

attempt at another *rasgo*; but toward midnight my neighbor tapped at the partition-wall, and asked me to get up and look at the sky. Above the ridge of the Cartagos Range, *i. e.*, in the south-east, the horizon glowed with a curious reddish hue, almost like the last shimmer of a lurid sunset. Here and there the stars twinkled through the clouds, and the conflagration of a neighboring town would have revealed itself in a different way. We concluded that the reflection of a volcanic outbreak in the mountains of Costa Rica was the most probable explanation, but the news of the next three days failed to confirm that conjecture, and it may have been one of those unexplained electric phenomena that often accompany a storm in the tropics.

The next morning the little port looked like a fortress-town after a heavy bombardment. The main street was covered with heaps of mingled drift-sand and rubbish. In the hill suburb nearly every house was down, as well as every larger tree and the trestle-work of an American saw-mill. The trees that had weathered the storm in the down-town gardens were not the largest, but the least leafy ones. An avenue of mango-trees (with a foliage resembling that of our southern magnolias) had fallen in ranks, all with their crowns to the west. Lake Managua, the Rio de San Juan, and Bluefields' Lagoon had overflowed their banks for miles; and with the exception of the earthquake of 1858, and perhaps of Walker's invasion, the calamity was, on the whole, the worst that has befallen the republic in the course of this century. In the district of Nicoya, where we were, the loss of life, direct and prospective, was estimated at 23, without counting that by shipwreck, which must have been

very considerable, as a number of feluccas had left the harbor a few hours before the outbreak of the gale. But on the Hacienda del Cerro, eight miles north of Las Velas, a herd of black cattle had saved themselves, *during the forenoon*, by galloping to the glen of a coast-river, the only valley within sixty miles, with a high north shore. Here, then, is one of the cases where art cannot compete with instinct. The tornado originated in the Lesser Antilles, skirted the Island of Porto Rico and the south coast of Cuba, and passed through the center of the Caribbean Sea, across Yucatan, Honduras, Nicaragua, and Costa Rica. Now, the only observatory in the range of that track is the United States Signal Office at Santiago de Cuba. The gale passed Santiago at 11 A. M. and reached Nicoya a little after 2 P. M., so that by instant telegrams (allowing for the unavoidable delays at the intermediate stations) the Santiago observer *might* have warned the Pacific ports in time to prevent them from mistaking the atmospheric symptoms of the early afternoon. But the cattle of the Cerro had recognized the danger during the morning.

In the small coast-towns, where telegrams are received only by the somnolent government officials, a few of the native shipmasters might have been saved by their weather-glasses, if barometrical indications were not so curiously equivocal. Professor Salinez, the State Geologist at Nicaragua, has a barometer on which the lower end of the scale is marked *Huracan ó Terremoto* — hurricane or earthquake. The professor owns that he has never seen the mercury down to the *terremoto* point, and the next higher degree may mean anything, from a tornado to a common thunder-shower.

Horace D. Warner.

THE LATE DR. DORNER AND THE "NEW THEOLOGY."

SEVERAL years ago an eminent American theologian, Dr. Edwards A. Park, late Professor of Christian Theology at Andover, wrote a biographical sketch of Professor Tholuck. Feeling evidently under some necessity of overcoming the prejudice then existing in many quarters against the freedom of German speculation, and being embarrassed in particular by Professor Tholuck's supposed leaning toward the larger hope of the final restoration of all souls, Professor Park apologized for the great German Christian, saying, among other extenuating remarks, that "an opinion, when

entertained in the shape of a subordinate and incidental theory, is as different in its influence from that same opinion, when entertained in the shape of an essential and conspicuous doctrine, as the alcohol in bread is different in its effect from the alcohol in brandy." The apology is creditable to the charity of the distinguished divine who made it, but it is not so creditable to the circle of his readers that such an apology for such a Christian as the late Professor Tholuck ever should have been deemed necessary. I once heard Tholuck himself offer a simpler and very different defense for the

German clergy. It was in the course of one of those conversations which American students abroad, who have ever been invited to walk with Tholuck, cherish among the memories of a life. Kindling with enthusiasm,—for Tholuck was always young in heart, and a word was often enough to call forth his devout enthusiasm,—he said that the German clergy have been accused of falling into rationalism, and it is true that many of them did become rationalists. "When I first came to Halle, there were only two Evangelical ministers and one Evangelical school-master in all this region. But the German clergy," he continued, "have sought most conscientiously to find the truth. They have been most conscientious students." Certain clergymen in the United States have of late been credited with the questionable right of holding private speculations diverse from their public teachings. An honest man may make, and because he is honest he sometimes must make, a distinction between his opinions and his beliefs; Horace Bushnell said he kept certain questions hanging up in his mind. But the only defense which religious teachers should make of their own work, or which they should willingly accept as an apology from their friends, is the justification which Professor Tholuck made for the German clergy, that they have been conscientious students of truth. Good Bishop Butler claimed the same high prerogative for the English clergy when he said, in anticipation of his own work, "I mean to make truth the business of my life." In this country Dr. Nathaniel W. Taylor used to say to his classes in theology: "Young gentlemen, follow truth, though it leads you over Niagara." And this same tone of manly sincerity was echoed at another seat of theological learning in New England when Professor Park, in a notable sermon on the "Duties of the Theologian," pleading in defense of his own suspected "new theology," said: "Idle, idle, this attempt to defeat the first law of nature, that the soul of man shall go out free as the air of heaven—go after truth, let her leadings be what they may." Such worthy words as these may very properly be quoted in a sketch of the life and teachings of that representative German scholar and theologian, Professor Isaac A. Dorner.

The life of a German student and professor has in it usually few of the elements of romance. There is little color for the literary artist to weave into the portraiture of the work and thought of a German philosopher and theologian. Indeed, the simplicity of his life, undisturbed by the rush of the world's affairs, affords the opportunity for that patient work of investigation and quiet, steadfast communion with ideas which have rendered Ger-

man scholarship thorough and trustworthy, and made acquaintance with it a matter of mental economy to scholars in our own country who are pulled hither and thither by the multitude of interests which lay hands upon them. The still world of the theologian may have in it little to attract the general reader; but, nevertheless, the religious question is always the question of life; the theological interest lies not far beneath the surface of all the interests of society and movements of life. Dr. Dorner's name has been brought into special prominence of late in religious discussions in this country. It has become associated with a wide and deep movement in our own religious world, and many readers who care little to enter into the schools of theological disputation may yet wish to know more of one of those leading teachers of our times whose thought is evidently working like a new theological leaven even in our own religious conservatism.

The world of ideas in which men like Dr. Dorner have lived and thought is not so well known to the public at large as those whose studies have led them into it wish it might be. It lies somewhat one side from the traveled ways of literature. One cannot be hurried through it in a day in some easy literary conveyance, at a small expense of time and effort. One must plod through it afoot. But to those who have found their way into this somewhat remote theological world, and who are not easily wearied in exploring it, it proves a rich country, and rewards them with many superlative views of truth. It is unfortunate for us that the best work of German scholars, particularly in the sphere of religion, has not always become the best known abroad. German philosophical and religious literature suffers in the importation very much the same fate as the vintage of foreign fields. The acrid and poorer wines are not long in finding their way to this country, and adulterations of them abound, while the best wines are not so easily brought over to our tables. We have had in past years large importations of the sour wine of German thought. The hasty, unmelting products of German scholarship have been eagerly devoured by a class of American readers. Adulterations and popular dilutions of crude German theories and unripe speculations have been accepted and paraded as pure philosophy by persons who have been ignorant of the mature thought of the richest minds abroad. In philosophy, for example, the "Microcosm" of Hermann Lotze still remains untranslated,—the pure wine of a fine vintage locked up in the original German from most American readers,—while books fermenting with unchristian ideas have found a market,

the effervescent reasonings of the pessimists have been poured at least into second-hand magazine articles, and the distillations of Haeckel's scientific imagination, and of others of his class, have been put up by enterprising publishers in quantities suited to the popular taste, labeled pure science, and dispensed to the people. Similarly in theology Strauss's "Life of Jesus," and other raw first-fruits of the new science of Biblical criticism, were quickly imported, while later and better products of that conscientious study for which the German universities are renowned have been left hardly known beyond the circle of a few thorough students of modern German thought.

Professor Dorner was the last eminent representative of a famous group of German thinkers and teachers whose influence has long been felt by some of our own ablest minds, though it is just beginning to come to its full power in our religious literature. There has been an unbroken succession of strong thinkers in Germany, throughout this century of searching and doubt, who have followed truth conscientiously, and who have not been left, like snow-bound travelers, at some cold, uncomfortable half-way house of skepticism or rationalism, but who have pushed on and through until they have come again to the happy, restful faith of childhood. From about the beginning of this century the German universities have been honored by religious teachers who have found in Christianity the reconciling word for modern philosophies and doubts. Patient and profound students of the history of thought, they have realized in their studies the truth of Pascal's thought, "In Christ all contradictions are reconciled." Walking in the fires of intense questionings, they have come forth Christian believers, unharmed. The smell of the fire may indeed be upon some of their garments, but they have kept the faith. Eminent among this group of Christian scholars and believers are the names of Schleiermacher, Neander, Nitsch, Tholuck, Julius Müller, Ullmann, Rothe, and — but lately entered among that godly company beyond the veil — the venerable Dorner. Schleiermacher was among the first of this royal succession of Christian scholars who, during this century, have found thrones of faith in the land of doubt. He has been rightly spoken of as "the last in a generation of skeptics, and the first in the succession of believers." His name marks the beginning of a new era in German Protestantism; for since the first impulse and freshness of the Reformation an age of Protestant scholasticism had ensued. Careful scholars have learned to distinguish between the living principles and powers of the Ref-

ormation and the post-Reformation dogmas and definitions which are embalmed in many current forms of religious speech. Protestantism was a new life of souls before it crystallized into the confessions of faith. During the last two centuries Protestantism had withered in many places — not everywhere, but in some branches of the Church — into an orthodoxy as dry and fruitless as the Latin scholasticism which became tinder to the flame of Luther's newly kindled faith. The reaction from this Protestant confessionalism and orthodoxy of sound words had necessarily carried many of the best minds over into rationalism and general skepticism. Many of the Protestant clergy at the close of the last century were hopeless rationalists, and sermons were often anything but religious. The old mechanical supernaturalism and orthodoxy had made the challenge of Lessing's skepticism a providential necessity. His sturdy and oft-repeated blows against the dogmatic theologies of his day helped open the gate through which the next century might find an entrance, in a more childlike spirit, to fresh pastures of faith. The same rising flood which came in to renew the arid rationalism in which the philosophy of the last century lay parched and exhausted — the reeking French infidelity, and the dry sands of English deism which mark the dead low tide of human philosophy — the same refreshing flood of higher and still higher thought which began to flow in with the opening years of this century swept away, also, almost every vestige from Germany of the mechanical divinity and confessional dogmatism which marked the wreck of the theology of the Reformation. Schleiermacher stands at the beginning of this new epoch. But Schleiermacher was himself the herald of the coming day, rather than the careful reconstructor of its beliefs. He sowed far better than he could reap. He has been an influence in the thoughts of his pupils and successors, rather than the master of a school of thought. He was not a gigantic system-builder, as Hegel was in philosophy, whose ideas even in the present ruins of his system as a whole are the quarry from which many minds still gather material to build. Schleiermacher's thought has been as a living spring whose outflowing has mingled with the whole subsequent development of German theology. Amid the many diversities and strong individualities of this succession of Christian believers in the German universities, there may still be noticed a certain unity of tendency, which may be traced back to Schleiermacher's spirit and direction. The whole modern development of German theology is informed, at least, by the principle

which was the life of Schleiermacher's thought, that in faith man stands in some real contact with the living God—in some immediate, felt, and assured relationship to the Christian God.

It is noteworthy that this revival of faith, this new epoch of German Protestantism, was in its beginning contemporaneous with that uprising of patriotism and outburst of national enthusiasm which enabled the German people to throw off the yoke of Napoleon. The professors in the University of Berlin were ardent patriots; Schleiermacher's sermons rang with patriotism, while they glowed with faith. When the war interrupted the session of the university, Fichte dismissed his students with the words: "These lectures will be resumed in a free country." This is not the first nor the only example in the history of liberty of the power of patriotism and religion when fused in one purpose in the heart of a people. Patriotism rises and burns in a clear and steady flame when it is fed from the religious consciousness of a people. It flickers and is more easily extinguished if it is not so fed. Any necessity of national life or endeavor which stirs the popular heart to its depths necessarily calls forth the forces of religion, and is sustained by them. What great and enduring achievement has been won in history, unless the religious power of a people's life has been evoked? We may not forget that the modern nation was not born from Erasmus' culture, but from the soul of a peasant's son, a monk who had found his own freedom before the throne of the Christian God; and so also the century which began with the overthrow of the Napoleonic domination, and has become a new era for the German people, began also with renewed power of spiritual faith, and already may be characterized as a new era of Protestantism.

Dr. Isaac A. Dorner was the son of a clergyman. He was born in Württemberg in the year 1809, and was but a child when Schleiermacher was still publishing his famous addresses upon religion to its despisers among the educated. His early career was a more rapid advancement than is usually possible in Germany. Graduated at the University of Tübingen as the first scholar of his class, he made a literary journey, during which he visited England, and returned to Tübingen as a fellow and tutor. There he was elected in the year 1838 to the professorship of theology, then made vacant by the death of Steudel,—one of the last representatives of the old order,—although when elected he was still a young man to hold a full professorship in an important faculty of the University. At that time the influence of Baur was in the ascendant. Baur saw the early Christian his-

tory through Hegel's dialectics, and the so-called Tübingen school, then at the height of its fame and power, possessed no little attractiveness for young and idealistic minds in its scholarly endeavor to account for the origin of a large part of the New Testament through certain supposed tendencies of human thought; and it was not then so apparent as the criticisms of a generation of sober scholars have since made it that the Tübingen school virtually made the second century the father of the first—an order of parentage more philosophical according to Hegel than natural according to the truth of history. The endeavor of these learned men to account for the fact of Christianity in the world from its own effects—a philosophical endeavor now largely abandoned in Germany—reminds us of the wonderful exploit which the monkish biographers relate of Saint Patrick, who upon one occasion, they calmly assure us, swam across the Irish channel, carrying his head in his teeth. Dorner was one of the first writers to withstand vigorously this new school of philosophical reconstructionists of the facts of primitive Christianity, who, on their part, notwithstanding their frequent arbitrary procedure with the facts and actual processes of history, did the Church great service in causing the Scriptures of the New Testament, and every shred and remnant of the early Christian literature extant, to be subjected to a microscopically critical examination. Dorner had himself been a careful student of Hegel, and at first Neander was somewhat suspicious of his Hegelian style and tendencies. The rising star, however, was not to be eclipsed in the clouds that gathered around the setting sun which for a long day had ruled German philosophy. Dorner emerged safely from Hegelianism, as Julius Müller had done from the pantheism of Spinoza; and the results of his earlier Hegelian studies appear in many just and searching criticisms, scattered through his later writings, of the relation of Hegelian ideas to the truths of Christianity. His early skill in confuting the left, or pantheistic, group of Hegelians with their own weapons, and from the arsenal of their own master, rendered him before long a popular champion of faith, and he was urged by a succession of calls from one university to another.

Dr. Schaff, in a brief notice of Dorner written several years ago (Schaff, "German Universities," pp. 377-380), suggests that this rapid succession of calls may have worked disadvantageously to Dorner's literary labors. He certainly never has acquired what we should regard in an English writer as a good style; but few German thinkers study form

of expression. Dr. Dorner was advanced in honor and usefulness from Tübingen to Kiel, from Kiel to Königsberg, from Königsberg to Bonn, thence to Göttingen, and from there to Berlin,—whose university, though one of the latest born, is the queen and crown of the whole university system in Germany. In Berlin he quietly elaborated his teaching, and at last published the ripe fruits of his long life of theological study.

My own recollection of Dorner begins with a picture, still hanging in memory, of a quiet study in Berlin, peopled with books, where a letter of introduction from a former American pupil of his secured me a kindly welcome. Dorner sat by his plain study-table, with books to the right of him and books to the left of him, a man of not large stature, yet compact frame, with a marked face and thoughtful eye. A young American student seems to breathe ideas in such an atmosphere! I remember well one remark which Dorner made as he was inquiring about our own country: "You, in America, are not compelled to grow up, as we are, under the shadow of ancient institutions." Though a man of books, his conversation dwelt largely upon the religious condition and practical needs of the people of Germany. He thought there was much real piety among the people in the country; but the cities in Germany, as with us, are the problems of society and Christianity. As the practical tendency of Dorner's writings, and of the group of men to which he belongs, has recently, for polemical purposes, been called in question in this country, and, indeed, the evils inherent in the German system of state churches, and German irreligion in general, have been laid by indiscriminating American controversialists at the door of those very men who have done the most to reform and to revive the faith of the German people during this century, it is only just that this interest which the theologian of Berlin showed, in that interview with him in his study, in regard to popular evangelization and vital religion, should be noted. Dr. Dorner has not been a preacher or pastor; but years ago, so he once told a friend of mine, he took great pleasure in preaching in a jail. He has not been an uninterested or silent spectator of the religious life and activities of his times. These leaders of the "new" German theology, and Dr. Dorner conspicuous among them, whose views, we are told, if allowed in our evangelical pulpits, will "cut the nerve of missions," were among the founders and supporters of the German Church Diet, which is the Protestant home missionary society of Germany. "This assembly," says Dr. Schaff, very justly, "may

be regarded as the practical fruit of that vigorous evangelical theology," among whose leaders and supporters he mentions the names of some of those men, including Dorner.

The missionary power of the modern Church has its purest and deepest source in the Christian principles of God's grace and love for the whole world; and no modern theologian has entered more fully or more thoroughly into the spirit of Luther, into the power of these Christian truths, than has Professor Dorner. An address lies before me which Professor Dorner delivered at the meeting of the Evangelical Church Diet, in Kiel, in the year 1867, which he began by a modest expression of his own wish that a practical theologian, in the stricter sense of the word, had been chosen to speak in his place. He then proceeded to deliver a noble exposition and vindication of the great principle of Luther's Reformation,—the doctrine of justification by faith,—dwelling in conclusion upon the practical fruits of this principle in the life of the Church, and in his closing sentences expressing the wish that German youth of sufficiently ripe age might be trained in Sunday-schools, "not merely receiving, but acting and giving," in order that there might be an "active participation of young men and women in the work of home and foreign missions." The cruelly groundless suspicion of "Dornerism" as a practically perilous influence among us is one of those misunderstandings and misrepresentations of the views of good men which are apt to arise, and to disappear, with theological panics. The wise are not alarmed or misled by them.

Dorner has not been indifferent to the interest of religious liberty. He defended the liberal union principles of the faculty of Göttingen against the confessionalism of the clergy of Hanover; and when Baron Bunsen was violently attacked on account of his pamphlet upon "The Signs of the Times," Dorner did not hesitate to take up his pen for the cause of religious liberty against the reactionary tendencies of Stahl and Hengstenberg.

His chief and enduring service, however, has been in the realm of speculative theology, which is in many places clearer because he has moved through it. His power comes from his lecture-room. We have nothing in our American colleges corresponding exactly to the German system of lectures. The students congregate where they are most attracted by the fame or fresh thought of the professor, being left in their choice and attendance very much to the devices of their own hearts. Dorner's lecture-room in Berlin used to be well filled, some of the theological students appearing at times with heads bandaged on

account of the cuts received in duels—though there are not now, I believe, so many of these heroes of the duel as formerly. The professor would enter, take his seat, and plunge at once into the profound discussion of the hour, only interrupting the flow of his discourse to take occasionally a pinch of snuff. He was in his last years prevented by a painful disease from going to that lecture-room for which he elaborated his best thought, though he was still able, so he wrote last spring, to "work a little." American students, many of whom have attended his lectures, always found him courteous and interested in them and their work.

In the last chapter of his "History of Protestant Theology," Dorner remarks that theology in America has hardly had a connected literary history. He notices the different foreign elements which are entering into our thought, and anticipates that theology in this country will come, even though it be through a process of fermentation, to an independent combination and form, which he thinks, in our entire freedom of the church from the state, may resemble in many respects the theological development of the first centuries. "America," he says, "stands as yet in its theological beginnings, but the future of Protestantism depends largely upon the further development of this powerful people now freed from the ban of slavery; hence the maintenance and increase of intercourse with German Protestantism and its possessions are of inestimable importance." This commerce of thought between German theologians and American students and clergymen has not been established for us without a struggle. In a published letter, with regard to the pursuit of German studies, Professor Moses Stuart once portrayed vividly and feelingly the difficulties and the suspicions of his brethren, with which he had to contend in pushing his way into the German literature and bringing the spoils of its Biblical scholarship back to his own lecture-room at Andover. He found fightings without and fears within. As the Athenians of old were taught by their philosophers to avoid commerce in order that they might keep out the rascals, so good men have been afraid to encourage free intercourse with the foreign literature of Germany lest it should bring in heretics. This universal commerce of free scholarship has now, however, become so firmly established that we are not so much in danger of having to do without these products of German scholarship as we are of having our own individuality overwhelmed by their abundance. Dorner looked, as we have just seen, with sagacious hope for an independent development of religious thought

and life in this country, which may be enriched by the treasures of German Protestantism. Mere imitation of foreign manners would be as unfortunate for us in matters of philosophy and theology as it is in literature and art. Our scholars must not consent to become mere importers of German goods. We may well go abroad to learn, but we should come home to teach, and in our own vernacular. Our theology has always had in it something of the flavor of our own national life, and the strength and purpose of our own national consciousness. It needs enrichment and expansion; but let it, in all its larger and higher development, be still the product of American life, and have in its fruit the flavor of our own clear climate.

It is undoubtedly true that German books and German ideas are influencing powerfully our schools of thought. The Germans are the hewers of wood and drawers of water for the scholars of the rest of the world, and he who would understand any science, or know all that can be known in any department, must go to the Germans. So the works of Dorner, and of other younger Biblical and theological teachers in Germany, must be read by our students and clergy who would understand modern theology. Good men may be afraid of their tendency, but the young men must read them, or consent to ignorance. It is altogether too late in the century to attempt to put a "high ecclesiastical tariff" upon any foreign ideas or speculations. Even though one may justly at times be afraid of the infection of error, especially in minds predisposed to it, from the influx of foreign ideas from all quarters, still no quarantine can now be devised in the republic of letters against any thought; and there is for us no need of it, for our safety is in our broad practical piety and in our religious freedom.

Moral pestilence is best dissipated by the breezes of free discussion. The real conservation of faith in Germany itself has been in the freedom of its universities. The history of philosophy and theology in these universities proves that in the end to think in freedom is to think in truth. The free air of Protestantism, after all, is a better preservative for the life and health of the Christian faith than the restrictions of ecclesiastical stipulations and the confinement of high theological creeds. It is true that the liberty of the universities produced a generation of doubters—unwilling skeptics, like the doubter who wished his boy to be educated in the belief of those things in which he had lost faith; and radical skeptics like Strauss, who set up a poor human caricature of religion as his last gift to those who cared to worship in the void which he

left instead of the home of the old faith. But the universities of Germany have also raised a race of giants to defend the faith. Whoever would follow Matthew Arnold's canon, and know "the best that has been thought and said" in vindication of religion, and in witness to the Christ, must go forth now from the institutions which have fettered their professors with dogmatic restrictions to the universities which have not sought to bind up forever their teachings in cerements of words, and must learn his faith afresh of those great scholars who, like Dorner and many others, have wrought out their own Christian beliefs in freedom, and in the open halls of science, in the face of all denials. In the long run a large conscientious liberty of teaching proves to be the best conservatism of the Christian faith. For the true apostolic church is not, and was never intended to be, a museum of dead traditions carefully preserved in glass bottles; — the true church is the living body of Christ, not afraid to walk forth at any hour of the world's history, be it day or night, having in its own glad and forgiven heart the eternal evangel of the Christ, and most safe from the infection of human error when most active in its divine ministry among men. All who really believe that the Christian religion is true; that the soul of man is organized for the perception of truth; that the Gospel of Christ and the heart of humanity are made for each other, as the ocean with its inflowing tides fits the shore — as the life-giving air covers every acre of the earth, from highest Alp to lowest valley; — these will never be disturbed by the utmost freedom of thought, or fear the largest commerce of ideas.

Several years ago Professor Dorner visited this country and attended the meeting of the Evangelical Alliance in New York. There was at that time no little curiosity among the audiences at those meetings to see the German theologian whose fame had been whispered in the public ear. Many who may never have read a word of his writings were then willing to honor him as a defender of the faith. Some of the same persons, in perhaps equal ignorance of his real work, would now look askance at him as a bringer-in of divisive novelties. The denominational religious papers have succeeded in coining a new word, "Dornerism," to designate a portentous German speculation about the hereafter, and they have done much by repeated warnings against it to persuade their readers to believe their own somewhat vague and hazardous notions of what Dornerism really is. Unfortunately, popular religious prejudices are still too easily inflamed, and, when these are once excited, the truth needing

to be received must wait in quietness until in time such prejudices burn themselves out. For those who care little for any theological discussions, but who like to be well informed as to the drift and tendencies of religious opinion, a summary of the teachings of a theologian like Dorner might be a helpful service. But when one considers the breadth and profundity of his works, any attempt, especially within the limits of an article like this, to convey a just idea of his teaching would seem almost as hopeless an undertaking as the task once imposed upon a French philosopher by a lady, who, meeting him in a *salon*, said: "Give me your theory of the universe in one word — in one word!"

Patient familiarity with the habits of German minds and modes of German speech is necessary to render much of their best thought intelligible. German style in the schools of philosophy is apt to be the loose and negligent address of thought. The German grammar lends itself with fatal facility to intricate discourse. German philosophical writers often carry us along slow and winding processes of thinking, where condensation and a rapid summary of results would be a great gain to their readers. Dorner's style is involved and difficult to follow until one has learned to keep in the current of his thought through the sinuosities of his grammar. But the current is always deep and strong. His sentences are often the despair of translators who would make him speak English. His chief works have been translated, though they may hardly be said to have been Anglicized, in the foreign "Theological Library," published by the Clarks of Edinburgh. A greater service might be rendered by some one who understands him, if his "System of Christian Doctrine" should be, not translated, but epitomized and rewritten for English readers. To those who have become sufficiently familiar with Dorner's style to understand him readily, he is a most suggestive writer. One may win from his pages principles of thinking and belief which he will find afterward shining over many dark passages of doctrine and life. American theologians are fond of definitions. A clear definition is considered to be the beginning of all wisdom. Start with a good definition, proceed through a straight course of logic, and end in a dogmatic proposition as the conclusion of all strife — this is the favorite verbal method of much of our theology. Usually, moreover, the desired conclusion is put into the definition from which afterward it is to be triumphantly drawn forth. But this method, which has undeniable advantages as a method of teaching foregone conclusions, is not helpful or satisfactory to minds which

punctuate life with interrogation points, and which cannot rest satisfied until things are seen in their spiritual principles and forces. And there are realities too divine to be compassed by human definitions.

It is of more importance for us to have our thinking on every subject inspired with the living, informing principles of the Christian faith, than it is to agree in our definitions of doctrine, or to be able to show on all topics of inquiry a clear-cut and perfect crystallization of beliefs. These are necessary in Christian education, as text-books are in scientific education. But as the really scientific man knows that the principles of his science are larger and more far-reaching than any results as yet definitely won by them, so the true theologian knows that it is more important for reason to move along its high investigations of things spiritual and divine in the Christian principles of grace and love, than it is for it to build its deductions into a compact logic of divinity. Dorner is a logical reasoner; but he is more than that—he is a thinker, a Christian thinker. His endeavor is to interpret the facts of man's history, the revelations of God, and, so far as we may, the prophecies of the hereafter, according to the principles of the Christian faith. The title of his last work—the mature product of his life—indicates this peculiar superiority of his endeavor. It is his "System of the Doctrine of Christian Faith." The true ideal of theology is not merely to construct a symmetrical "body of divinity," or to deduct from Biblical proof-texts a complete system of doctrine, but in all things "to think according to Christ." The student of Dorner's pages will find many problems of faith left again unsolved in these pages. He will wish sometimes that more definitions of belief were possible; he will realize how partial after our utmost effort our knowledge remains of the infinite mystery of life and God; but he will find it easier to believe that this is a Christian mystery, a mystery of light as yet too bright for us, and not a mystery of darkness and infinite night; and he will find it easier also to write above all the hard facts of the world, and doubtful doctrines of the creeds: Nevertheless I believe that God is a Christian—of all beings the most Christian—an infinite and adorable Christ-likeness.

Dorner's work is not indeed a final word or completed task of theology; but his endeavor to carry all questions of doctrine up into the harmony of the principles of faith which are embodied in Christ—the real and authoritative revelation of God on earth—is in the line of the strongest and purest spiritual movement of our times, and indicates the

hopeful way of further progress for theology. The so-called "new theology" can surpass the old only as it shall prove itself to be more thoroughly, practically, and profoundly Christian—more distinctively Christian in its informing principles of faith, and more broadly Christian in its transformation of life and society. Anything in thought or life which makes it shine more luminously with the spirit of Christ should be gladly welcomed by all good men. All else in theology and life must pass away before the kingdom for which the Church has ever prayed can come on earth. To re-Christianize Christianity, then, may be a part of the work of the Spirit for the conversion of the world.

The work of Dorner which won for him his early fame was a "History of the Doctrine of the Person of Christ,"—a beautiful book, Julius Müller used to say,—which Dorner afterwards enlarged into a voluminous and complete discussion of all views which have been held in the Church concerning the two natures and one person of Christ. In this work he made a notable contribution to the philosophical conception of the fact of the incarnation. His "History of Protestant Theology," which he published subsequently, is a criticism and classification of Protestant theologies from the hour of Luther to the present day. His review of the cardinal principles of the Reformation is luminous. No clearer or more satisfactory discussion, within so brief a compass, has ever appeared of the relation between Christian faith, or the Christian consciousness, and the Scriptures, their relative independence, and mutual dependence. His last work, to which I have already alluded, which consists of his theological lectures, is a classic of Protestant theology.

It is somewhat unfortunate for Dorner's present reputation in this country that his name has recently become identified with a discussion of a single point of orthodox doctrine, and many regard him simply as the German sponsor for questionable views among us of the future life. His contributions to this subject, however, constitute but a part, and not the most important portion, of his whole theological work. As I touch at this point a matter upon which there has been recently much popular interest in religious circles, and upon which there is great religious sensitiveness in the community, a few words in explanation of Dorner's position are necessary in justice to him, and they may be welcome to many who would not wish to misunderstand his views and influence. English and American theologians, following the lead of Bishop Butler, make large use of the word *probation*. Life is a probation for char-

acter, and the probation for which room has been made in the system of nature for man naturally ends with death. Any individual who has had no gracious opportunity for Christian character shall at least be judged justly according to the law of nature by the just God. It is significant that this constant word of our theology, probation, hardly occurs at all in Dorner's writings. The reason is that he approaches the question from a different direction, and carries the whole discussion up to a higher plane. The discussion of man's future condition, as it has ordinarily been conducted, lies down on the plane of nature, and is concerned chiefly with the questions, What punishment does man justly deserve for sin? and When under the natural laws of the formation of character does he become self-determined in sin? Dr. Dorner approaches the questions concerning the future life from the higher plane of Christianity, and his mind is concerned rather with the inquiries, When does a man put himself freely and finally beyond the pale of possible redemption? and Where must divine grace leave him alone in his natural self-determination in evil? The one view considers man as a probationer under a system of nature, to which in the Gospel a provision of grace has been added, at least for the elect; the other view considers man as belonging in God's eternal purpose in Christ to a system of grace, justly deserving indeed by nature the punishment of sin, yet not to be abandoned to the judgment until he has freely put away from himself the possibility of Christian redemption. The latter view holds thus consistently that Christianity is the universal and absolute religion, and that the last judgment shall be the Christian judgment for all men. Those who entertain this view believe it to be in accordance with the principles of faith, and to be true to the Christianity of the Christ. It is evident that this view cannot be refuted by those who are not prepared to meet it in the plane of its own principles. The arguments against the possibility of a gracious probation after death for any souls, which have been running of late through the denominational newspapers, do not meet Dorner's conduct of the discussion any more than a wagon on the street in New York can collide with a train of cars on the elevated railway. The most that American students of Dorner have cared to claim is their perfect liberty to think and to discuss these subjects upon the plane of his Christian principles of reasoning, and to rest in any conclusions which may seem legitimate from such premises. They have advanced no new and definite dogmatism with regard

to the hereafter. They have protested against the attempt to make revelation more definite than Christ, and they apprehend the danger of producing unbelief in the world by overbelief in the Church. They do care much for their liberty in the Christian Church to think upon all subjects, and to dream, if they wish, of the future in the spirit of Christ. They do not care so much for any particular view or speculation concerning the hereafter, and the final issues of things, which men have suggested. They have hoped, and still expect, that free and reverent rediscussion of these themes, and the teachings of the Scriptures concerning the future life, in view of the most Christian conceptions of the nature of God and our relationship to him which modern theology has been able to gain, may yet yield more satisfactory results for believers concerning the final issue of evil in the universe—views which shall not be alien to the Christian heart, while true to the Christian conscience. They find it easier to preach the laws of retribution, and to proclaim the present Christian opportunity of grace, because they have ceased to make their dogmas concerning the future so definite and complete as to render the conclusions of their logic unreal to their own Christian imaginations, and to estrange from their own words their Christian hearts. A great deal, they are confident, may be gained for the relief of our working faith from needless theological difficulties, if we are always careful to maintain the reserve of revelation. The Biblical disclosures of the future life were given to us for present practical purposes; hence, they are necessarily partial and prophetic. A revelation for use by little children cannot be a full revelation. It will help us much in this matter if we follow out a hint first dropped, I believe, by Schleiermacher, and suggested again by Dorner, that the Biblical revelation of the future is a prophecy, and subject, therefore, to the necessary limitations and incompleteness of all prophetic writing. We stand, that is, toward the New Testament prophecy of the world to come, in a position similar to that occupied by an Israelite of old to Isaiah's prophecy of the coming Messianic kingdom. Certain truths and promises which the Hebrew then needed for his own use and profit undoubtedly lay clear to his eye upon the surface of that Messianic prophecy. Certain great outlines, moreover, of the future he might have discerned fixed and definite in the prophetic imagery. But the Jew would have made a wretched caricature of prophecy, if he had attempted to harmonize all the words and colors of the prophetic revelations in one definite and complete picture of the Christian-

ity which was to come. Yet they were words of inspiration. We can now see how they all find their fulfillment in the Christianity of Christ. It is their perfect fulfillment, yet not probably the realization of the dreams even of the prophets themselves, still less, then, of their uninspired commentators and copyists. Thus the New Testament teachings concerning the world to come, and particularly the few words of Christ which have come down to us, are of the nature of unfulfilled prophecy. There are some clear lines in them, definite so far as they go; there are truths of present urgent concern to us, warnings and hopes, which he who runs may read. But they are, like all prophecy, a broken and partial revelation. They do not contain one distinct, harmonious, finished picture of the life to come. Any religious teacher, orthodox or universalist, who finds such a revelation of the hereafter in his Bible, does so by selecting single texts, or classes of texts, and shutting out others. Only when the history of redemption shall have completed God's picture will all the lines of revelation be seen

finished, and all its colors blended. A certain reserve and silence of faith, therefore, before this great unfulfilled Christian prophecy, is both humility and loyalty of faith. And it is also practical wisdom of faith.

Professor Dorner has finished his work for the Church, but he lived to speak his full thought. But the succession of Christian teachers and thinkers will continue in the free universities of Germany. The "new theology" in this country calls no man master; but many who are thinking with fresh joy, and working in the Church with new hope, gratefully own their obligations to these German scholars and believers for the enlightenment and inspiration, if not the intellectual salvation, of their own faith. They may differ much among themselves as to particular statements of doctrine;—in one thing they find themselves agreed, for their common desire and aim is that the most Christian thing possible should be thought and said and done, to-day and to-morrow.

Newman Smyth.



THE FIRST STEP.

My little one begins his feet to try,
 A tottering, feeble, inconsistent way;
 Pleased with the effort, he forgets his play,
 And leaves his infant baubles where they lie.
 Laughing and proud his mother flutters nigh,
 Turning to go, yet joy-compelled to stay,
 And bird-like, singing what her heart would say;
 But not so certain of my bliss am I.
 For I bethink me of the days in store
 Wherein those feet must traverse realms unknown,
 And half forget the pathway to our door.
 And I recall that in the seasons flown
 We were his all—as he was all our own—
 But never can be quite so any more.

Andrew B. Saxton.