

# **OUTLINES OF CHURCH HISTORY**

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Outlines of church history by Rudolf Sohm

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**RUDOLF SOHM**

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# OUTLINES OF CHURCH HISTORY

BY  
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*WITH A PREFACE BY*  
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## EDITOR'S PREFACE

THE present work is intended to supply a want which most historical teachers must have felt—that of a clear and suggestive outline of general Church History for intelligent readers. Such a manual is Professor Rudolf Sohm's *Kirchengeschichte im Grundriss*. Short as it is, it is neither a meagre sketch nor a confused mass of facts, but a masterly outline of Church History from the first ages to our own times, combining a lawyer's precision and a historian's insight into the meaning of events with a philosopher's sense of the unity of history and a Christian's conviction that the Kingdom of God is spiritual.

The translation is made from the eighth German edition, which the author has brought well up to date. His vigorous and often epigrammatic sentences are far from easy to render into flowing English, and the work has cost the accomplished translator no little time and care.

We are becoming used to the transformation of Christian thought by the advance of science during the last two hundred years. It has been 'a revelation come up from the earth to meet the revelation which

had come down from heaven' (Hort). It may be that another revelation is coming back from the past which will work another and as great a transformation in the next two hundred years. The critical study of history has already done much to loosen our Pharisaic ideas of the Gospel, and to show that it is far more spiritual than Catholic or Calvinist imagined. It has revealed a new world, which is yet an old one, of Christian thought beyond and above the narrow Western sectarianism which bounded the horizon of Catholics, and even of Protestants also. Not by unreasoning worship of the past, nor by ignorant contempt of it, nor yet by partisan distortion of it, but by critical and sympathetic study of it, we shall learn something of the grandeur of our own time, and of the meaning of the mighty questions which lie before our children.

H. M. GWATKIN.



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

THE following pages contain a collection of essays which I published some little time ago in the *Allgemeine Conservative Monatschrift*. It is not without some misgiving that I now bring these essays out as a whole. Yet I dare to hope that this method of exposition, by which I attempt to present the history of the Church as a part of universal history, will perhaps make it easier for the casual reader to obtain a survey of the whole course of historical development, and an insight into those spiritual forces which through Christianity have flowed out into the world.

LEIPZIG, *November 12th*, 1887.

The Second Edition differs from the first only in a few alterations.

LEIPZIG, *February 14th*, 1888.

A few additions have been made to the Third Edition; as in § 10, Montanism; § 15, Rise of Monasticism—Augustine. But the work as a whole has remained unchanged.

LEIPZIG, *November 8th*, 1888.

The Fourth Edition was unchanged from the third. The opportunity offered by a Fifth Edition is taken to revise the whole carefully once more, and to enlarge it by some additions which seemed necessary in order to present the whole picture in a clearer light. With this view sections 6, 7, 16, 20, 26, 32, and 51 have undergone fresh treatment with reference to the 'Proceedings against the Christians,' Iconoclasm, the *Libri Carolini*, Pope Nicolas I., Bernard of Clairvaux, 'Reforming Forces,' and Alphonso of Liguori.

LEIPZIG, January 19th, 1890.

In the Eighth Edition some sections, namely §§ 10-38, have been further elaborated with special reference to the results set forth in my *Ecclesiastical Law*, vol. i. (1892).

LEIPZIG, February 22nd, 1893.

RUDOLPH SOHM.

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