

ART. X.—SARTORIUS ON THE PERSON AND WORK OF CHRIST.

1. *Die Lehre von Christi Person und Werk in populären Vorlesungen vorgetragen von ERNST SARTORIUS, Doctor der Theologie. Fuenfte Auflage. Hamburg, 1845.*
2. *The Person and Work of Christ. By Ernest Sartorius, D. D., General Superintendent and Consistorial Director at Königsberg, Prussia. Translated by Rev. Oakman S. Stearns, A. M., Boston, 1848.*

THE second work here named offers itself to the world, as a translation of the first. If by a translation, however, we are to understand a true transfer of the sense and spirit of a book out of one language into another, it is wholly a misnomer to apply the term to this case. The original work of Sartorius is one which comes up in full, both in sentiment and style, to the wide reputation, which has carried it in Germany through five editions, and made it a favorite with all who take an interest in practical piety under a manly and substantial form. No one can read it understandingly, without admiration and respect; and the heart must be dull indeed, that is not made to kindle, under its simple though profound devotional eloquence, into some corresponding

* Writer of "The Apple as a Criterion of Taste," in No. I., the signature having been inadvertently omitted.—PUN.

glow of christian edification. But of all this, it would be hard to form any conception from Mr. Stearns' *translation*. This is neither elegant, nor intelligent, nor edifying. A most lame, clumsy performance throughout, it presents no single attraction either in thought or expression, no redeeming quality whatever, save in the broken fragments of truth and beauty that still look forth here and there upon the beholder, in spite of the general desolation with which the work has been overwhelmed as a whole. It is indeed Sartorius *in ruins*; a spectacle, whose remains of greatness serve only to render more affectingly sad, the chaotic dreariness in which its exhibition mainly consists. Murderous translations are by no means uncommon; but we have seldom met with one which could be said more effectually to kill the life of the author it pretends to honor, in this way.

In the first place, Mr. Stearns evidently has had no sufficient knowledge of the German language, and no proper mastery of the English either, to do justice to any undertaking of this sort. His own English, as we have it in his short preface, is anything but easy and smooth. Were his knowledge of the German ever so complete, he lacks altogether the freedom and pliancy of style that are required to make a good translator. But he has brought with him no such advantage to his task. It is only a smattering acquaintance with German, he can be said to possess at best. His knowledge of the language shows itself to be throughout, mechanical, superficial, and in a great measure merely external. He has never entered at all into its true genius and life; its idiomatic soul remains, to a great extent, foreign from the view of his understanding. Still less can he be said to be at home, in the peculiarities of German thought. There is not a page of his translation accordingly, we might say indeed hardly a sentence in its connections, which does not betray some want of insight, more or less, into the true living sense of the original work. Take as a specimen, the following extract, which is made to pass for the preface of Sartorius to the last German edition:

"Several years have passed away since the first appearance of this little volume, and now the Fifth Edition is deemed necessary by the continual demand for it. It is absolutely necessary

that the doctrine of the incarnation, by the union of divinity and humanity in it, and the re-union of both by it, which was rejected by many theologians out of the historical churches, and had become foreign to and far from the educated and uneducated in general, should be transferred in this artless, familiar manner, from the department of learned theology, to the more common orbit of faith and life, and should be brought to the Christian conscience of readers of every grade, as the basis of all Christianity and of all salvation. Great storms have been raised during this time respecting the proper field of the church, and they have been particularly directed against this fundamental doctrine. They have endeavored to turn away the testimony of the church and its judgement, thereby expecting to tear it asunder and destroy it. Some have spoken of the incarnate Jesus as the Lord of humanity, in the loose generalities of the multitude, and thereby robbed him of the excellence by which he was to increase to a confederate head, and by which he should become the reconciler of everything which sin had separated, even the fountain of life and love from which every favor and power of renovation should flow. He has a very narrow conception of the thing who expects to remove from Christ the concentration of the fullness of the Godhead. He most assuredly misunderstands himself, because if in him all fulness dwells, every favor, even grace for grace must come from him, and by means of him we become partakers of the divine nature.

"These storms, however, have to a great degree blown over or turned out to be mere wind. Indeed, the church has strengthened itself, established itself, and made itself fast during the roar of the storm, clinging the more tenaciously to the reconciliation of heaven and earth by faith in Jesus Christ, the mighty God eternally generated from the Father, and the mighty man generated from the virgin Mary. This union of time and eternity cannot be removed. The denial of the divinity of Christ humbles him to an idol or a demi-god, and leads to a heathenish idolatry, or it degrades him to a mere man, and thereby sinks his religion behind Judaism. Very evidently everything spiritual and human becomes him who is the king of the heavenly kingdom, who was exalted from the cross to the right hand of the majesty, not to conquer, but to receive the name which the Father has given, by virtue of which he shall obtain the homage of both angels and men.

"In spite of the stormy movements of the time, therefore, while the world renews the evidence of the Scriptures and the church respecting the Son of God, and the Son of man the mediator between God and man, Jesus Christ our Lord, who though in the image of God, humbled himself, and took upon himself the

form of a servant, was obedient to the death of the cross, and from his humiliation is now exalted for us over all the world to his praise and for our salvation, this discussion will remain immovable by the side of that which is old and unchangeable. Neither the contents nor the form of this little book ought to suffer any material change. The circumstances of the time seem to demand the very same things. Indeed, they present themselves as another proper occasion for giving the book both in Germany and in other lands, by means of translations, a larger circle of readers. Its design is to meet not so much the wants of a theological public as those of a Christian public. Accordingly, the Fifth edition appears with every essential correspondence to the earlier ones. As I would not, however, omit any amount of care manifest in the other editions, I have inserted when and where it was proper, individual additions and emendations, and thereby increased the pages somewhat.

"May this work receive the blessing of him concerning whom it treats. May it receive the sanction of the Lord who renovated the condition of the world by reconciling it to himself. May it aid in establishing the Christian reader upon the precious cornerstone, without which every church organization founded upon some other basis than the rock of confession, which was first testified to by the apostles before the Lord gave to them the shutting up of the heavenly kingdom, is founded only upon the sand. This is the first and chief thing to be done by the church, that worshipping in the name of Jesus, every knee may bow, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord to the glory of God the Father."

To be properly estimated, this should be compared with the original German text. As however a large part of our readers must be supposed unable to try it in that way, we subjoin the true sense of the original in a different version. It will be easy to see, by the comparison, first that the "translation" just quoted has in part no clear sense whatever; and secondly, that such sense as it has, is materially different from that intended by Sartorius:

"Fourteen years have elapsed since the first appearance of these lectures, of which the continued demand now calls for a *fifth* edition. The doctrine of the *God-man*, of the union of divinity and humanity in him, and the reconciliation of both through him, (a doctrine by many theologians long since thrust out of the church into mere history, and that had grown strange to the Christian community, cultivated as well as uncultivated,) by these unpretending lectures, came forth again from the sphere

of scientific theology into more general contact with faith and life, and was anew brought nigh to the christian consciousness of readers of every standing as the foundation on which christianity with its whole salvation rests. Great storms have swept since that time, over the field of the Church, and have directed their strength in particular against this foundation, bearing witness thus to its true character in this view, while seeking to unsettle it, and so to overthrow the church built upon it. It has been pretended to dissolve the God-man Jesus, the Lord of humanity, into the loose generality of the human race; robbing this thus of the head, from which the whole should grow up into a well compacted body, (Eph. iv. 15f.) of the mediator through whom is to be reconciled all that has been separated by *sin*, (Col. i. 20,) and of the fountain of life and love from which all should draw grace and power of renovation. The concentration of the fulness of the Godhead in the One Christ, (Col. ii. 9,) it was affected to set aside as something poor and narrow; while in truth such judgment was itself too narrow to see, how all fulness dwells in *him* for this reason precisely, that all may receive thence grace for grace, and become through *him* partakers of the divine nature (John i. 16; 2 Pet. i. 4).

"Those storms have to a great extent blown over, or are sunk at least into common winds; in the midst of their raging, however, the Church visibly gained strength, planting herself with new and more firm resolution on the rock of her all-reconciling faith in Jesus Christ, 'true God begotten of the Father in eternity and also true man born of the Virgin Mary.' She cannot recede from this ground which binds eternity and time into one; since the denial of Christ's divinity either sinks him to the character of an idol or demi-god, leading in this way to heathenish idolatry, or else reduces him to a mere man, and so falls back into Judaism. Assuredly all the spiritual and fleshly powers of the world will be found unable to prevail over the king Messiah who has been exalted from the cross to the right hand of majesty, or to take from him the name which is given him of the Father, so high and glorious as to compel the homage of angels and men.

"In the face accordingly of all the stormy agitations of the time, these lectures have stood immovably fast to the firmly settled, ancient (though never old, but rather always world-renewing) testimony of the Bible and the Church, concerning the Son of God and of Man, the Mediator between God and man, our Lord Jesus Christ; who being in divine form equal with God, nevertheless emptied himself and took upon him the form of a servant, and became obedient even to the death of the cross, and now is exalted from such humiliation over all the world for his own glory and our salvation (Phil. ii. 5ff). No material

change therefore has been made in the contents of this little volume, as it has passed through different editions, nor even in its form; for this, as it had from outward popular occasion adapted itself to a wide christian rather than theological public, was just what procured for the work its extensive circulation, and this indeed not in Germany only, but by translations also in foreign lands. So this fifth edition also appears in substantial agreement with those which have gone before; only I wished to show my continued interest in the earlier work, and for this reason have introduced single additions and improvements, as it seemed worth while, which have increased somewhat also the number of pages.

"Under his blessing now of whom it treats, under the blessing of the Lord, who has brought into the world not so much a constitution as an atonement, may this little book still farther contribute to build christian readers on that precious foundation and corner-stone, without which all church organization, the great concern of the present time, will be built upon the sand, and not on the rock of that confession, (Matt. xvi. 16ff.) which the Apostles were required first to make, before the keys of the kingdom of heaven were given to them by the Lord. This it is which the Church needs first and above all, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in worship, and every tongue *confess* harmoniously with his people, that he is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

Koenigsberg, Passion week, 1845."

This will be sufficient, for all readers, to justify in full the sweeping censure we have allowed ourselves to pronounce on Mr. Stearns' translation. Harsh and exaggerated as the judgment might seem, on first view, it will easily be perceived that it falls not a whit short of the sober truth. The translation is no translation whatever, but a miserable travesty and caricature rather of the respectable work in whose name it appears. It is such a wrong indeed upon the character and reputation of Sartorius, that under any proper system of international literary law, he would be authorized to sue for heavy damages, as a grossly misrepresented and slandered man. "The translation," we are told in the preface, "is designedly free, and as expressive of the views of the author as the time and means of the translator would allow." A good translation must be in any case *free*; that is not bound slavishly to the letter at the expense of the spirit and sense. But in the case before us, the freedom is such as flows from weakness and not from strength. It is helplessly, wilfully, and

for this reason slavishly independent. Its liberty stands only in the power it has to go wrong, without understanding the fact. A strange freedom truly, that turns words and sentences continually from their proper sense, misled by its own mechanical dictionary-guided ignorance, and turns an author on every page into a shape, which can hardly be said to reflect a single feature of his native face. If the "time and means" of Mr. Stearns allowed no more than this, it had been better, we think, to turn his resources to some other work. It is no apology for such a wrong as this, that the doer of the work could do it no better. Why should he, in such case, feel bound to try it at all? The world would not have suffered any irreparable loss—Sartorius himself might well have borne the disappointment—if the little book in question had been left to go untranslated; at least till some more competent hand, with proper "time and means," had offered itself for the purpose. The thanks of the translator are tendered, in conclusion, to the Rev. Dr. Sears, President of the Newton Theological Institution, for suggesting the translation, "and for any aid he has generously afforded him during the progress of it." No doubt Dr. Sears recommended the work as worthy of being translated, as any one would who was able to appreciate its value; but it is not to be imagined for a moment, that he is responsible in any way for the character of the translation. He is known to be one of the most accomplished German scholars in the country; and to involve him even indirectly in the endorsement of such a production, must be taken as a wrong to his reputation, only less flagrant than the wholesale slaughter of poor Dr. Sartorius himself. How such a work could pass muster with the common religious press, might seem strange; for it abounds in sentences and entire passages that have no sense whatever, and as a whole is made exceedingly tasteless and dull; but newspaper notices, we all know, are not generally in such cases the fruit of much consideration or care. They go by presumption, far more than by insight. This has been well illustrated, in the present case.*

* Even the scholarly editor of the Methodist Quarterly Review, (Dr. McClin-
tock,) is so far misled, on the faith probably of the respectable publishing
firm, "Gould, Kendall & Lincoln, Boston," as to say: "The translation appears
to be faithful, and is in general well expressed."

Our interest, however, in this translation is something deeper than its merely literary character. As a bungling attempt to turn a good German author into English, its merits fall so low that it might seem scarcely worth while to make it the subject of criticism; although even in this view there is such a wrong involved in it, as ought not to go unnoticed and unrebuked. But along with the literary defect of this translation, must be taken into consideration also a general theological defect, which goes of course so far as it prevails, to aggravate the other evil. Some illustration of this may be found in the two phases of the preface already presented; which indeed have been given in full, for the purpose partly of bringing into view what is now stated.

The truth is, the religious theory of Mr. Stearns differs very materially from that of the author whose work he has here undertaken to translate. Of this he is himself aware, to some extent. Sartorius, he tells us, is a Lutheran, with certain peculiarities, which he of course, as a New England Baptist, is not prepared to endorse or accept. It is plain enough, however, at the same time, that his sense of such difference between himself and his author, remains always in the end very partial and narrow. The peculiarities in question are taken to be in part verbal only, technical forms of different schools, and, in other cases, mere outward and accidental excrescences, (traditional *crotchets*,) rather than living and necessary elements in the inward constitution of the system to which they belong. It is quietly taken for granted accordingly, that this system is, in all substantial respects, one and the same with that of the translator himself. Mr. Stearns has been honestly persuaded, in his own mind, that his general scheme of evangelical religion is identical with the scheme of Sartorius, and the *evangelical* German school generally, to which he belongs—barring only a few old-fashioned European prejudices, now fast going into disuse; and he has set himself to translate this work, and carried through the undertaking as he best could, without the least imagination probably that he was bending the inward habit of the work throughout to a form of thinking altogether strange and foreign from its own. And yet it is so in fact. Without the least *consciousness* of any such wrong, and much less with any malicious intent to bring it to pass, he has, nevertheless, contrived to surround Sartorius with a theo-
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gical nimbus, or *cloud*, which, so far as it can be seen through at all, makes it very difficult, if not indeed absolutely impossible, for any merely English reader, to catch even a dim outline of his true German person.

The great object of the work, as is shown by the preface to the fifth edition already quoted, is to assert the glorious mystery of the incarnation, with its necessary consequences, as the one only sure and immovable foundation of religion, over against the rationalistic and pantheistic errors, with which it has been opposed, particularly in modern Germany. This mystery is of course accepted by all evangelical bodies in this country also, from the most churchly away out to the most unchurchly, as the foundation of the gospel, in opposition to all sorts of Unitarianism. Mr. Stearns accordingly finds no difficulty, in making common cause with Sartorius, on this ground. A tract on the Person and Work of Christ falls in easily with his theory of religion, as based on the conception of a supernatural redemption wrought out by his death; and no hesitation is felt about taking it in the sense of this theory, leaving all awkward *inconcinnities* to fetch themselves right as they best can. Here, however, is a grand mistake. The mystery of the incarnation in its relation to christianity, is something very different to Sartorius, from all it is made to be, or felt to be, in the Baptistical theology of Mr. Stearns. There is a stress laid upon the fact, a deep sense, a world of significance and force, made to go along with it, in the one case, which come not into view to any similar extent in the other. It is after all a different *christology*, that comes before us in the two cases.

With Sartorius, christianity is a new order of life that has its ground in the christological fact itself. The incarnation is viewed not simply as an outward contrivance, to open the way for the work of redemption, but as the real foundation in which the entire mystery not only starts, but continues also to hold from beginning to end. It is the union of divinity and humanity in Christ, which not simply qualifies him for the work he was appointed to perform, but of itself involves in his person that reconciliation between heaven and earth, God and man, which the idea of redemption requires, and for which there could be no room in any other form. He is in his very constitution our PEACE,

in whom first the Sundered worlds just mentioned are made one, for the very purpose of bringing them together afterwards in the way of a general salvation. It is in virtue only of what he is in this view, as the head of our human life, that it becomes possible for the race beyond him, through union with his mystical body and by conjunction with him as its centre and head, to partake also of the divine nature. Thus it is, that "this ground binds eternity and time into one," reconciles heaven and earth, not circuitously and instrumentally only, but immediately and at once, in Jesus Christ. This is very distinctly stated by Sartorius in the preface to the first edition of his work, which it may be well to give here also in full:*

"After the example set by Professor Struve, at the beginning of the year before, the following lectures were delivered during Passion week of the present year, in aid of the poor supported by the Benevolent Society of this place, in the large lecture room of our university, before a mixed audience, which gave them encouraging attention to the close. They are now printed, partly

* Travestied in Mr. Stearns' translation as follows:

"The subject herein discussed was originally presented to a mixed assembly in the form of lectures. Lectures on another subject had already been given by Prof. Struve, by whose very kind assistance and instigation the poor were accommodated during Passion-week in the great lecture-room of our university. I now give them to the public, partly because others desire it, and partly because I myself wish by these unassuming discourses to establish a fixed and determined knowledge of the peculiar evangelical doctrine of salvation, in a larger circle than that in which it is now found, even among such laymen as err concerning true Christianity rather in knowledge than in good will. Of these there are at the present time more than is generally supposed. I have, therefore, discussed the doctrine of the incarnation of the Son of God, the more extensively, because I wished to show intelligibly, that the work of redemption, as connected with the divine benevolence, depends upon a personal union in Christ of divinity and humanity. Moreover, this great doctrine is peculiarly practical and requisite in an age when an unchristian rationalism is striving to destroy it by a foolish indifference, and is making bold efforts to deny the revealed truth of the Bible. This discussion, besides furnishing a correct knowledge to the laity, will, it is hoped, contribute to the purity, importance and completeness of the doctrine as believed by the church, maintaining as it does the only true and self-evident medium between two antagonistic errors. Finally, if the publishing these Lectures shall remove any unavoidable mistake in a single passage during their delivery, or shall give any proof in this time of jealousy with respect to evangelical Christianity, that there is in this doctrine no new-fangled mysticism, but only the firmly-settled Bible-Christianity of our fathers; which is to stand as long as the Augsburg Confession shall have a lawful existence in our church, then my object will be accomplished. Though the times may degenerate, and many may fall away, truth itself never changes, but will continue when the heavens and earth have passed away."

to satisfy the wish of others, and partly from my own desire that their unpretending form may serve to promote, in more remote circles also, a definite and practical acquaintance with the peculiar saving truths of the gospel, among those of the laity, who are often wanting in right knowledge far more than in good will towards true christianity: and of whom there are more at the present time than is generally supposed. I have accordingly dwelt at large on the doctrine of the incarnation of the Son of God, as I wished to show, for common apprehension, how his work of redemption, together with all his benefits, rests for us throughout upon the union of divinity with humanity in his person; and of what practical moment and how necessary to salvation therefore this great doctrine is, which an unchristian rationalism, with stupid indifference and in plain contradiction to the Bible, is endeavoring to bring out of credit. The work may contribute besides to bring the purity, consistency and completeness of the church doctrine, which ever maintains the alone true and sure medium between opposite errors, into proper acknowledgment also with the laity. Finally, the publication of the lectures will remove any misunderstanding of single passages, such as is unavoidable with mere oral delivery, and furnish clear proof at the same time to such as share the reigning prejudice against evangelical christianity, that no new-fashioned mysticism has been presented here, but only the old, well authenticated bible christianity of our fathers, which alone can claim, as long as the Augsburg Confession stands, a legitimate authority in our Church. However many may have fallen from it, the truth itself is not for this reason fallen, but shall continue to stand when heaven and earth even pass away.

Dorpat, May, 1831.

In carrying out his design, Sartorius dwells at length in the first place, on the nature of the great mystery of godliness, "God manifest in the flesh," the way and manner of the union of divinity with humanity in Jesus Christ, as the basis on which rests the whole superstructure of the christian salvation. In the next place, the value and power of the fact for the purposes of redemption are shown. Finally the process is explained, by which all is made to pass over to the actual benefit of the human race.

The mystery of the incarnation is presented to us, as "the assumption of the human nature by the Son of God into the unity of his person." It throws us back at once on the eternal sonship of Christ, and the doctrine of the divine trinity. This, however, is not absolutely peculiar to revelation. Some trace of

it at least is to be found in philosophy and heathen mythology. The God of the mere deist is a lifeless abstraction. "There is hardly any ancient system of religion, in the East or West, which reveals not some glimmering of the doctrine of the trinity; the traces of it are to be met at the opposite poles, in India and Scandinavia." Peculiar to revelation rather, as its foundation truth, is the announcement that the eternal Word has become flesh, under a personal historical form, in Jesus of Nazareth, the Son of the Virgin Mary. "The latest enemies of christianity, (Dr. Strauss and his followers,) have assailed it by asserting a general incarnation of God in humanity as a whole, in such way as to deny it under an individual separate form in Jesus Christ, nay, to repudiate the idea of this as narrow particularism. This is a gross error, which sees not in the first place, how estranged from God the human race has become by sin, so as to be wholly incapacitated within itself for a re-union with divinity without a mediator; and in the second place, does not consider that, in the perfect Mediator all the fullness of the Godhead dwells, just for this reason, that out of his fullness all may receive grace for grace, John i. 16., and not by any means that it may remain selfishly shut up in his person. So in the body of the sun, light is not concentrated, to remain there fixed, but rather that all the world may be enlightend by it; whereas when many stars twinkle in place of the one orb of day, we have at best but the dusk of night. Into such night dusk would those lead us, who rob the planets of their sun, while in room of the one God-man, who is the Saviour of all and the Light of the world, they affect to proclaim *all* men, and especially, the heroes of the race, an incarnation of deity. They deny both, the personal oneness and glory of Christ, as well as his true universality; for the last consists just in this, that as the *one* divine head of his Church, he comprehends under himself *all* its members, (Eph. iv. 15, 16,) and communicates to them his truth, grace and righteousness, forming them thus into one body. Where on the contrary the royal head is made to fail, the members fall asunder in helpless broken disorder, and there is no room to speak farther of a kingdom of Christ or a Church of God, or of any redemption and salvation of the human race. Here, then, if anywhere, it behooves us to abide by the Scriptures, which in most direct contradiction to this

modern wisdom or folly expressly assure us, Col. i. 19: It pleased the Father that in him (in Jesus Christ) should all fulness dwell; and ii. 9: In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily."*

The incarnation under this personal, historical character, is shown to be an act of *free* condescension on the side of God. It implies no essential *change* in the divine nature. At the same time, the human nature assumed by the Son of God, must be allowed to be in all respects real and complete. It was no phantom or show only, but a true body joined with a reasonable soul. Lastly, the union of the two natures, while it leaves them distinct, must be regarded as organic, involving a strict personal unity in the form of a common undivided consciousness. "Without such a personal union of divinity and humanity, no redemption could be accomplished; for the very nature of it stands just in this, that grace brings together what by nature and sin are sundered, namely, God and man; a mere man could of himself as little redeem the world as he could create it; and God of himself, though able to create, uphold and govern the world, cannot either make reconciliation for it, since this requires a union of the sundered parts, and such a free satisfaction for sin as he only can render, who stands at once over the law and under the law. The error before us is accordingly at war with the whole Bible. Throughout, in the entire life of our Lord, we are confronted with only one personality, one *I*, one undivided, though in its contents, most manifold self-consciousness."

Sartorius next considers how the two natures, in this personal union, condition and affect each other. There must be, through the medium of the common consciousness in which they meet, a mutual communication, to some extent, of states and properties. Only so can the divine and human be regarded as coming fully together, in such way as the idea of a true and proper redemption and reconciliation requires. Hence the most opposite predicates can be affirmed of the common person. Secondly, the

* This fine passage, so intimately related to the deep significance of the christological mystery as held by Sartorius, his translator entirely omits; connecting what goes before and what follows, in a continuous paragraph, with a violence that fairly kills the original, to make out, what is, after all, only an *apparition* of sense.

properties of the divine nature attach, through the central consciousness, to the human. Thirdly, the properties of the human nature attach, in the same way, to the divine.* With such constitution, the mystery of the Saviour's person, in order that it may be still more fully understood, must be followed through the successive stages of his humiliation and exaltation, till all becomes complete finally in the glory of his second coming.

The way is opened thus, at length, for contemplating the *work* of Christ, the end in which the mystery of his person reveals its meaning and power. This occupies the sixth, seventh and eighth lectures. All is made to grow out of the fact of the incarnation. "So closely is the whole joined with this as its root, that to describe the wonderful constitution of Christ's person, is itself to set forth in some measure its object. If we cast a retrospective glance over the entire portrait of the God-man, as presented to us in both his natures, in their union and in his different states of humiliation and exaltation, so as to bring all as much as possible to one grand impression, we must at once feel that the end and purpose of it is to effect the inmost union and fellowship of divinity and humanity, and in this way to glorify the love of God as well as secure the happiness and salvation of men." Man is formed for religion, as the perfection of his being. This holds only in union with God, whose love is the ground of all good. Sin sundered us all naturally from his presence. Our salvation requires that it should be taken out of the way. This is accomplished only through the satisfaction of Christ, which, in virtue of his inward living relation to the race, and the theanthropic mystery of his person, carries with it a true reconciling and saying force for all mankind.

The next inquiry regards the application of this grace to particular men, the transition of what is accomplished primarily in Christ, over to his people. This leads to the consideration of the *means of grace*, namely, the word and sacraments, as they have been divinely lodged in the keeping of the Church for this pur-

* Mr. Stearns, with amusing awkwardness, makes Sartorius say here just the same thing in his second and third conclusions; in the first case, "by means of the communicated union of consciousness, the attributes of the divine nature belong to the human," while in the second, "by means of the reciprocal consciousness, the human nature receives also the attributes of the divine nature."

pose. Next follows a view of the several stages in the process of salvation; after which the whole discussion concludes with a brief survey, in the last lecture, of the prophetic, priestly and kingly offices, as executed by Christ in the character of Mediator.

Throughout, thus, the person of the Saviour is represented as lying, inwardly and truly, at the foundation of the whole christian salvation. "Christ is himself the living substance of christianity;" which accordingly, from first to last, serves but to unfold or bring out the deep contents of his life. His work holds always and only in the mystery of his person, and is of force for others in no other way than as they are brought to have part in this as its constant support and ground. "In him dwells all fullness; all the predictions of the prophets, all the ideals of sacred poetry, all the deepest thoughts of true philosophy, are fulfilled and actualized in him, in whom God became manifest in the flesh, (I. Tim. iii. 16.) that we might behold his glory, as that of the only begotten Son of the Father, and receive from his fullness grace for grace, John i. 14-18:" *In him*, not *by him* simply, all things which are in heaven and which are on earth, are reconciled, united and comprehended under one head, (Eph. i. 10., Col. i. 20.).

All this, rightly apprehended, is something materially different, we say, from the christology of Mr. Stearns. Without being aware of the fact, he has in his mind throughout, quite another conception of the theanthropic mystery, and quite another scheme accordingly of the christian salvation. Sartorius is a Lutheran, honestly and earnestly true to the substance of Luther's faith, though now in the bosom of the United German Church. Mr. Stearns is a Baptist, immersed all over in the unmythical element of his own creed. These two systems are by no means the same; and the difference is not simply accidental. It falls back, in the end, to the idea of Christ's person, and in this way necessarily conditions the theory and life of religion throughout. The Baptist Christ is not in full the Lutheran Christ. He may be acknowledged in the same terms to a certain extent; but his constitution is not the same, and he stands in a different relation to the work of redemption. The Baptist christology is not itself the new world of grace, in which the whole gospel stands revealed as a living fact, but forms rather the outward machinery which hea-

ven has contrived for saving men. The *work* which was required to take away sin, needed indeed a conjunction of divinity with humanity in Christ, to qualify him for its execution; but once executed, it carries with it an independent and separate value in the divine mind, and may be set to the account of men as a mere abstraction in this way, apart from Christ's life altogether. The person of the Saviour is not viewed as the principle and root strictly of the whole christian salvation, but only as its outward occasion or instrument, brought in gloriously to make way for the action of grace under another form; just as the electric telegraph is employed as a medium for bringing a word to pass a thousand miles off, which could not be made to take effect in any other way, although it is in no sense itself the very form and substance of the word so spoken. So regarded, the hypostatical union itself assumes a more or less shadowy and unreal character, leaning at one time towards Gnosticism, or at another saving itself again only in the form of Nestorian dualism. The sense of an inward, *organic* union is, in a great measure, wanting. The true *universalness* of Christ's humanity comes not into view. The *reconciliation* of heaven and earth, which lies in the mystery of the incarnation itself, and involves potentially and necessarily all the atonement and redemption that follow, is not perceived. The deep, rich, overwhelming sense of the living *fact*, is not understood or felt. In place of it, we have only an orthodox abstraction. Then the redemption which follows, is of course apprehended under a corresponding character. Christ executes all his offices in a comparatively outward way, parallel thus in kind with the Old Testament prophets, priests and kings, only rising above them in degree, "*primus inter pares*." He reveals truth, buys righteousness, and exerts power, all in an external instrumental manner; instead of being in fact, as he always claims to be, in the very constitution of his own person, *the way, the truth, the resurrection and the life*, all in the most real and absolute sense, in whom, as well as by whom only, it is possible for any of the children of men to be saved. An abstract conception of the work of redemption again brings with it necessarily also, a like abstract idea of the way in which men are made partakers of its grace. The process is lifted into the sphere of pure thought. All turns on supernatural acts of God on one side, and

the exercises of individual experience on the other, that come after all to no steady union in the way of spiritual life. The mystical, sacramental interest in religion, is practically undervalued, or we may say, rather to a great extent subverted altogether, in order to make room more effectually for what are conceived to be the far higher claims of piety under a different form.

It is easy enough to feel this want of congruity between Sartorius and his translator throughout; but it comes to its most glaring exposure, where the subject of the sacraments is brought forward. In the nature of the case, this could not be left out of sight in the original work. No christology, no scheme of christianity, can be *Lutheran*, which leads not to the idea of sacramental grace, the *mystery* of Christ's presence in the sacraments, as an essential, inseparable element of the gospel. Sartorius accordingly devotes a whole lecture mainly to this subject—a rich, instructive and edifying discourse, for any one whose mind is prepared at all to sympathize with the ancient faith of the Church. But what now becomes of this most unbaptistic chapter of the work, in the hands of Mr. Stearns? The whole of it is quietly suppressed, with only the following explanation, in the way of a short note, at the beginning of the next lecture: "The previous chapter discusses the Lutheran view of baptism and the Lord's Supper, but is omitted in the translation as inapplicable to the ideas upon that subject held by christians generally on this side of the water."

Let us now look for a moment to the lecture in question, that we may understand how much is involved in the summary renunciation, thus made in behalf, not only of the Baptist body, but of the American churches in general.

The means of grace, according to Sartorius, have their force only in the Church, constituted by the Holy Ghost, to hold them in charge and administer them as organs for men's salvation. They are, first, the *word*, in the two-fold form of law and gospel; then the two holy sacraments, *baptism* and the *Lord's supper*. These are not properly *our* works, but acts of grace performed towards us by Christ, through the Church, which we are required to accept believingly in this character. Baptism is the seal of our ingrafting into Christ. We are born under the curse of original sin; but grace interposes, through Christ, to bring us

out of that state, extending to us, even in infancy, the visible pledge of such deliverance in this holy mystery. "Hence it is called the laver of *regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5; because by it the child, though at first still unconscious, passes out of the kingdom of the world and its spirit into the kingdom of God and his Spirit, and from a child of the flesh becomes a child of grace, on whom is impressed anew the seal of his original destination to the image of God and the inheritance of eternal life, while in the Church of Christ, of which he is a member, all means and helps are furnished for reaching this end." The objective value of it is not affected, in the case of infants, by the consideration that they cannot at once appropriate it by faith. It remains always at hand, as a divine fact, notwithstanding, for their use and appropriation through the whole of their lives. Does a man become truly and properly the child of his natural parents, only when he wakes first to the clear sense of what is comprised in such relation? Baptism, in this case, comes to its completion of right in *confirmation*. Again, as the christian life begins in this first sacrament, so it is fed and supported by the second, the holy supper. Here Christ imparts to us his flesh and blood, that is, the power of his own divine-human life; for he is, in truth, the living bread, of which all must partake or perish. There is, indeed, no change of the bread and wine into the substance of Christ, as the Roman Church teaches; but still there is a real union between them, above sense, according to his own word. "We will not envy those," says Sartorius, "who see in this meal only an outward figurative memorial of an absent Christ, which makes nothing more of him to be present, than what they may think along with it out of their own minds. Such, verily, would do better to contemplate a crucifix, or an *ecce homo*, or some other image of Jesus, than to eat a piece of bread and drink a sip of wine, destroying thus the recollection sign in the very act of its reception."

All this, of course, is at full variance with the system of Mr. Stearns. He allows no such efficacy to baptism, and dreams of no such mystery in the Lord's Supper. It is easy thus to see and understand, why he should be disposed to set aside the whole chapter as out of date. What, however, must we think of the *honesty* of such conduct? Be the merits of the suppressed lecture what they may, it is certain that for Sartorius himself, it has

been of indispensable account in the discussion of his general subject. It goes necessarily, with him, to make out the completeness and integrity of the book; he would not be willing at all, as a good Lutheran, to stand charged before the world, with a christological theory, from which, by any possibility, the idea of sacramental grace could be divorced in such wholesale style. The probability is, that he would prefer decidedly the suppression of the whole work, to any mutilation so terrible as this must appear to be in his eyes. What right then, we may well ask, has any translator, standing in a wholly different system of religious thought, to mutilate the book in this way, and still publish it in *Sartorius' name*? It may be proper, in certain cases, to abridge another man's work, for more general popular use; though, even then, to be at all honest, the abridgement must be published *as such*, and is bound besides to be true to the sum and substance of the full work. It is, however, quite another thing, to change or expunge a single passage or even a single word, by which the true sense and spirit of the original is expressed at any point, in such a way as to bring in another sense quite foreign from the author's mind. This is spiritual forgery, which deserves to be abhorred of all good men. No small noise was made a few years since, about certain liberties of this sort, taken with D'Aubigne's History of the Reformation, by the American Tract Society. But that wrong, generally condemned, we believe, was small indeed as compared with the high-handed violence here perpetrated on Sartorius; and it must be regarded as a sign of the general obtuseness of the American Church to the claims of the high interest here concerned, that so glaring a wrong should be able to proclaim itself, with so little danger of shocking the common sense of christian propriety. Let the case be put into a new shape. Suppose a Baptist tract, gutted of its baptistic peculiarities, or some good Puritan work *catholicized*, for the use of the Roman Church, by the careful obliteration of a whole section on justification by faith, and we should not soon hear the last of the stealthy-footed, cowl-mantled strata-gem. Can it be less *jesuitic* to play the same game, under a Protestant evangelical guise? We think not.

But this is not all. The case reveals a radically wrong conception of the entire theological system represented by Sartorius,

and of its relation to the theory of religion, in whose service he is here enlisted. It is quite common, we know, for all evangelical sects, as the Church now stands, not excepting Baptists of every hue and name, to claim inward affinity with *Luther* as the father of the Reformation, and to glory in his doctrine as only carried out to its purest form in their own faith and practice. His prejudices about the sacraments, and some other things, they, of course, have consigned to the tomb of the Capulets, (with due indulgence to the dormitancies of so great a Homer,) but only to stick the faster to the true life and marrow of his divinity, as found in the doctrine of justification by faith. But only see the contradiction which all this carries upon its very face. "Saul among the prophets!" was not, surely, a greater incongruity than the idea of Luther quietly seated among these various sects ("die himmlische Propheten") and consenting to be taught "the way of God more perfectly," at their feet. What a compliment, moreover, to the cause of the Reformation, to conceive of its great leaders generally, and most of all, the very Moses of its glorious exodus, as having no power to discriminate between the essential and the accidental, in so clear a case as this of the sacraments is now taken to be; but actually filling all Europe with their noise about it, as though it belonged in some way to the very core of christianity, when any child may now see that they were driving at a shadow from first to last. The whole conception is absurd. The sacramental doctrine of Luther, so far as the substance of it is concerned, was no outward *fungus* upon his system. It lies imbedded in its inmost life. To part with it, is to give up the cause of the Reformation itself, as it stood in his mind, and to turn his whole theology into a new and different shape. To think of the Baptistic theory of religion as one and the same with the evangelical Lutheran, *only* divested of his sacramental doctrine—as though this were an old cocked hat, to be kept on or laid off at pleasure—can only show the shallow character of the whole theology, for which any such thought is possible. So in the case before us, to drop the chapter on the sacraments, and yet pretend to be satisfied with the rest of the book as sound and good, must be taken as a gross inconsistency. Any christology that can admit the idea of a Church with no divine powers, no grace in its sacraments, no room in its bosom

for infants, no mystical presence of Christ's life in the Lord's supper—be its claims to respect in any other view what they may—must be counted utterly foreign from the entire mind of Sartorius, and cannot possibly be the same that is presented to us in this little book. However it may be with others, *his* view of Christ's person, (like that of Luther,) necessarily involves such a conception of the christian salvation, as brings along with it in the end all that the sacramental interest includes. His scheme of religion thus, in the nature of the case, is materially different throughtout from that into whose service he is here forcibly *translated* by Mr. Stearns.

Still farther. The Lutheranism of Dr. Sartorius, as presented in this work, is by no means of the rigid extreme sort; so that in the case before us, it might seem to be set aside in favor simply of the old Reformed or Calvinistic doctrine of the sacraments, as this stood in the sixteenth century. Even in that case, the wrong would, of course, still merit sharp rebuke. But the opposition here, is not between the two forms of the original Protestant doctrine. There are a few sentences, perhaps, in Sartorius, to which a true follower of Calvin might demur; but the body of his doctrine, beyond all doubt, is the same that is most distinctly taught in the writings of Calvin, and embodied in all the classic confessions of the Reformed Church. There was a difference between the two creeds, of course; but such as it was, it lies away beyond the Baptist horizon, with which we are here concerned. Both sides of the old Protestantism intended to hold fast to the substance of the ancient sacramental doctrine, as it had stood in the catholic Church from the beginning. Both held the sacraments to be *mysteries*, regarded them as *organs* of grace, looked through them by faith to the *presence* of Christ's life, as objectively and truly comprehended in their solemn transaction. All this grew too out of a corresponding christology, by which room was made for the idea of a concrete Church, with divine resources and capabilities, commensurate, in all respects, with the entire extent of our human fall, and fitted in this way to cover the case of infants no less than that of adults. All this, however, and nothing more than this, is just the conception which Mr. Stearns, true to his Baptist feeling, undertakes to expunge from the doctrine of Christ's Person and Work, "as inapplicable

to the ideas upon that subject held by Christians generally, on this side of the water." This deserves to be well considered and borne in mind.

But now finally; what are we to think of the declaration here made of Christians generally, on this side of the Atlantic? The reference is, of course, not simply to the Baptist body, but to the so-called evangelical denominations in general. It is taken for granted, that they have collectively fallen away from the old doctrine of the sacraments, as here represented; that their system of religion excludes it; that it has come to be, in short, on all sides, obsolete and out of date. Is this representation correct? We fear that there is but too much reason for it, in the actual state of the Church. It is sometimes resented indeed, as harsh and unkind, to speak of any falling away from the original Protestant ground, in the posture of our modern churches. But the evidence of the fact, so far as the general Puritan and Methodist tendency is concerned, is too clear in the case of the sacraments, to bear any controversy; and it can only be by making no account of the interest in consideration, that the reality and momentous significance of the fact are so generally thrust out of sight. This, however, is itself, one of the strongest evidences of the very change, which it is affected in this way to overlook or despise. It is the want of the old faith in the sacraments, precisely, which makes the question of the sacraments, and along with this the whole subject of the Church, to be for so many, of so little interest and meaning. With all this agrees, but too well, the low style, in which these divine mysteries are spoken of in every direction, and the determined resistance which is made to the idea of everything like sacramental grace. It would seem, indeed, as if Mr. Stearns had good reason to say of the old doctrine, both Lutheran and Calvinistic, (for *his* repudiation of Sartorius excludes it in both forms,) that it no longer suits the reigning faith of this country. The statement has called forth, so far as we have noticed, no contradiction or exception, on the part of those who have noticed his book. His monstrous wrong done to Sartorius, and to the theme of his book, on this plea, is suffered to pass without rebuke. Even the Lutheran Church, whose whole significance is here at stake, and whose dignity and glory it should be to stand forward, especially at such a time, as the

bulwark of the sacramental interest, has lost, unfortunately, to a great extent, the power of entering any effectual protest in so grave a case. The "Lutheran Observer," which represents at present the reigning mind and life of that church, actually took notice of this mutilation of Sartorius, not long since, with a chuckle of delight, as a broad sign of the entire *antiquation* which has happily overtaken, here in evangelical America, the whole sacramental dream of the sixteenth century. The sympathies of this *organ* of Lutheranism fit it for making love ecclesiastically to the Cumberland Presbyterians, and other such sects, much more than for coming up to the help of its own proper faith in the hour of distress and danger. Could there well be however, a more grinning irony on our existing sect system, than is presented to us in such a spectacle—the creed of Luther, the faith of the Augsburg Confession, thus mortally wounded, in favor of the Baptists, in the house of its own professed friends!

It is all right, in this case, that the doctrine of infant baptism is made to share a common fate with the mystical presence in the Lord's supper, and the idea of sacramental grace generally. The baptism of infants can have no meaning for those who allow no objective value or force in the sacrament itself. Such may still hold fast to the rite, on the ground of old church tradition; but they do so with inward contradiction to their own faith; they are baptistic in principle, and to be at all consistent, should fall in fully also with the baptistic practice. This lies also necessarily in the christological theory, and their corresponding view they take of the Church. Only where the christian salvation is seen and felt to be a fact, primarily made real, under a concrete form for the benefit of the whole world, in the person of Christ, can there be any proper consciousness of its enduring objective character in the Church, and its necessary relation in this form to the *whole tract* of our human existence, from the cradle to the grave. The idea of a Christ, whose life is not formed to take up into itself the entire fact of humanity, (of which infancy is just as necessary a constituent as full age,) is such a contradiction as no sound christological feeling, no true sense of the Church, can ever comfortably endure. But let all resolve itself into a mere outward and mechanical salvation, and the case is quite changed. The whole mystical, sacramental side of christianity

is given up as no better than superstition; and along with the loss of all faith in the grace of holy baptism, as well as in that of the holy supper, the right of infants to be comprehended in Christ, by any such laver of regeneration, is thrown into an unsubstantial unmeaning shadow.

J. W. N.
