and could not, be an organized association in the legal sense, with functionaries possessing a recognized authority in virtue of their office. Against this extreme Lutheran spiritualism, Harnack emphasizes with no little force the authoritative position of the Twelve and other functionaries in the community. He is less successful in an attempt, under the influence of Hatch, to differentiate between the offices of presbyter and bishop, whom he transforms into an administrative functionary. His thesis has not been generally accepted, and the identity of these functionaries may still be said to be the established view. The Christian life of the early community has been admirably depicted by Dobschütz (*Christian Life in the Primitive Church*, Eng. tr., 1904). In connexion with this subject it is advisable to consult Friedländer's *Sittengeschichte Roms* (Eng. tr. from the seventh German edition, under the title *Roman Life and Manners under the Early Empire*).

Passing to the Ancient Catholic Church and its development during the first four centuries, German scholars have rendered sterling service in the critical treatment of this lengthy period, on which the discovery of lost documents (the Didache, the Apology of Aristides, the Acts of Paul, certain

¹ *Zeitschrift für Theologie und Kirche* (1915).

writings of Irenæus, Hippolytus, Methodius, Priscillian, Nestorius, etc.) has thrown new light. For an introduction to the earlier part of this literature the student is greatly indebted to Harnack's *Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* (1893) and his *Chronologie* (1904-07), and to Bardenhewer's volumes on the same subject (1902-24), and that of Schanz-Krüger for the Latin writers. To the Vienna Academy we owe the series of Latin Ecclesiastical Writers (*Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum* from 1866 onwards); to the Prussian Academy the series of Greek writers (from 1897 onwards), which includes Schwartz's standard edition of the Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius and competent editions of Theodoret, Gelasius, Philostorgius, and Epiphanius. The long series of *Texte und Untersuchungen*, corresponding to the English *Texts and Studies*, provides a varied repertory of studies of particular writers and themes. Valuable contributions to the elucidation of the period are also to be found in the various German theological journals and the numerous *Festschriften* in honour of distinguished German theologians. As an example of the critical study of groups of writers stand out the edition of the Apostolic Fathers by Gebhardt, Harnack, and Zahn, (1877-78) and Funk's handy collection of these writings (1906). The number of monographs on individual writers is almost bewildering, and it must suffice to mention Zahn on Ignatius (1875) and Hermas (1868), Harnack on the Didache (1886), Baumeister on the Ethik of Hermas (1912), Bonwetsch on the Theology of Irenæus (1925), Loofs on Paul of Samosata (1924). Böckh's *Corpus Inscriptionum Graecarum* includes a collection of Christian inscriptions, which Mommsen has almost entirely excluded from the *Corpus Ins. Lat.*

Recent systematic works of value on the period are available in those of Achelis (*Christenthum der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*, 1912), Haase (*Altchristliche Kirchengeschichte nach orientalischen Quellen*, 1925), von Soden (*Geschichte der christlichen Kirche*, 1919). The older works of Baur (*Das Christenthum und die christliche Kirche der ersten drei Jahrhunderte*, 1860, Eng. tr. 1878) and A. Ritschl (*Entstehung der alt-katholischen Kirche*, 1857) are important for the stimulus imparted to other historians. Ritschl took the initiative in the reaction against the distinctive standpoint of Baur, who, under the influence of the Hegelian philosophy, built his work on the very questionable assumption of the long-drawn-out antithesis between Jewish-Christian and Pauline Christianity. In the department of the History of Dogma the more recent works of

Harnack, Seeberg, Loofs, and Dorner are of capital importance. Those of Harnack and Loofs belong to the Liberal School. Harnack in his detailed and masterly exposition frankly recognizes the decisive influence of Hellenist thought, which gradually moulded ecclesiastical doctrine and, in the acute form of this influence, found expression in Christian Gnosticism. Hence what he calls the secularization or Hellenization, in varying degree, of Christian thought throughout the period preceding the General Councils of the fourth and fifth centuries, whose history has been minutely, though not always objectively recounted by the Roman Catholic, Hefele (*Concilien Geschichte*², 1877). This contention is substantially founded. Its influence is already apparent, indeed, in the Fourth Gospel, though Harnack recognizes that it forms only one element in the development of ancient Catholic thought, which in its own subjective fashion sought to embody and preserve the evangelical-Apostolic traditions. Roman Catholic writers like Ehrhard, on the other hand, repudiate such influence, and very hazardously maintain the Divine character of the developing Catholic Church as 'the genuine fruit of primitive Christianity' (*Urchristenthum und Katholicismus*, 1925). For the Protestant Sohm, on the contrary, who approaches the subject from the constitutional point of view, it is a complete aberration from the primitive model (*Wesen und Ursprung des Katholicismus*, 1912).

The study of the Gnostic movement both as a system of thought and in its influence—positive and negative—on the Catholic Church, to which Harnack's thesis gave an impulse, has entered on a new phase in works like Bousset's *Hauptprobleme der Gnosis* (1907), the first volume of Müller's *Kirchengeschichte* and the 'Beiträge zum Verständnis der valentinianischen Gnosis,'¹ Schmidt's edition of *Pistis Sophia* (1925), Harnack's *Marcion* (1921), Leisegang's *Gnosis* (1924), and the older work of Anz, *Zur Frage nach dem Ursprung des Gnosticismus* (1897). For the contemporary but widely different anti-ecclesiastical movement known as Montanism, the work of Bonwetsch (*Geschichte des Montanismus*, 1881) is still the standard one in German.

On the Christian mission in the Græco-Roman world Harnack opened up a new perspective in his *Mission und Ausbreitung des Christenthums in den ersten drei Jahrhunderten* (fourth edition, 1924, Eng. tr. by Moffatt), in which, improving on Neander, he luminously, if not exhaustively, reviewed the subject from the relative evidence. The book has also had the merit of fostering inquiry,

¹ *Nachr. Gott. Ges. Wiss.*, 1920.

outside as well as within Germany, into this hitherto largely neglected, but highly important branch of Church History. Much labour has, on the other hand, been expended on the long, if intermittent, persecution of the Christians to which the Christian mission gave rise, and on the relation of the Ancient Church and the Empire. Mommsen led the way to a truer conception of the early persecutions in his article in the *Historische Zeitschrift* on 'Der Religions-frevel nach römischen Recht,' though his thesis, that the earlier persecution was purely a matter of the police jurisdiction of the local magistrate, not of State ordinance, has recently been subjected to some criticism—by O. Sild, for instance, in *Das altchristliche Martyrium* (1920) and Heinze in *Tertullian's Apologeticum* (1910).

Recent writers like Geffcken (*Das Christenthum im Kampf mit der Griechischen-Römischen Welt*, 1920), Schönaich (*Kämpfe zwischen Römertum und Christenthum*, 1927), Stade on the Diocletian Persecution (1926), Knipping on the Edict of Milan (1922), have made substantial contributions which have superseded the older works of Uhlhorn (1879), Wieseler (1878), and Linsenmayer (1905). Schiller's *Geschichte der Römischen Kaiserzeit* (1883) is also helpful for the attitude of the various emperors. In this connexion the works of the Apologists and their opponents have been the object of intensive study. Among the large number of valuable monographs it must suffice to mention those of Geffcken (*Zwei Griechische Apologeten*), of Wehofer (1897), Engelhardt (1878) and Flemming (1883), on Justin Martyr; Schwartz on Athenagoras; Keim (1873), Glöckner (1924), and Stange (1926) on Celsus and Origen; Schmidt on Plotinus in relation to Christianity (1901), Harnack on Porphyry (1916). The more notable of the general works dealing with the fall of Paganism are those of Schulze (*Geschichte des Untergangs des G.-R. Heidenthums*), especially of Seeck (*Geschichte des Untergangs der antiken Welt*, 1895-1920), whose estimate of Christianity has been sharply criticised by Krüger.¹

The development of the ecclesiastical constitution has been the object of much inquiry and discussion in the works on *Kirchenrecht* (Sohm, Harnack,

¹ *Die evangelische Theologie, 3te Theil: Die Kirchengeschichte*, 31-32 (1928).

Bickell, Loening, etc.), and in the monographs on parts of the subject. Among the latter are important contributions like Zahn's *Ignatius*, Harnack's edition of the Original Sources of the Apostolic Canons in *Texte und Untersuchungen*, ii. (Eng. tr. by Wheatley, 1895), Döllinger's *Hippolytus und Kallistus* (tr. by Plummer, 1876), Rolffs' 'Kallistus' (*Texte und Unters.* xi. 1893), O. Ritschl (1885) and Goetz (1896) on Cyprian, Schwartz's *Kaiser Konstantin und die Christliche Kirche* (1913) and the *Acta Conciliorum oecumenicorum* (1914 f.). A systematic discussion in German of the influence of the organization and administration of the Roman Empire on the development of the ecclesiastical constitution is still, as far as I know, a desideratum. On the other hand, there is a considerable amount of recent literature on the Roman Primacy, which is elucidated by Grill (*Primat des Petrus*, 1904), Schnitzer (*Hat Jesus das Papstthum gestiftet?*, 1910), Caspar (*Primat des Petrus*, 1927), Lietzmann (*Petrus und Paulus in Rom*, 1927), in which the burning questions of the authenticity and interpretation of Mt 16^{18, 19} and the sojourn of Peter in Rome, etc., are discussed.

In other departments of Ancient Church History it must suffice to mention the meritorious contributions to the early history of monasticism of Weingarten (1877), Reitzenstein (1914), Bousset (1923), Crum and Ehrhard (1915), Laun (1925), Peradse (1927). On church life, discipline, and worship those of Lucius, *Anfänge des Heiligenkults*, edited by Aurich (1904), Adam's, Poschmann's, and Brewer's expositions of the ecclesiastical remission of sins, Holl's essay on 'Fasts in the Ancient Greek Church,' that of Kalsbach on the institution of the office of deaconess, Preisker and K. Müller on marriage. On the liturgy of the Ancient Church see the recent works of Dölger, Schermann, Lietzmann, Völker, Baumstark, and Mohlberg. Ecclesiastical archæology has also received additions from Kaufmann (*Handbuch der Christlichen Archäologie*, 1922), Schultze (*Grundriss der Christ. Archäologie*, 1919), Wulff (*Die alte Christ. Kunst*, 1917), v. Sybel (*Frühchrist. Kunst*, 1920), Beyer (*Die Katakombenwelt*, 1927). Culture and education in Christian Antiquity have been treated by von Schubert (1925).

(To be continued.)