

Origin, Nature, and Influence of Neology

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PREFACE

The following pages are designed to present, in a clear and concise manner, the rise and progress, in the church, of Neology and kindred fruits of the German schools of Theology, with their effect on the churches of our own land.

It was not until the blessed hope of the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ was presented, as an immediate event, to the professed followers of Him, who promised to come again, and was rejected by such with scorn, that it was even dreamed that the great body of the church had departed so far from the belief of our fathers, and from "the faith once delivered to the saints." But the strong neological ground which the anti-Adventists have been obliged to assume, to ward off the doctrine of the immediate appearing of Christ, and the manner in which such views have been received, unrebuked by the great body of the church, have served to exhibit the extensive spread and deep root which the philosophy of Germany has, attained among the churches of our own land.

These principles have crept in so insidiously-till now almost unnoticed-that their sudden maturity has caused a great call for information respecting their origin and progress, with the causes of so extensive a reception of them by the church. This call has here been most successfully met; and we cheerfully recommend it to all, as a work worthy the serious perusal, not only of those who love the appearing of Christ, but also of those who have drank deeply at the poisoned fountain.

J. V. H.
Boston, March 1, 1844.

ORIGIN, NATURE, AND INFLUENCE OF NEOLOGY

The term Neology, or Rationalism, has been applied to the *actual* creed of a large portion of the members of the German church, who profess a nominal adhesion to the Augsburg Confession of Faith, while they reject its fundamental principles, and maintain tenets which the Saxon reformers would have regarded as "damnable heresies." Like many other forms of error, Neology did not make its first appearance among the common people. In all countries, the simple faith of this class in the book of God, and their reverence for its instructions, have made them the well known conservators of truth. It is seldom that their course of life is such as to drive them to the necessity of impugning the authority of the Scriptures. Neology had its birth among those, who held the part of "watchmen on the walls of Zion;" among professors of theology, whose rank, learning, and talents gave them a controlling influence over the opinions of the religious world. These were the men, who applied their strength to rend down the pillars of the temple of truth, who labored by every insidious art of false interpretation to pervert and render

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powerless that book, which its Author designed to be "a lamp to our feet and a light to our path, until the day should dawn and the day-star arise in our hearts." All experience proves that heresy is rather the offspring of the heart than of the head. When the moral condition of the soul is such, that man has nothing to fear should all Scripture be, in very deed, the word of Jehovah; no ordinary strength of temptation will lead him to *wish* it untrue; still less will he wish to persuade others that it is not entitled to full credit. He, who has felt the power of divine truth, as applied to his conscience by the Holy Spirit, convincing him of sin, and leading him to the Lamb of God, -will not lightly esteem the book which embodies that truth, nor wish to shake the confidence of others in "the law of the Lord," which "is perfect, converting the soul."

Unhappily, in the case before us, the German church was a national establishment. The public authorities patronized the church, because they supposed its influence would give stability to political institutions. Princes paid an external respect to the Bible because they appreciated the commandment, -"Render to CÆsar the things which are CÆsar's," rather than that, which with equal clearness says, "and unto God, the things which are God's." Both in the Protestant and Catholic states civil rulers exercised a control in the appointment of preachers, pastors and professors of theology. Thus a door was opened for the admission of unconverted men into religious offices. While the magistracy insisted on high *literary* qualifications in all candidates for the ministry, and demanded those still more elevated

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from men who aspired to theological professorships, the most important of all requisites, *vital piety*, attracted but little attention. The results are obvious. Men,

who were accurately acquainted with the sciences, familiar with the varied topics of biblical literature, with the history, languages, customs and antiquities of the East, might be found occupying the station of teachers in theology, though destitute of the first elements of religious experience, and strangers to the power of godliness. Such men as they knew nothing of the influence of the Spirit on the soul, despised and ridiculed the very *language* by which God describes that influence, as the mystic phraseology of enthusiasm.

It could not be expected that such *guides* would quietly acquiesce in the popular belief that all scripture was given by inspiration of God. Disliking the moral restraint which the Bible imposes, so long as it is regarded as a revelation from heaven; chafed in the false position into which they had blindly thrown themselves; often obliged, especially if pastors, to perform duties entirely foreign to their tastes, and yet fettered by the force of public opinion, and restrained from an open avowal of their sentiments, they were compelled to wait for a more convenient season, when their principles might be exhibited, without hazard, in the face of the world. Before that season had arrived, the metaphysical skepticism of Hume, and other authors of the English deistical school, had found its way to the continent. The writings of these authors attracted the attention of numerous readers in the ranks of the German ministry. They were often translated

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and published with pretended refutations, in which the author allowed himself to defend truth with sophistical arguments, and thus effectually betrayed the cause which he appeared to defend. The unwary reader was led to suppose that what he had heretofore deemed to be truth, was error which could not be logically sustained. In some cases, these writers asserted that a proposition might be true according to the principles of sound philosophy or metaphysics, yet, when examined theologically, it was very questionable. The reader was left to infer that sound philosophy and religious truth could hold no alliance—that Christianity was not based on facts—that a sincere Christian, of course, could hold his position only by believing without evidence, and at the very best, must be but a sorry philosopher. At a later period, the productions of the French encyclopedists obtained an extensive circulation in Germany. The lively style and sparkling wit of these writers enchanted many of the Germans, who had hitherto been content to plod along the beaten path usually taken by men, who confine their attention to plain *matters of fact*. The want of solid thought, so characteristic of the French school, was overlooked in the admiration paid to eloquent phraseology and flights of imagination. At this disastrous era, vital piety was rapidly declining in Germany. With the exception of a few favored spots, the life-giving influence of the Holy Spirit was hardly felt. In the church, the form of godliness existed, but its power was gone. German pastors, instead of searching the Scriptures with prayer, that they might learn and follow the Divine

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will, toiled in composing elegant disquisitions on some point of ethics. "Christ crucified" was more rarely the theme of their sermons. Men, who had not known what repentance was by personal experience, ceased to call on the; sinner to

turn to God and do works meet for repentance. Philological dissertations, critical essays on oriental archaeology and languages, took the place of those plain, pungent addresses to the conscience, which, in a happier age, rendered the preaching of Luther and Justus Jonas so effective in warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come.

An event now burst upon the world, which was destined to give public sentiment an impulse which it had not felt since the fall of the Roman empire. It was not a *reformation*, but a *revolution*. A convulsion commenced in France, which tested the stability of every institution, creed and opinion known to the civilized world. That its final results were not unmingled evil, can never be ascribed to the virtues of those who directed the storm. It is a consolation, amidst the wildest outbreaks of human extravagance, that still "the Lord reigneth," that he can "restrain the wrath of men, and cause the residue of that wrath to praise Him." The example of an entire nation, which arose as one man, to vindicate its freedom, and proclaimed itself the champion of the oppressed and the supporter of liberal sentiments, enlisted the best wishes and the warm admiration of all who paid more attention to words and acts than to principles. The actors in this drama were equally impatient of political and religious control. Making no distinction between

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the corruptions of the Papacy and the religion of the Saviour, they assailed both with the same blind fury. Those who could wield the pen, deluged Europe with pamphlets and volumes filled with the bitterest attacks on Divine Revelation. The ruling powers of the new republic, which sprang to light like the prophet's gourd, however inconsistent with themselves in everything else, remained constant in their enmity to the word of God. The unsparing boldness of French skeptics was communicated to "kindred spirits" among the more cautious Germans. Public sentiment received a shock from the revolution, which went far to destroy its conservative power. Lax sentiments on the subject of religion were hardly considered as a reproach to the clergy: still, while the members of this order received salaries for the avowed purpose of teaching the truths of the Bible, some respect for appearances must be preserved—a sort of conventional decorum, in the treatment of that book, was yet necessary. The time had not arrived when a religious instructor might announce that he believed in no other religion than that of nature. Some latitude might be allowed, on the ground that though he was not a believer of Luther's school, yet he was a *rational* Christian, as might naturally be expected of one, who lived in "the age of light." He might be a skeptic in heart and life, so long as he *pretended* to be a disciple of Christ. He must profess to believe the Bible, while he was allowed, by every art of fallacious criticism, to explain away all those doctrines, which hold a vital alliance with the redemption of man. However revolting such

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hypocrisy may seem to men of integrity; in Germany, multitudes were found, men of varied condition, possessing talents which gave currency to their opinions, who would stoop to such hypocrisy. By acting thus, they have given a memorable lesson to the world. They have proved, that in the cause of divine truth, genius

and learning are worse than useless, if their possessor is destitute of an upright and humble heart-if he does not fear God and tremble at his word.

Such was the origin of Neology. Its form has varied with the changing breath of public opinion and the exigency of circumstances. At one period, it boldly took the field against evangelical religion, and hardly sought a disguise. In the writings of Fichte and Forberg, and some others of the transcendental school, it would have received the name of atheism, in our land. In the hands of other artists, it has assumed the shape of the Pantheism of the Greek philosophers. Now it is "liberal Christianity," or "Rationalism"-again it is marked by an icy indifference to all revelation. Like the demons of Milton, its votaries, turning from the promised land lit up with the beams of the sun of righteousness, survey their congenial domain-

"A frozen continent Lies dark and wild, beat with perpetual storms Of whirlwind and dire hail."

The influence of the moral condition of the heart on the interpretation of the Scriptures has long been a subject of familiar remark. As the preacher, destitute of vital piety, will not appreciate the spiritual element in truth, because he

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has not experienced its power-so he will not present it in its living energy, and will be at the test, a mere "hewer of wood and drawer of water for the congregation of the Lord." Thus it is with the interpreter. In all that addresses itself to the conscience of man, he is sure to fail, because, in his own conscience, there is no chord that responds to the touch of truth. If, perchance, he should feel at all, he will be offended with those declarations which announce his danger as a sinner, and his entire dependance on God. "That blessed hope, the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ," is a strange thing to him, one that excites no aspiration for the rest that awaits the saints. With a temper of mind, which is "earthly and sensual," his expositions will bear the stamp of the mould through which they pass. That which belongs to this present world, that which is *earthly*, he may appreciate, but the "new heavens and the new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness," lies beyond his ken. The writings of neologists afford lamentable illustrations of this principle.

It might naturally be expected, that, in the war waged against the holy writings, the inspiration of the prophets would be the earliest point of attack. If it be questionable whether they predicted events, (which they continually claim to have done,) we are driven, on the most favorable supposition, to class them with the dreaming enthusiasts of later ages, who have been deluded by imagination into a belief, that they uttered the word of the Lord, while, in truth, he was far from them. As the Saviour and the apostles often appeal to prophecy as the infallible truth of Jehovah,

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it will follow, that they did this, not because such was the fact, but merely that they might not shock the prejudices of the Jews, with whom a confidence in the inspiration of the prophets was a fundamental article of faith. If, on the other hand, the prophets themselves did not *believe* that the word of the Lord came to them, then *they* must be classed with those deceivers, who have led the world

astray, while pretending to maintain a cause, in which moral integrity is a vital element. The extent to which neological writers succeeded in destroying the belief of the German church in the inspiration of the Scriptures cannot be viewed without the deepest pain. It must be left to eternity to declare the consequences in their full extent. The results which crowned this unholy enterprise, emboldened neologists to assail the integrity and authenticity of nearly all the canonical books. The tale is soon told. Multitudes, who styled themselves Christians, were led to believe that the only inspiration actually possessed by the Jewish seers was that which is claimed by all poetic writers. The celebrated W. Gesenius, as we have been told by one who heard his lectures on Isaiah, often compared the inspiration of that prophet and the inspiration of the Grecian Homer. In point of genius and strength of imagination, he represented the *two poets* as nearly on a level, though he would coolly remark, that as Isaiah was compelled to use a language less copious and harmonious than that of Homer, it was not surprising that the palm must be awarded to the latter. He would not allow, that the Hebrew had any more prescience of the future, than the Greek. He especially

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labored to impress his large auditory with the idea, that inspiration, in the sense of the older theologians, was a thing *impossible* in itself. Passages, which in former times were supposed to have a marked reference to the Messiah, or to the glories of his kingdom, according to Gesenius were merely patriotic aspirations, couched in glowing language, which Isaiah never imagined could be applied to anything higher than a splendid reign of some crowned mortal, and a prosperous state of the Hebrew common-wealth. Neologists have called in question the miracles of the Old and New Testament, explained away, or resolved them into attempts of mystagogues to deceive the spectators, by means similar to those employed by jugglers, who can produce effects, which may seem supernatural to those not versed in legerdemain. In its progress, neology has not been confined to Protestants. Several Catholic writers have given sad proof that they too have imbibed this subtle poison, though from the rigid authority exercised by the Papal hierarchy, they have been less bold in expressing their sentiments. Among these, may be numbered J. Jahn, late Professor of Oriental Languages and Biblical Archaeology in the University of Vienna. Occasion will soon be presented for noticing some of his views, which have been borrowed, adopted and advocated by American divines.

For some years past it has been deemed necessary in our country, for those who aim at a thorough theological education, to cultivate an acquaintance with German writers. Their language is studied in our theological institutions,

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and where this is not the case, translations, which are rapidly multiplying, can be substituted for the originals. A tour to Germany, and an introduction to her *religious lights*, has become as common and as fashionable with American Professors and students of divinity, as a visit to the continent has been with the English nobility. As in the latter case, it has been deemed important to add a French *polish* to a fashionable education, so in the former, it would seem that a German *polish* is equally important, that an American may complete his

theological training, and be enabled to understand a book, which its author has designed to be read by every nation under heaven, and to be equally the guide of the sage and the peasant. It could hardly be expected, that a familiar acquaintance with the tomes of Rationalism would produce no effects on the minds of our countrymen, who toiled to master their contents. The effects have already begun to develop themselves in the productions of our writers and the sermons of our preachers. They may be traced in the expositions of our divines, in discourses which are valued as specimens of clerical talent and proofs of deep research. In reference to these sermons, our older readers have often had occasion to notice the paucity of scriptural quotations. It would seem that the authors of these productions were apprehensive that they might vitiate their style or betray a want of taste if they employed scriptural language to convey religious ideas. They forget that the great mass of their hearers are more familiar with biblical phraseology, as a medium for religious thought, than with any other, and that holy men of old,

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who preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven, employed a plain, unadorned style, when urging eternal truths on the minds of men; that in this, they followed the example of Him, whose discourses are a perfect model of simplicity. The preachers to whom we refer, would do well to recollect that the Saviour and his apostles made a free use of quotations from "Moses and the prophets and the book of Psalms." Experience shows that men readily and naturally quote those authors, whose language most frequently mingles with their trains of thought, though the reverse is the fact in reference to writers who are only consulted *occasionally*.

In proof of the correctness of the portrait of Neology, which we have sketched, we shall adduce some testimony from the well-known letters of Professor Stuart, addressed to Dr. Channing, in 1819. In this work, the Professor (page 442) makes the following remarks, many of which, time has fully verified in reference to *some* American theologians, although we are not aware that Dr. Channing arrived at "the conclusion," which the professor here noticed. "I am well satisfied," says the professor, "that the course of reasoning in which you have embarked, and the principles now in question, by which you explain away the divinity of the Saviour, must lead most men, who approve of them, eventually to the conclusion that the Bible is not of divine origin, and does not oblige us to belief or obedience."-"Deeming what you have publicly taught them, to be true, viz., that it is no crime to believe with Mr. Belsham," who declares, that the *Scriptures are not the word of*

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God; feeling the inconsistency, (as I am certain some of them will and do feel it,) of violating the rules of interpretation, in order to make the apostles speak, as in their apprehension they ought to speak; and unable to reconcile what the apostles say, with their own views; will it not be natural to throw off the restraints which the old ideas of the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures impose upon them, and receive them simply on the ground on which they place any other writings of a moral and religious nature?" "For myself, I regard it as more

desirable, in many points of view, that the authority of the Scriptures should at once be cast off, and its claims to divine inspiration rejected, than that such rules of exegesis should be introduced, as to make the Scriptures speak, against their obvious meaning, whatever any party may desire. Avowed unbelief in the divine authority of the Scriptures can never continue long, as I would fain believe, in the present day of light and examination. Such a state of things may pass away with the generation who act in it. But it is a more difficult matter to purge away the stain which Christianity may contract by violated laws of interpretation. Those who do thus violate these laws, may obtain, and hold, for a long time, great influence over the mass of people, who are not accustomed to examine, in a critical manner, the minor points of theology. If opponents to this method of interpretation, lift up the voice of warning, they may not be heard. They are liable to the, imputation of bigotry, or ignorance, or illiberality. But when men professedly cast off their respect to the authority of the Scriptures,

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the case becomes different, and the great body of plain and sober people will revolt. In making these observations, of the nature and probable consequences of that exegesis, which explains away the deity of Christ, I cannot think that I am building castles in the air, to amuse my own imagination. For ten years past, I have been called, every week, to duties which necessitated me to be conversant with the history of interpretation, as it has appeared in Germany; a country, which, in half a century, has produced more works on criticism and sacred literature, than the world besides. About fifty years since, Semler, Professor of Divinity at Halle, began to lecture and publish on the subject of interpretation, in a manner that excited the attention of the whole German empire. The grand principle by which he explained away whatever he did not think proper to believe, was that which has been called *accommodation*. He maintained that the apostles and the Saviour often admitted representations and doctrines into their instructions, which were calculated merely for the purpose of persuading the Jews, being *accommodated* to their prejudices; but which were not intended to be a real directory of sentiment. In this way, whatever was inconsistent with his own views, he called *accommodation*; and thus, at once, expunged it from the list of Christian doctrines." "The more recent method of exegesis, however, in Germany, has been to solve all the miraculous facts related in the Bible, by considerations which are affirmed to be drawn from the idiom and ignorance of antiquity in general, and in particular of the sacred writers themselves. Thus with

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Eichorn, the account of the creation and fall of man, is merely a poetical, philosophical speculation of some ingenious person, on the origin of the world and of evil. So, in regard to the offering up of Isaac by Abraham, he says, 'The Godhead could not have required of Abraham so horrible a crime; and there can be no justification, palliation or excuse, for this pretended command of the divinity.' He then explains it. 'Abraham *dreamed* that he must offer up Isaac, and according to the superstition of the times, regarded it as a divine admonition. He prepared to execute the mandate which his dream had conveyed to him. A lucky accident (probably the rustling of a ram who was entangled in the bushes)

hindered it; and this, according to ancient idiom, was also the voice of the divinity.' The same writer represents the history of the Mosaic legislation, at Mount Sinai, in a curious manner. Moses ascended to the top of Sinai, and built a fire there, (how he found wood on this barren rock, or raised it to the top, Eichorn does not tell us,) a fire consecrated to the worship of God, before which he prayed. Here, an unexpected and tremendous thunder storm occurred. He seized the occasion to proclaim the laws which he had composed in his retirement, as the statutes of Jehovah; leading the people to believe that Jehovah had conversed with him. Not that he was a deceiver, but he really believed that the occurrence of such a thunder storm was a sufficient proof of the fact that Jehovah had spoken to him, or sanctioned the work in which he had been engaged. The prophecies of the Old Testament, are, according to him, patriotic wishes,

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expressed with all the fire and elegance of poetry, for the future prosperity, and a future deliverer of the Jewish nation. In like manner, C. F. Ammon, Professor of Theology at Erlangen, tells us, in respect to the miracle of Christ's walking on the water, that, 'to walk on the sea, is not to stand on the waves, as on the solid ground, as Jerome *dreams*, but to walk through the waves so far as the shoals reached, and then to swim.' Thiess, in his commentary on the Acts, explains the miraculous effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, (Acts ii.) in the following manner: 'It is not uncommon,' says he, 'in those countries, for a violent gust of wind to strike on a particular spot or house; such a gust is commonly accompanied by the electric fluid; and the sparks of this are scattered all around. These float about the chamber, become apparent, and light upon the disciples. They kindle into enthusiasm at this, and believe the promise of their Master is now to be performed. This enthusiasm, spectators assemble to witness; and instead of preaching as before, in Hebrew, each one uses his own native tongue, to proclaim his feelings.' The case of Ananias, falling down dead, is thus represented by the same writer: 'Ananias fell down terrified; but probably he was carried out and buried while still alive.' Heinrichs, however, who produces this comment of Thiess, relates another mode of explaining the occurrence in question, viz., that *Peter stabbed Ananias*; 'which,' says Heinrichs, 'does not at all disagree with the vehement and easily exasperated temper of Peter.' Numerous systems of Hermeneutics, i. e., the art of Interpretation,

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have been written and published in Germany, on this plan. Meyer, in a very labored system of Hermeneutics of the Old Testament, in two large octavos, has a body of rules, by which everything miraculous is to be explained away. He concedes that there is the same objection to admitting any one miracle, as to admitting all. He therefore rejects the whole.

"At present, the leading German critics (rejecting *accommodation*, and casting off all ideas of the divine origin of the Scriptures) are disputing with great zeal, the questions, whether a miracle be possible? Whether God and nature are one and the same?-(Schelling, a *divine*, is at the head of a great party, which maintains that they are the same)-and whether the Jews ever expected any

Messiah? Some time ago, many of their critics maintained, that no Messiah was predicted in the Old Testament; but now, they question even whether the Jews had any expectation of one. It would seem, now, that they have come nearly to the end of questions on *theology*."

We have made these long extracts from Professor Stuart, because his candor is a guaranty for the accuracy of the remarks which he has made on the subject of Neology,-because he is well acquainted with writers of this school,-because we believe he has never been considered a *fanatic*. He says of these writers, (page 152,) "The person, who reads their works, will see what the spirit of doubt and unbelief can do, in respect to the Book of God, and where it will carry the men who entertain it. It is indeed a most affecting and awful lesson. But is there no

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reason to fear that we are to learn it by sad experience?"

Time has answered the professor's question. Recent publications show that the neologic system of interpretation, which *he* so forcibly condemned in the year 1819, has gained a currency in our land, and this, among divines who exercise a powerful influence on the opinions of the church. But we will not anticipate the proofs of this fact.

When the neologists had, as they thought, demolished the confidence hitherto reposed in the inspiration of the biblical writers, and left men to decide by their own *acumen*, what portions of the Scriptures were worthy of regard, and to cast away those which were at variance with their philosophic or religious standards, their task was by no means ended. The unholy propensities of their hearts were still active, and the cry of those hearts, like that of the disobedient Jews, still was, "Cause the Holy One of Israel to cease from before us." Although the Bible was regarded merely as a historical document, it presented too many proofs of the moral government of God,-too much of his interference and control over the conduct and destinies of men,-not to offend those who wished "to walk after the sight of their own eyes." Another effort must be made. It was made with a boldness which astonished the reflecting portion of mankind. The assertion was hazarded, that the books of the canon had been grossly corrupted. De Wette maintained that Moses was not the author of the Pentateuch; that it was much later than the age in which he lived; and the following assertion was offered as a proof: "The

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analogy of the whole history of the language and literature of the Hebrews, contradicts the supposition that Moses is the author of the Pentateuch; it is inconceivable that one man should create the whole literature of a nation in all its extent, both as to matter and as to language." Augusti, in his Introduction to the Old Testament, gravely tells us, "that there is such a coherence in the whole Pentateuch, as proves the book to be an *epic poem*!" Some of the Germans have taken the position that "Moses wrote nothing more than the *laws* which are contained in the Pentateuch, and that the historical parts have been added in later ages, from traditions." This position is defended on the ground that miracles are *impossible*. Says De Wette, (in his introduction to the Old Testament,) "Common sense determines that miracles are impossible. It may, however, be

inquired, whether some events did not really happen, which, to eye-witnesses and contemporaries, *seemed* to be miraculous. This, also, receives an answer in the negative, as soon as we inspect the narration with any degree of closeness. The result is already obtained, that the narration is *not contemporary, nor derived from contemporary sources.*"

Having disposed of the claim of Moses to thy authorship of the Pentateuch, these critics are unable to agree as to the real author. Rosenmüller, enumerates no less than *twelve* theories on this single point, all different, and many contradictory.

Jahn, who, according to the *modern standard*, is thought to be untainted with Neology, makes the following remarks-(Introduction to the Old

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Testament, translated by S. Turner and W. R. Whithingham, page 230)-respecting the miracle in which the sun and moon are said to have stood still, Josh. x. 12-15: "The celebrated passage (x. 12-15) is poetical; for which reason, it is to be poetically interpreted, namely, thus: that the Hebrews inflicted a defeat upon the Canaanites as great as if the sun had stopped his course, and had prolonged the day to a double length!" Yet, Jahn's Introduction is a text-book in most of our theological institutions.

This author thus notices the preternatural strength of Samson (page 243.) "The connexion of Samson's strength with the preservation of his hair, (Judges xvi. 16-19,) was merely *his own supposition*. Hence, when his hair was shorn, his *courage* forsook him, and he did not *dare to try* his strength; but, with the growth of his hair, his courage returned, and he was capable of exerting his former strength." It is due to the translators of Jahn, to say, that in a note, they express their dissent from *this* hypothesis.

Eichorn furnishes a curious specimen of the respect in which a neologist may hold "the sure word of prophecy." "All ecstasies and visions, are, in my opinion, mere poetic fiction."

Jahn, who, it will be recollected, was a Catholic, in his summary of the book of Daniel, although he seems to have stopped far short of the goal reached by Eichorn, yet he does not hesitate to interpret the vision of the seventh chapter, thus: "The fourth monster had no resemblance to the others, but was exceedingly strong, and terrible to look at; it had great iron teeth," etc. With the intention of changing the

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law or religion, it made war upon, and conquered the saints, who were in subjection for a time, times, and half of a time. Hereupon, the Eternal sits in judgment, commands the monster to be put to death, and the others to be delivered of their dominion, but allows them to live until a definite time. Then came in the clouds, a human form, and received the dominion; the saints received sight, that is to say, *they conquered and fortified the kingdom*. All this is emblematic of the times of the Greek kingdoms, which were to spring from the monarchy of Alexander. Although the more considerable of these kingdoms were only four, yet, if the less important are added to them, they will approach so *near* to ten, that this round number may very properly be used. The little horn, which

became great, is Antiochus Epiphanes, who prohibited the worship of the true God, and persecuted and made war upon the pious Jews. The human figure in the clouds is an emblem of the Maccabees!" When we recollect that the council of Trent declared the apocryphal books (I. and II. Maccabees) to be a part of the canonical Scriptures, it may not be thought strange that Jahn should treat them with great respect; but what must we think of the assertion that, "the human figure in the clouds is an emblem of the Maccabees," after finding the following language in the passage to which he refers, Daniel vii. 13: "I saw in the night visions, and behold, *one* like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before them. And there was given him dominion and glory, and a kingdom, that all

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people, nations and languages, should serve him; his dominion *is* an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom, *that* which shall not be destroyed."

In presenting his views of the import of the vision recorded in Daniel viii., Jahn says-"After this, the victorious he-goat grows to an astonishing greatness, (that of Alexander's monarchy,) but soon the horn is broken, (Alexander dies,) and four sharp horns spring up, (the four larger Greek kingdoms, Egypt, Syria, Macedonia and Thrace,) from one of which grows out a small horn, which performs exploits towards the south, east, and the pleasant land, that is, Palestine; it acts against the host of heaven, throws down some stars and tramples on them. It contends even with the prince himself of the heavenly host; the continual offerings are taken away, and through treachery *a garrison is stationed at the place. This continues for 2300 morning and evening offerings, 1150 days, that is about three years and a half, and then the rites of the sanctuary are restored.* This is a representation of the expeditions of Antiochus Epiphanes against Egypt, against Armenia and Persia, and against Judea, and of his persecutions, when the Jews at the end obtained their independence."

Many of our readers will conclude that Jahn's interpretations are not uninfluenced by Rationalism, yet this same author has employed two entire sections in refuting the more thorough-going neologists, who have asserted that the book is a comparatively modern composition, in short, that it is a forgery! We have often inquired, if Jahn is esteemed a pillar in the cause of sound

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interpretation. If *his* expositions bring us so often from heaven to earth, from what is spiritual to what is temporal, how deplorably low must a belief in the authority and inspiration of the Scriptures have sunk, when Germany, once the glory of the Reformation, can display a host of theological writers, whom *he* deems it a duty to oppose on the ground of *the looseness* of their principles of interpretation!

The miracles of Christ have not escaped the unholy hands of these skeptics. In Eckerman's "Theological Contributions," the following hypothesis is presented: "Christ learned *the art of working miracles* from some *mystagogues*, but having the impression that they could not be performed without a peculiar influence of God, he declared them to be the works of God himself."

The author of a "historico-critical dissertation on the declarations of Jesus concerning the Messiah's kingdom,"-disposes of striking predictions of the Saviour in reference to it, in the following manner: "Jesus himself was *somewhat* attached to the erroneous ideas of his contemporaries, in relation to the nature of the Messiah's kingdom; and in his declarations, concerning his second coming and the circumstances connected with it, he was indeed *sincere*, and uttered the sentiments of his heart; but in these matters he cannot be our guide."

The doctrine of a *literal* resurrection of the body was deemed by Paul (1 Cor. chap. 15,) a fundamental doctrine; of Christianity; yet Kant, who has been termed the "Locke of Germany," in his "Religions Instruction," makes the following

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remark on this momentous topic: "Reason can see no advantage in the supposition, that a body, which, however much it may have been purified, is still to be formed substantially of the same materials; a body, to which we have never been rightly attached in this life, should be dragged after us through all eternity. Nor can reason comprehend what would be the use of this body, which consists of earth, in heaven, that is, in another part of the universe, in which probably other substances than matter are necessary to the existence and preservation of living beings."

We have passed thus hastily through this wilderness of error,

"Where all life dies, death lives, and nature breeds Perverse, all monstrous, all prodigious things,"

not that we take pleasure in tracing the downward course of men, who, abandoning the guide which God has provided, wander on in utter darkness; but, because duty demands that their example should be held up as a warning to others. It is highly probable that when these writers first commenced their rash speculations, they never dreamed of the results to which they were finally led. The cunning of the Prince of the power of the air, filled them with a vain conceit of the mighty strength of *their reason*, in religious matters. Thinking more highly of themselves than they ought to have thought, attempting to philosophize where they should have prayed and believed, loving the praise of men more than the honor that cometh from God only; their names must be chronicled among those, who, with talents

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of the highest order, become the scourges, rather than the benefactors of their race.

The history of the church shows that men do not suddenly become heretics. In proportion as vital piety declines in a religious community, truth becomes less interesting, especially *that truth* which reproves those who backslide in heart. Error will be welcomed. Yet this error may long exist and increase, it may long be cherished secretly, before its advocates will dare to avow it in the face of the world. If, under such circumstances, some powerful agitation of the public mind occurs, then the depths of thought are laid bare, and the world learns, for the first time, that its religious guides have departed from the faith, and stands amazed as the light breaks in and reveals what the "ancients of Israel do in the dark; every man in the chambers of his imagery." So the decay of the oak, which has

stood the storms of a hundred winters, goes on slowly at the heart, until that has mouldered away in silence and darkness. The passing gale then hurls the monarch of the forest to the dust, and reveals the rottenness within.

We have already intimated that Neology has begun to influence the opinions of a portion of the American church. More than twenty years have passed away, since we heard some of our elder preachers express a decided conviction, that the attention then paid to German writers in our theological institutions, would ere long produce results unfavorable to the interests of religion. They were unwilling to allow that a more accurate acquaintance with oriental literature could be any adequate compensation for the mischiefs

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that would be wrought in the hearts of theological students, by a familiarity with works fraught with skepticism. "Better would it be for us," said one of these silver-haired men, "if every trace of German theology were sunk in the German ocean." When we heard this remark, we were disposed to rank it with those complaints which are uttered by the aged, who, as they feel forcibly the ills of life, amidst nature's decay, look back to their earlier times as the best. But now, when more years and *more facts* have corrected some of our earlier opinions, we frankly say that we could wish that Neology had found a resting place in the bottom of the German ocean, rather than in the breasts of our pastors and professors of theology.

It will be found in the history of religious error, that its votaries usually make their first essays for its propagation by conversation. Occasional remarks are hazarded, often in the shape of questions, doubts and queries, which leave him who proposes them on *non-committal* ground. In this manner, the readiness of other minds to embrace the sentiment can be ascertained at the least risk. The *errorist* assumes the attitude of one, who is humbly and cautiously inquiring after truth, and thus conceals the fact that his opinion is fully formed, and that his interrogatories are really designed to give information, not to obtain it. It is only at a later period that he will hazard an expression of his sentiments on paper. It is seldom that his writings contain a full expression of his belief. They rather exhibit a portrait of sentiment presented in that form in which he has the least to fear from an adverse

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public sentiment. The cause for adopting this plan of operations is quite obvious. It is much more difficult to fasten on him the charge of heresy, when we must resort to oral communications, always liable to the suspicion of being altered or distorted, than it is when he has committed himself by using the pen. We have alluded to the fact, that some agitation of the public mind will embolden men to an expression of ideas, which they have long cherished in secret. If two sentiments are brought into collision, one of which arrays on its side the passions and interests of the worldly-minded, whether within or without the pale of the church, while the other is adverse to temporal advantages, - one which exposes its advocates to the reproach of the ungodly, and to the frowns of that class, who suppose that godliness is gain, - it is easy to see the results, which will be produced on the minds of those professors of Christianity who do not properly

feel the force of the divine truth, "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." They will of course, embrace the popular side of the question. If their learning or talents give them any influence in such matters, they will contrive to render themselves conspicuous in the controversy, and after ascertaining where numbers afford a prospect of safety, will boldly hazard opinions which, under other circumstances, would have been carefully suppressed. It is not intended, in making these remarks, to charge all of this class with an entire want of Christian principle. We have proofs in the entire history of the church, that Christians sometimes decline

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sadly from the life and power of religion. In that state, they are *weak* like other men. Prospects of present advantage, love of ease and approbation, and the fear of man, have in all ages proved a snare to those, who, in the judgment of charity, might be deemed children of the Redeemer. If the author of evil can deceive these, and lead them out of the path of truth—above all, if he can induce them to espouse and defend error, he obtains one of his mightiest triumphs.

Events have occurred, within the last three years, to open the eyes of our community to the *real* sentiments of its religious guides, in reference to "the sure word of prophecy." The testimony of the Scriptures, respecting the second coming of the Saviour, after having been long neglected, has been again presented to the world. It is a well known fact, that since the era of the French revolution, the study of the prophetic writers has received so little attention among the American clergy, that any attempt to ascertain the mind of the Spirit, as communicated by those writers, has been regarded as a proof of fanaticism. Many of those whose official duty it was to teach the whole truth, have not hesitated to admit, that they had never attempted to study the prophecies. We believe we are not mistaken, when we say that in our theological institutions, no lectures were delivered on this subject, and it has been generally believed, that prophecy could not be understood until the events which it shadowed forth became matters of history. Many, who held permanent stations in the church, instead of instituting independent examinations of inspired predictions, contented themselves

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with adopting the sentiments of German writers on these points,—writers who, unhappily, were less qualified to teach the words of soberness and truth than almost any others, inasmuch as they were the pillars of the school of Rationalism. It was with such weapons as could be found in neological arsenals that the friends of the advent doctrine were first assailed. Their antagonists seem to have been aware that the Adventists possessed an important advantage in the contest, while they made frequent appeals to the obvious import of the common version of the Scriptures. The world was at first told that none but the learned were capable of understanding the word of God. Protestant theologians did not hesitate to adopt the exploded doctrine of the Papal church, that the common people must remain dependent on the ministry for a knowledge of divine truth; that piety, prayer and a childlike disposition to know and obey the will of God, were of less importance than high literary attainments. Strange as it may seem,

the positions taken by Romanists at the dawn of the reformation to check its progress, were taken in the nineteenth century by men who claimed to be the sworn opposers of "the man of sin." The Adventists were overwhelmed with charges of fanaticism, enthusiasm and madness. They were coolly told that they were too *ignorant* to have any claim to a candid hearing from an enlightened community. Their activity and zeal in attempting to rescue the prophets from longer neglect, their perseverance amidst the frowns of a world, that lieth in wickedness, was ascribed to every, base and sordid motive. Men who, abandoning the comforts and

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endearments of domestic life, literally went forth to spread the truth without purse or scrip, were termed "speculators." Those who were expending their little all, that others might be prepared to meet Him who is to be revealed from heaven in flaming fire, found that the severest blows aimed at their characters, came from those, who were within the pale of the church. It was, however, soon seen, that they were not to be silenced by invective. Public sentiment demanded something more than railing accusations as a substitute for sound reasoning. The Adventists had not only preached, but written. When candid men perused their productions, they were at a loss to discover on what ground the authors were charged with being "beside themselves." While they made no pretensions to extensive learning, they still seemed to be familiar with the Scriptures, and far better acquainted with the historical proofs of the accomplishment of prophecy than many of their opposers. Candor demands that we should say that, if to count all things but loss for the cause of truth, for the welfare of souls; if to concentrate all the energies of the mind on the great object-the speedy coming of the Lord; if these things are proofs of madness, then the Adventists were undoubtedly mad. On the other hand, if to be extremely careful not to offend the wealthy and the mighty of this world, if due caution in following instead of leading public opinion, be a proof of sanity, then their opponents were truly "wise in their generation."

The time at last arrived when the *pen* must be used, and a formal appeal made to the world. The position taken by anti-Adventists now became

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defined by their writings, and the community possessed the means of deciding whether American theologians had really adopted the erroneous system of interpreting the oracles of truth, which characterized the German school, or not.

The first work which attracted general notice, was the well-known "Hints on the Interpretation of Prophecy," by Professor M. Stuart, of Andover Theological Seminary. The erudition of the author, his intimate acquaintance with biblical literature, the fame he had already acquired by publications on the Hebrew language, and his talents, all served to excite attention; and many predicted that *he* would put the question which so deeply interested the ranks of the church, at rest forever. Time and facts have decided how far this expectation has been realized. Of one thing we feel quite sure-that some of the positions taken by Professor Stuart, have been so startling to the mass of those termed orthodox believers, that, while they are strongly opposed to the Adventists, they hesitate to follow his conclusions, and think that on the subject of prophetic interpretation he

is by no means a safe guide. He seems to have been fully aware that his position, that the prophets have never used a day as the symbol of a year, was at variance with the opinions of such men as Mede, Isaac Newton, Bishop Newton, and many others equally distinguished for their erudition and piety. He makes the following remarks (page 77, second edition): "It is a singular fact, that the great mass of interpreters in the English and American world have, for many years, been wont to understand the *days* designated in Daniel and in the Apocalypse, as

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the representatives or symbols of *years*. I have found it difficult to trace the origin of this general, I might say almost universal, custom." From this paragraph, we are left at liberty to conclude that Professor Stuart maintains that a *day* is never used as the symbol of a *year*; and that "the great mass of interpreters in the" German world, differ from the interpreters whom he has noticed, and that he has adopted their views.

Other portions of his book leave no doubt on this point. To have been consistent with his hypothesis, he should not have made the prophetic weeks in Daniel ix. an exception. He labors, however, to prove that the Hebrew "Shabuim" signifies *sevens*, and not weeks, leaving us to ascertain the word which it qualifies from the context; or, as he has done in this case, from conjecture. He supposes that as Daniel must have had the seventy *years* of the captivity in his mind, he would necessarily have understood that the *seventy sevens* referred to *years*. In most other *instances* in which American and English interpreters believe that *days* are symbols of years, Professor Stuart stoutly maintains his ground. The results at which he consequently arrives, coincide with those of the Neologic school. The professor tells us, that the language in Rev. ii. 10, "Behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days," implies neither a trial of ten years, nor of ten literal days, -but a "short period merely, not a strictly definite one." He asserts that the number *ten* is thus employed in the Scriptures. In proof of this, he quotes 1 Samuel xxv. 38. Nehe. v. 18. Jere. xlii.

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7. Dan. i. 12-14. Acts xxv. 6. Now, if our reader will turn to these places, we think he will agree with us, that the word *ten* is not used in either case for an indefinite number. The following extracts will serve to show how far Professor Stuart has deviated from the views hitherto entertained by the great mass of English and American Protestant interpreters:

"The sum of Rev. xi. is, then, that the Romans would invade and tread down Palestine for three and a half years, and that Christians, during that period, would be bitterly persecuted and slain; but still, that, after the same period, the persecution would cease there, and the religion of Jesus become triumphant. The words of the Saviour, in Matt. xxiv., compared with the tenor of Rev. xi., seem to lead us plainly and safely to these conclusions. And in these we may acquiesce, because historical facts are before us, which serve to show that the *forty-two months*, or 1260 *days*, are to be understood in their plain and obvious sense.

"The latter of these two verses designates again the same period of retreat and safety as the sixth verse, but in a different way, viz., it is designated (after the manner of Dan. vii. 25, xii. 7) by the expression *time and times and a half a time*, Rev. xii. 14. When this period expires, then the church is freed from the desolating power in Palestine, as it was, of old, freed from the like power in the days of Antiochus Epiphanes. The similarity of events, in the two cases, gives occasion to adopt the same language in respect to the continuance of both.

"The persecuting power of imperial pagan

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Rome, and specially that power as exercised by Nero, is, beyond all reasonable question, symbolized by the beast described in Rev. xiii. 3, seq.

"Whenever the *beast* is distinguished from the seven heads, it then is employed as a *generic* symbol of the imperial power; but when particular and specific actions or qualities of a personal and distinctive nature are predicted of the beast, it designates the imperial power as individually exercised, e. g. by Nero.

"To recount the efforts which have been made to interpret these passages, would of itself require somewhat of a volume. I have never seen, and cannot find, but one probable solution; and that is drawn from the history of the times, and particularly the history of what was said and generally believed respecting Nero, during his life-time, and even long after his death."

"The most usual one, by far, seems to have been, that Nero would be assassinated, receive a wound apparently deadly, recover from it, and subsequently go to the East and return from it with great power, ravage Palestine, lay waste the church, and finally re-enter Rome with fire and sword, and avenge himself of all his former enemies.

"Thus much for the belief of the heathen in general. Nor was this belief confined to them. Christians widely participated in it. Passages in abundance are to be found in parts of the Sibylline Oracles, some of which were written about A. D. 80, and others early in the second century, which show most plainly how vivid the persuasion was, that Nero would again make his appearance, notwithstanding his apparently deadly wound."

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"The question is not now, at least with me it is not, whether the writer of the Apocalypse did himself participate in this vulgar belief respecting Nero's re-appearance. I have no apprehension that he cherished such views as these; certainly not, if he were (as I believe) an inspired man. My apprehension is, that in describing the beast, i.e. Nero, instead of calling him by name, (which would have been, in connection with what he said, a treasonable offence,) he has adverted to him as the person respecting whom the reports in question were current, and purposely adverted to him in such a way, in order that his readers might easily know who was meant.

"Several circumstances serve to confirm this view of the case. After describing the beast *whose deadly wound was healed*, in Rev. xiii. 3-8, he adds immediately: 'If any man has an ear, let him hear,' i.e. let the reader very attentively consider who is meant in this case. He then subjoins: 'If any one leads

into exile, he shall go away into exile;' Rev. xiii. 10. In other words: 'He, of whom I have been speaking, is the individual who exiles Christians; but mark well! he shall himself speedily be exiled.' In chapter xvii., the effort to guide his readers and put them on their guard against an erroneous construction of his words, is still more visible. After speaking of 'the beast which was, and is not, and will come up from the abyss,' he exclaims: *Wdeo nous o exwn sofian*, *here is a meaning which comprises wisdom.*' In other words: Some special sagacity is needed in the interpretation of this passage.

"By speaking in this way does not John show,

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that he does not expect his words, i. e. his description of the beast, to be understood as if he employed them simply to express his own individual belief, but only that he introduces upon the scene the person of whom such things are reported, viz., such as that his deadly wound is healed, and that he will again resume his imperial power?

"Is there any more difficulty in such a supposition, than there is when the Saviour says to the Pharisees: 'If I cast out demons by Beelzebub, *by whom do your sons cast them out?*' Matt. xii. 27. Is there any more, than when Jesus speaks of 'unclean spirits as *walking through desert places*, seeking rest and finding none?' Matt. xii. 43. In both cases the popular opinion is cited, without any remark whether it is true or untrue. The speaker had another and different purpose in view. So here; John's object was secretly to intimate to his readers, who was meant by *the beast*; and in order to accomplish this object, he has repeated those things which popular rumor had spread abroad respecting him, or at least alluded to them. But, as I have already noted, he has taken care, in each case, to give a caution to his readers how they interpret this, or what use they make of it. On any other ground, why should these cautions be inserted in these particular places, and omitted in all the other symbolical parts of the Apocalypse?

"If the reader is satisfied, with me, that John might describe Nero in this way, it will be easy to show him how well the description comports with the substance of the common rumor. According to this, Nero was to be assassinated, and

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to receive a wound apparently deadly, and yet to recover from it. So says Rev. xiii. 3: 'One of the heads [i. e. Nero] was smitten as it were unto death, and yet his deadly wound was healed.' What can be more exact?"

The paragraph commencing with the words, "Is there any more difficulty," etc., clearly proves that although he, in the year 1819, censured Semler for using the principle of *accommodation*, yet he has here employed it *himself*; thus sanctioning a principle of interpretation which he *once* justly denounced as dangerous, as one that would pave the way for a denial of the authority of the Bible.

By the way, it may be remarked that the prediction in Daniel ix. has been "a rock of offence" to the German Rationalists. Bertholdt, Bleek and Hitzig, maintain that this part of Daniel is a *forgery* by some writer, who, because the time fixed by Jeremiah for the return of the Jews and the rebuilding of their temple had long passed without a fulfilment, has attempted a sort of parody or mystical

interpretation of the 70 years! Bertholdt and Rosenmüller tell us that Messiah the prince, is Alexander. Bleek and Hitzig maintain that he is Seleucus Philopater, the predecessor of Antiochus Epiphanes. In reference to this and other theories respecting the interpretation of Daniel, Hegsterburg forcibly remarks: "The reference to the Maccabees and the whole non-Messianic interpretation, will remain false, as long as the word of Christ remains true; therefore to all eternity. That the passage, Matt. xxiv. 15, refers to this prophecy, has been shown in *Beitr* 1, p. 263; and that the Lord cites it as

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a real prophecy, which concerned the destruction of the city and temple, to be first fulfilled at a future time, in the same place, p. 266."

The Rev. C. Newton, of Mass., published in the *Christian Watchman* of March 31, 1843, an "Exposition of the 9th chapter of Daniel," from which we shall make some extracts in proof of our assertion that Neology has influenced the opinions of the American clergy. The editor of that paper, the Rev. E. Thresher, makes the following remark respecting the "Exposition:" "The student of prophecy will find on our first page, the views of the Rev. Calvin Newton, upon the closing part of the 9th chapter of Daniel. Mr. Newton is a very sensible man and a ripe scholar." But let us hear the author. After some preliminary remarks, in reference to the prayer of the prophet, he says:

"Such piety was regarded in heaven, and Gabriel was instantly commissioned to descend, and relieve Daniel's anxieties. (See verses 20-23.) In verses 22, 23, the angel positively declares, that he has appeared to give Daniel the information which his heart desired; and that was *certainly* information about the termination of the captivity, and the rebuilding of Jerusalem. Now, since God, and the heavenly messengers who do his will, cannot lie nor deceive, to my own mind it is *certain*, that Gabriel's remarks must apply to the subject of Daniel's prayer. This point being settled, I proceed to an interpretation of verses 24-27, accordingly.

"Here let it be remarked, that, in the Hebrew, the word signifying *seventy*, and that signifying *weeks* or *sevens*, aside from the pointing of the

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Masorites, (which is no part of the original language,) is the same. Repetition, too, in the Scriptures, for the sake of emphasis, is not unfrequent. See an instance in Acts vii. 34. Bearing in mind, then, that Daniel's solicitude was about the seventy years, of which Jeremiah had made prophetic mention, we may take the following as a correct and literal translation of Gabriel's revelation.

"Seventy, *seventy* are determined, respecting thy people, and respecting thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to end sins, and to atone for iniquity, and to bring back the righteousness of ancient times, and to complete the vision and the prophet, and to anoint the holy of holies. Know, now, and understand. From the going forth of the commandment to rebuild Jerusalem to an anointed prince shall be seven weeks. And sixty-two weeks the area and the trench shall be being made, even during trouble of the times. And after these sixty-two weeks, an anointed one shall be cut off, and there shall be nothing to him. And the people of the prince who shall succeed, shall lay waste the city and the

sanctuary; yet his end shall be with a flood, but unto the end of a war desolations are appointed. And one week shall confirm a league with many; yet, in the midst of that week, shall sacrifice and offering be in a state of intermission, and on the place of defence shall be the abominations of the desolator. But to extermination, even an appointed one, it shall be poured on the desolator.'

"The angel here informs Daniel, that the Jews' captivity is *certainly* limited to a period of seventy years;-that, at the expiration of that time, they

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will, by their sufferings, have sufficiently atoned for their transgressions, and will return to their former piety; that the instructions of the vision which Daniel was, at that moment, enjoying, and the prophecy of Jeremiah will be fulfilled; and that the holy of holies, in the new temple, will be anointed. The phrase, holy of holies, is of frequent use in the Scriptures, with evident reference, elsewhere, to the innermost part of the tabernacle, or of the temple. Why, then, should the usage, in this place, be an exception? I cannot believe that it is. The tabernacle, which, before the days of Solomon, was used as the temple was afterwards, was consecrated by anointing. (See Ex. xxx. 26-29; also xl. 9, 10.) Hence, whatever might have been the real ceremony, the consecration of the second temple is represented as the anointing of it.

"The commandment to rebuild Jerusalem was Cyrus' decree, mentioned 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23; Ezra i. 1-3; 1st Esdras ii. 1-5; and Josephus' Jewish Antiquities, book xi. chapter i. The anointed prince was Sheshbazzar or Zerubbabel, called the prince of Judah, Ezra i. 8; and here called an *anointed* prince, because he was of royal descent; and kings, being originally anointed, were ever afterwards termed anointed ones. From the time when Cyrus published his decree from the throne of Persia, before the Jews in Chaldea could rally under their prince Sheshbazzar, it would necessarily be about seven literal weeks.

"It is somewhat uncertain how we are to understand the words which I have here translated 'the area and the trench.' Gesenius refers the

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former to the open space about the temple; and the latter he regards as the ditch around the fortified city. But whatever may be the definite application of these words, it is clear that they refer to some portion of the work which the Jews had to perform. Now Cyrus reigned *seven* or eight years. For a season, the Jews carried on their work in peace; but, near the close of his reign, they were disturbed by the Cutheans and other neighboring nations, who had been planted in Samaria. See Josephus, book xi. chapter ii., also Ezra iv. 1-5. History does not fix the precise length of this troublous time; but it certainly favors the supposition that it was sixty-two weeks, according to the angel's prophetic declaration. At the expiration of these sixty-two weeks, Cyrus, an anointed one, (see Isaiah xlv. 1, and elsewhere,) was cut off effectually by his death, so that no power remained to him. Cambyses or Ahasuerus succeeded Cyrus; and, at the request of the Jews' enemies, forbade the building of the city and the temple; and these enemies carried his prohibition into effect. See Josephus, book xi. chapter ii., also Ezra iv. 6. The whole work was now thrown into confusion. Cambyses

reigned six or eight years; and, on returning from an Egyptian expedition, to suppress a rebellion raised by the Pseudo Smerdis, or Smerdis the Magian, was wounded by his own sword, and suddenly died. Thus his end was with a flood or sudden; but the desolations of Jerusalem remained, till the end of the war with Smerdis; that is, during the period of his possessing the government, which, according to Josephus, (book xi. chapter iii.) was one year.

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"After this, Darius ascended the Persian throne and Zerubbabel or Sheshbazzar, the prince of the Jews, visited Persia, and obtained a renewal of the decree of Cyrus, by which the people were allowed to resume the work at Jerusalem. See 1st Esdras, chapters iii. iv., also Josephus, book xi. chapter iii. Josephus tells us, that Zerubbabel went immediately from Persia to Babylon; and that his countrymen there, on learning the good news, betook themselves to a festival *of seven days*, 'for the rebuilding and restoration of their country.' At the close of this feast, a multitude chose themselves rulers, and went up to Jerusalem rejoicing. Thus one week confirmed a league with many.

"In the midst of that very week, however, while the Jews who had, till now, remained in Chaldea, were rejoicing, and preparing to go up and set forward the work at Jerusalem, everything, in the latter place, continued in the same desolation into which it had been thrown by the prohibitory decree of Cambyses. From the time of that decree till now, sacrifices and offerings had been prevented, and the Jews' place of defence had been desecrated. Whether by 'place of defence,' we understand the temple yet unfinished, or the fortifications which had been made around Jerusalem, the general sense is not affected; for everything valuable and sacred to the Jews was trampled under foot by their enemies. That sacrifices and offerings had been presented on the altar of God before Cambyses' decree, we learn from Ezra iii. 1-7. 'That they were in a state of intermission from the time of executing that decree, till Zerubbabel and the Jews came up

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from Chaldea to carry into effect Darius' decree, and that they were then resumed, is evident from Ezra vi. 8-10, also from 1st Esdras v. 47-50; and from Josephus, book xi. chapters iii. and iv. See also a mention of the desolations, made under Cambyses' decree, in 1st Esdras ii. 30, and in Josephus, book xi. chapter iii.

"Under Darius' decree, the Jews went forward with the work of rebuilding Jerusalem and the temple, and the latter was dedicated in the sixth year of this monarch's reign. See Ezra vi. 15-18; 1st Esdras vii. 5; also Josephus, book xi. chapter iv. The Jews' enemies were thus completely defeated in their designs, and were compelled to cease from their opposition, and leave the Jews undisturbed in the enjoyment of their religious privileges. Thus did God bless his people, and pour out, to extermination, his displeasure on their enemies, the desolators of the holy place. See various expressions in Ezra, 1st Esdras, and Josephus.

"From the exposition thus given, we see that the particulars enumerated in the last three verses of the 9th chapter of Daniel end just where the 24th verse

leads us to expect them to end; that is, at the dedication of the second temple. True, the fortifications of Jerusalem were not completed, till many years afterwards; but the captivity might be considered as closed, when all the means of worshipping the true God, and conducting the ceremonies of the Jewish religion were restored.

"Objections to the above view may easily be started, and, I believe, as easily obviated. Perhaps, in the minds of some, the most serious objection will be the fact, that Christ applies to

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the destruction of Jerusalem, by the Romans, in the year, A. D. 70, an expression used in this chapter. But I reply, the expression, 'the abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet,' means no more than an abomination of desolation like that spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet. When Herod slew the infant children of Judea, (see Matt. ii. 17, 18,) what had been spoken of by Jeremiah the prophet, (see Jer. xxxi. 15,) was said to be fulfilled. The meaning is, the weeping, in the one case, was like that described in the other. John the Baptist, is called Elijah, because he was like Elijah. Such an application of language is frequent in the Scriptures."

It is hardly necessary to apprise the reader that the 1st book of Esdras, which Mr. Newton has quoted as one of his authorities, is a manifest forgery, made up partly of extracts taken from the books of 2 Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah, with the addition of the ridiculous fable related in chapters iii. and iv.

It should not be forgotten that Mr. Newton refers us to Josephus, Antiq. x. 3. Now Josephus has copied this very chapter from the apocryphal Esdras, and yet a reference is made to him as though he were an independent authority.

We shall leave our readers to form their own conclusions respecting the merits of this exposition, without further comment.

Professor Stuart's position, that we are never to regard the prophets as having used a day as the symbol of a year, was adopted by Professor Stone, of Cincinnati, formerly a pupil of Professor Stuart, in a pamphlet entitled, "The Utter

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Groundlessness of all Millennial Arithmetic;" and by the Rev. Nathaniel Colver, of Boston, Mass. The latter gentleman, in his pamphlet, "The Prophecy of Daniel Literally Fulfilled," arrives at these conclusions, that the little horn mentioned in Daniel vii. 8, is neither more nor less than Nero, the Roman Emperor. Of course the impressive scene of the judgment, in vs. 10, 11, must be referred to the death of that emperor! In perfect keeping with his system of interpretation, Mr. Colver contends that Daniel xii. 1, 2, has no reference to the final judgment. This passage *merely* designates a national deliverance of the Jews.

Another author, the Rev. John Dowling, in an "Exposition of the Prophecies supposed by William Miller to predict the Second Coming of Christ in 1843," has adopted Jahn's theory, that the Hebrew phrase in Daniel viii.14, "ad ereb boker alpayim ushelÛsh meÛth," "unto two thousand three hundred days," should be translated unto "two thousand three hundred evening and morning sacrifices." He seems to rely on the words "ereb boker," "morning evening," as conclusive proofs of the soundness of this interpretation. How much weight is to be allowed to such

an argument may be safely left to the decision of any tolerable Hebrew scholar, or even to an English one, who recollects that, "the evening and the morning were the first day." Professor Stuart, in the work from which we have already quoted, regards this position as untenable. It is due to Mr. Dowling, to say, that with the exception of the word *days* in this passage, he does not maintain that a *day* in prophetic language never

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symbolizes a year. Although his decided hostility to the adventists has caused him to stumble into the neological realm, we have reason to believe that there are *moral causes* by which he is influenced, that would never allow him to think of a location in that land of "shadows, clouds, and darkness."

To those who are conversant with the state of opinion in many of the churches, it will be obvious, that the most clear and undisguised avowals of Rationalism are found in conversation rather than in writing. As in this mode of communicating ideas, the restraint which exists in the desk, or comes over the author, who remembers that his productions may be adduced in testimony, does not prevent a very frank expression of sentiment; here the most striking proofs may be found. There are multitudes within the pale of the church, who, in the familiarity of private intercourse, do not hesitate to question or deny the personal coming of the Saviour. Others consider the literal resurrection of the body clogged with too many difficulties to be received as an article of faith. There are some, who are by no means satisfied that the prophetic writings can be of any service, even if they could be understood. Not a few preachers may be found, who, in private and in public, have dissuaded their hearers from attempting to "take heed to the sure word of prophecy." Those, who have disregarded such counsels, have been denounced and ridiculed, in no very measured terms, as visionaries and fanatics. Now it is probable that in all these cases those, who hold the opinions which we have noticed, were not aware that they had their origin in the

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infidel school of Rationalism, and were held and defended by men, who have contributed, beyond all others, to bring a lasting blight on the cause of religion in Germany.

We might proceed further, and fill pages with extracts from what are termed *religious newspapers*, in proof of the influence of Rationalism on the mind of their editors and correspondents. As a large portion of these, however, make no pretensions to anything like argument, but on the contrary, are characterized by the same personal abuse, coarseness, and vulgarity, which disgrace the political press, we shall leave them to be buried "midst the wreck of things that were." Sufficient to the writers will be the account which they must meet at the bar of Him who "seeth not as man seeth."

We appeal to facts, which can be "known and read of all men," when we say, that

Once, the momentous subjects of the resurrection and judgment were themes which our preachers introduced in their discourses, to move the impenitent to awake and escape from the wrath to come.

Now, many who stand as watchmen on the walls of Zion, but seldom allude to such topics, lest it should be suspected that they lean towards "Millerism;" and the consequence is, that, as they do not follow the example of Christ and the apostles in preaching, men slumber on in their sins and are ripened for destruction.

Once, the whole Orthodox church believed that the Saviour would come in the clouds, and that every eye would see him.

Now, multitudes of professed Christians may

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be found, who believe that such language is employed *figuratively* to indicate mere temporal judgments.

Once, it was believed by the church, that the heavens being on fire, would pass away with a great noise, the elements melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein, be burnt up; yet Christians, according to the divine promise, looked for "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

Now, many in the ranks of the church insist that no such change is to be expected, but, on the contrary, some moral change in the inhabitants of the earth is all that is implied in such language; in other words, "the heavens and earth that now are," must exist eternally.

Once, a literal resurrection of all who are in the graves, was deemed by the church to be a fundamental doctrine of Christianity.

Now, there are those in the church, undisturbed by its discipline, who openly deny that we are to expect a literal resurrection of the bodies of those who have fallen asleep.

Once, it was predicted that there should "come in the last days, scoffers walking after their own lusts, saying, Where is the promise of his coming?"

Now, we have lived to see that prediction fulfilled, not in the world only, but also in the church.

With such facts before their eyes,-to say nothing of the lives of multitudes, allowed to hold their places in the visible church,-those who study the word of God, and believe that not one jot or tittle of its truths can ever fail,-who observe the signs

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of the period, in which we now live,-such men, uninfluenced by prejudices or suspicions, will conclude that we have fallen on those "perilous times," which were immediately to precede "the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all his saints."

