

historical portrait of Christ as authentic, is an unexplained mercy.

In conclusion, we are told that it was the force of ecstasy which moved Jesus to the preaching of the gospel and made Him the leader of an incipient Church. There are mutable ingredients in that gospel so far as its contents are ecstatic; but even here ecstasy may have brought gain as well as loss. It gave Christ His faith in His own Messiahship, without which Christianity could never have been. The chief gain to be expected from a work like his own, Professor Holtzmann thinks, is that it shows us a clearer and more living picture of Jesus, and presents that combination of antagonistic and conflicting elements which is often the most attractive vein in a great personality.

The theological defects of the book are hardly compensated for by its literary qualities, for it maintains only too well the reputation of Germany as 'the home of invertebrate prose.' The author has fallen a victim, we are afraid, to the idea that a problem has been solved when a new technical term has been invented to describe it. 'Ekstatiker' is a category which is not likely to have a great future in the interpretation of the person of Jesus, and in Holtzmann's hands it has neither the unity nor the clearness which we demand from conceptions that claim to modify our thoughts about Christ's inner life. Was it worth while, indeed, to write such a book? We can applaud it only on the principle that out of the violent clash of opinions, even the most extreme, there may now and then chance to be struck a spark of true fire, which, caught up by the wise, may one day come to burn with the light of higher and clearer knowledge.

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## Professor von Dobschütz on the Resurrection History.<sup>1</sup>

DR. VON DOBSCHÜTZ, whose valuable work in the *Primitive Christian Communities* is soon to appear in an English dress, has recently published a booklet entitled *Easter and Pentecost*, in which he discusses in a fresh and vital way the accounts of our Lord's Resurrection in the light of the oldest

<sup>1</sup> *Ostern und Pfingsten. Eine Studie zu 1 Kor. 15.* Von E. von Dobschütz. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung. Pp. 54.

apostolic formula, and of St. Paul's witness, as both are given in 1 Co 15. The little treatise, whose value is out of all proportion to its size, is dedicated to Dr. Ad. Hilgenfeld, 'the Nestor of our University' (Jena). In it we have a shining example of the freest historical criticism wedded to a profound faith in the fundamental facts of the Church's Confession. We are reminded of a serious lack in English apologetic literature, as we read the German theologian's paper. With all the strength and robustness which characterize the writings of such men as the late Bishop Westcott and Professor Milligan, one is conscious that they never came to terms with the *history* of the Resurrection as we have it in the Gospels, never tried to account for that history and to get at the realities which it imperfectly shadows forth. To leave the narratives as they stand, or to seek to harmonize them in a mechanical way, must always prove unsatisfying. On the other hand, it is hard to ask us to acquiesce in the agnostic despair of history to which Dr. Harnack feels himself driven, and which regards the problem of what happened on the first Easter morning as absolutely insoluble. Dr. von Dobschütz steers his way between these extremes.

His discussion falls into three parts: (1) the Empty Grave, (2) the Appearances of the Risen Lord, (3) Pentecost.

As to the Empty Grave, he finds that the common element in the collective tradition is the discovery of the grave open and empty, and the angelic message to the disciples, through the women, to go to Galilee, where the risen Lord would meet them. The appearances at Jerusalem must be set aside as owing partly to a confusion with the Galilean appearances, and partly to a later traditional growth. Is it objected that the angelic apparition must be deemed unhistorical—the creation of mythical fancy? Be it so. Nevertheless, the naked fact remains: the women on Easter morning found the grave open and empty. It is, indeed, said that St. Paul knows nothing of this alleged fact, and that his silence almost amounts to a disproof. Dr. von Dobschütz, on the contrary, maintains that not only the formula of 1 Co 15<sup>4</sup>, going back to a pre-Pauline tradition, but the apostle's dogmatic discussion in vv. 35-54 when compared with v. 20 and following, presuppose the idea of the empty grave. To those at Corinth who denied the possibility of a resurrection of the

dead—(though they admitted Christ's)—on the ground that they could not conceive *how* it could take place, St. Paul replies by setting the Resurrection of Christ in the closest connexion with that of all Christian believers: the latter is guaranteed by the former. The body remains: it is its matter that is changed. An analogy is found in the change that takes place in a corn of wheat when sown in the earth. St. Paul's idea of the Resurrection is modelled on that of Christ's—an idea as much removed from the sensuous conceptions of the Rabbis as from the ultra-spiritualism of the Greek philosophers. But the Pauline view goes back to that of the primitive disciples.

Again, the phrase in the apostolic formula, 'He was buried,' is very significant. Its motive is not merely, as is commonly supposed, to emphasize the full reality of our Lord's death, but to point to the grave as the state from which the Resurrection must take place. It is noteworthy also that there is no allusion to scriptural proof for His burial as in the case of His Death and Resurrection. Justin Martyr (*Dial. cum Tryph.* 7. 118) adduces proof from Is 53<sup>9</sup> and 57<sup>2</sup>. A striking illustration of the falsity of making the Old Testament responsible for the origin of the gospel tradition!

Yet the belief in the Empty Grave is by no means equivalent to faith in the Resurrection. The wish to set forth the Resurrection as an event open to historical proof, like any other event, attaches itself to the Empty Grave as an indubitable proof. On the other hand, those who feel that an object of faith cannot be something historically provable, refer the Easter-message of the women to the region of legend and poetry. Both views are false. 'That the grave was found open and empty on the third day by some women is historically certain, but it is just as certain that this did not result directly in the Easter faith.' Where is the joy of assurance in the words which, according to modern criticism, close St. Mark's Gospel: 'for they (the women) were afraid.' No! Faith in the Resurrection does not depend on the Empty Grave, but on the self-witness of the living Lord. Theories, indeed, have been devised in order to account for the women's discovery on purely materialistic grounds; the Wolfenbüttel Fragmentist attributes the disappearance of the body to the disciples, while Réville and O. Holtzmann deem the Jews and the owner of the garden respectively the responsible agents. 'Faith knows

another explanation, and need not be put out by any dictum of natural science; but this is won not by empirical investigation, rather is it an assertion of faith whose certainty does not rest on external facts, but on personal relation to Christ.'

As to the appearances of the risen Lord, neither their nature nor succession can be clearly made out. Still we know that after the discovery of Easter morning, the disciples were drawn to Galilee, not indeed with joyful hope, yet not without a ray of hope that there they would see the Master again. St. Luke and St. John transfer all the appearances to Jerusalem. Reasons for this tradition are obvious. A later time felt that the witnesses to the Resurrection could not be so far separated from the event. Moreover, as the third day was the day of the emergence from the tomb, must it not also have been the day of His self-manifestation? Doubtless there were traditions of appearances at Jerusalem to less known disciples. Could these have precedence of St. Peter and the Eleven?

Space does not allow us to follow Dr. von Dobschütz further. His discussion of the meaning of the Pentecost is most interesting and illuminating. The pouring forth of the Spirit is the way in which the author of Acts describes a Christophancy. Thus Easter and Pentecost stand in vital connexion. But we can only mention these points, not discuss them. All theological students must thank the Jena professor for this timely, scholarly, and reassuring little book.

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## Plenary Indulgences and the Reformation.<sup>1</sup>

THESE little books, the one viii and 160 pages, and the other vii and 212 pages long, are part of

<sup>1</sup> *Documente zum Ablassstreit von 1517*. Herausgegeben von Lic. Theol. Dr. W. Köhler, Privatdozenten an der Universität Giessen. Tübingen und Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr, 1892. Price 3s. (Sammlung ausgewählter kirchen- und dogmen-geschichtlicher Quellenschriften. Zweite Reihe. Drittes Heft).—*Luthers 95 Thesen samt seinen Resolutionen sowie den Gegenschriften von Wimpina Tetzel, Eck und Prierias und den Antworten Luthers darauf. Kritische Ausgabe mit kurzen Erläuterungen*. Von Lic. Dr. W. Köhler, Privatdozenten an der Universität Giessen. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1903. Price 3s.