

**ORIGIN OF THE FOUR
GOSPELS, FROM THE FOURTH
GERMAN EDITION, REVISED
AND GREATLY ENLARGED**

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Origin of the Four Gospels, from the Fourth German Edition, Revised and Greatly Enlarged by
Constantine Tischendorf & William L. Gage

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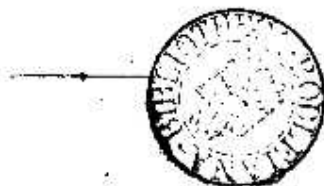
**ORIGIN OF THE FOUR
GOSPELS, FROM THE FOURTH
GERMAN EDITION, REVISED
AND GREATLY ENLARGED**

ORIGIN
OF THE
FOUR GOSPELS.

BY
CONSTANTINE TISCHENDORF,
PROFESSOR OF THEOLOGY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF LEIPZIG.

TRANSLATED, UNDER THE AUTHOR'S SANCTION, BY
WILLIAM L. GAGE.

FROM THE FOURTH GERMAN EDITION,
REVISED AND GREATLY ENLARGED.



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AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

WHEN in January, 1865, I set my hand to the task of preparing a work which should solve for the satisfaction of cultivated readers no less than of thorough scholars the question of the genuineness of our Gospels,—a question which stands related in the closest manner to the great topic of the present age, the Life of Jesus,—I was fully aware that those theologians who have for some time brought the scourge of their skeptical and unbelieving theories upon the field of New-Testament scholarship would take great offense at my work, and express themselves strongly against it. For who does not know that these men have long forgotten how to subject their prejudices to the results of conscientious investigation? Equally well known is it that they are accustomed to regard nothing as having scholarly and scientific value unless it proceeds from their own circle. On my part, however, I felt it to be my duty to take up arms against this organized movement to convert theological science into so-

phistry, and give powerful support to the anti-Christian spirit of our time; to meet it with the results of rigid inquiry, and with the earnestness of convictions which have matured from a lifetime consecrated faithfully to Christian learning. It seemed to be only in this way that I could advance the sacred interests which I had at heart, and throw light upon the questions which are vitally connected with belief in the Lord.

Did I expect to escape contradiction and the anger of opponents? By no means. Others might hesitate about committing themselves absolutely to a service in behalf of the interests of truth, fearing to encounter the sharp thrusts which might be directed against them; but I believed that I ought to and must cherish no such fear, and solaced myself with the thought that it would be a hard matter if what I might suffer from the calumny of enemies were not offset by the approbation of those who believe in the purity of my intentions and the uprightness of my aim. I have not been disappointed in this. The displeasure of my opponents has been manifested in a shameless manner. But, on the other hand, there has not been wanting the satisfaction of seeing my little book received in many quarters with the warmest acceptance and heartiest recognition, as well out of Germany as in it. In France, Holland, England, Russia, and America, translations have appeared; even an Italian one was made at Rome. Yet opposition has at no sin-

gle moment failed to display its real character; the weapons of lying, persecution, and calumny have been brought to bear against me; and in so doing, the blind zeal which has been displayed has at times suffered the grossest ignorance to peep out.

Two men in particular have undertaken the task of assailing my work with the weapons mentioned above,— Dr. Hilgenfeld, of Jena, and Dr. Volkmar, of Zurich. The first has devoted to this task an article in the Review which he edits, heading it, "Constantine Tischendorf as Defensor Fidei." As examples of the disingenuous statements with which he figures [strotzt], I adduce the following. Although in my work my main task was with the canon of the four Gospels; although I in no place undertook to put the whole New-Testament canon on the same footing, as, indeed, no thorough scholar can do; and although I do not speak specifically of the whole canon, and merely put together as of equal canonicity the four Gospels, the Pauline Epistles, the first of John, and the first of Peter, yet Hilgenfeld writes, p. 330: "The cheering result which issues from this illustration of the subject is the fact that the four Gospels, and even the *whole canon* of the New Testament, can be assigned to the close of the first century." Page 333: "Than the presupposition that the close of the New-Testament canon falls at the end of the first century, nothing is more incompatible." Page 336: "The modern apologist, who puts a full and fair ending

of the New-Testament canon at the close of the first century." Is this legerdemain, or a purposed misleading of readers? It is, it must be, one of the two. Naturally, he shuns quoting a single passage of my work in support of the charge which he brings against me.¹

Page 333, note 2, Hilgenfeld, in commenting on Euseb. Hist. Eccl. iii. 392, and alluding to Papias, thus writes: "That the line of presbyters is opened here by the apostles, can only be more than doubtful with a critic like Tischendorf." But would any reader suspect from this that I was following the express declaration of Eusebius, to whom we are indebted for almost all our knowledge of Papias's book, and to whose silence the negative school itself is indebted for its powerful evidence against John? And that the "Defensor Fidei" is here in accord with the two heroes of the negative school — Strauss and Renan — has not the third hero of that school ignored this, or sought to whitewash it over?

On page 337, Hilgenfeld writes: "The 'honorable weapons' on which Tischendorf prides himself are, for that matter, made very doubtful even in the homilies of Clemens Romanus." On this, he proceeds to quote my words [in the first edition of this book]: "It is of unabated interest that the alleged and acutely argued cropping out of John's Gospel in this celebrated record of the Jewish-

¹ See notes in Appendix.

Christian tendency, based on the recent discovery by Dressel, at Rome, of the closing portion of the document, where there is an undoubted use of John's story of the man whose blindness was healed, — though it may be that the genial habit of skepticism will yield to no array of truth, — has entirely fallen out of sight." On this, he remarks: "As I, to whose critical investigations into the Gospels of Justin a note at this point refers, do not wish to hold Dr. Tischendorf to be a base calumniator, I must conclude that he has taken a twelve-years' slumber over the matter with which he is dealing. Dressel's complete edition of Clemens's Homilies, published in 1853, is for Tischendorf a book only 'just out.' Then he rubs his eyes, and simply comes to the same conclusion that I came to fifteen years ago, before the conclusion of the Homilies was brought to light." To this I answer, that my allusion to Hilgenfeld was coupled with the expression "acutely argued," and that it was expressly stated that Hilgenfeld's words dated from 1850; and when I had occasion to speak of Dressel's work as "new," I appended the date, 1853. Still some trace of his base calumination must remain. And Hilgenfeld draws my own words, "Though it may be that the genial habit of skepticism will yield to no array of truth," down upon his own head. A glance shows that he is entitled to the full application of it; and one may not hear of the "genial habit of skepticism" without seeing

that Dr. Hilgenfeld is alluded to. He acts as if he did not know that it is Dr. Volkmar who has, so weakened his confession of a use of John's Gospel by the Clementines that the doubts respecting the authenticity of this Gospel remain undisturbed; and he writes: "But Tischendorf, although an honorable man in everything else, has in this instance been buried, with his critical knowledge, in the deepest slumber." Everywhere Hilgenfeld acts as if he believed that all that he advances must be contested by me. I did not purpose to take him for the subject of my book: he comes, as all can see, only under consideration so far as he follows in the direction which I oppose. Does he leave this direction at any point, and under any circumstances, he begins to cry out about "dishonor," "going to sleep," "Spanish knight-errantry," and the like, as in page 336, where says, "In him (Justin) I have long recognized the use of the three first Gospels, and even the possibility of an acquaintance with the fourth. This puts Tischendorf in the attitude of spurring his Rosinante, Don Quixote-like, against windmills as imagined giants, in his zeal to show the use of the four Gospels by these apologists." The zeal of the Spanish knight lies in the following forcible words: "That Justin repeats our Matthew in many passages is undeniable; that he knows and follows Mark and Luke, is in several places extremely probable."² Then a page and a half are devoted to a discussion of the effort which has been