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yet it is painfully true that even Christian faith becomes insipid and ineffective unless it confronts the world, comes with blood, and is proved in the actualities and conflicts of life. But coteries and conventions do not perhaps mislead so many as the charm and happiness of what is probably counted a Christian home. It is not uncommon to see life narrowed in such circumstances to the circle of the domestic affections. It is pure, beautiful, amiable, truly happy; but it has no interests beyond itself. The conflicts of the world rage around it but it is not troubled by them; all that calls for effort, sacrifice, blood, is ignored. The Lord's battle is going on against powerful forces of evil—pride, sensuality, secularism, false patriotism, drunkenness, greed—but the members of such families are not in it. Their life is refined, retired, accomplished perhaps, but bloodless. Is that Christian? Can One who came by blood see in lives like these of the travail of His soul? Or does not reality like that of His Passion call for something far more intensely and vividly real in those who believe in His name?

JAMES DENNEY.

## THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

### V.

CREDIBILITY *contd.*—“THE EASTER MESSAGE.”

PROFESSOR HARNACK, in his lectures on Christianity, bids us hold by “the Easter faith” that “Jesus Christ has passed through death, that God has awakened Him to life and glory,” but warns us against basing this faith on “the Easter message of the empty grave, and the appearances of Jesus to His disciples.”<sup>1</sup> On what, then, one asks, is the faith to be based which connects it peculiarly

<sup>1</sup> *What is Christianity?* pp. 160-3.

with Easter? Or on what did the apostles and the whole primitive Church base it, except on their conviction that, in St. Paul's words,<sup>1</sup> Jesus "was buried, and that He hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that He appeared to Cephas," and to the others named? But in all these "stories told by Paul and the Evangelists," Professor Harnack reminds us, "there is no tradition of single events which is quite trustworthy."<sup>2</sup>

It is this assertion of the insecurity of the Easter message of the Resurrection as a basis for faith which is now to be tested. Attention will be given first to the points which are more central and essential. It is, of course, easy to spirit away every part of the evidence by sufficiently bold denials, and by constructions which betray their weakness in the fact that hardly two of them agree together. It will be seen as the inquiry proceeds that the contradictions imputed to the Evangelists are trifles compared with those of the critics among themselves in seeking to amend the history. Agreeing only in rejecting the evidence of the Gospels as to what actually happened, they lose themselves in a maze of contradictory conjectures.

A few examples may be of service.

Weizsäcker, like Pfeiderer, is certain that St. Paul knew nothing of the women's visit to the grave. "The only possible explanation," he says, "is that the Apostle was ignorant of its existence."<sup>3</sup> "Paul," says Pfeiderer, "knows nothing of the women's discovery of the empty grave."<sup>4</sup> Professor Lake, on the other hand, thinks that St. Paul *did* know of it, and accounts in this way for his mention of "the third day."<sup>5</sup>

Further, as "Paul's knowledge of these things must have come from the heads of the primitive Church,"

<sup>1</sup> 1 Cor. xv. 4-6.

<sup>2</sup> P. 162.

<sup>3</sup> *Apost. Age*, E.T., i. p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> *Christian Origins*, p. 134.

<sup>5</sup> *Res. of Jesus Christ*, pp. 191-6.

Weizsäcker deduces that "it is the primitive Church itself that was ignorant of any such tradition."<sup>1</sup> The visit of the women must therefore be dismissed as baseless legend. Keim agrees.<sup>2</sup> But Renan,<sup>3</sup> Réville, H. J. Holtzmann,<sup>4</sup> O. Holtzmann, Professor Lake—indeed most—accept the fact as historical.

Another crucial point is the empty tomb. Strauss, Keim, and, more recently, A. Meyer<sup>5</sup> treat the empty grave as an inference from belief in the Resurrection. But a "hundred voices," Keim acknowledges, are raised in protest, and "many critics, not only of the Right, but even of the Left, are able to regard it [the empty grave] as certain and incontrovertible."<sup>6</sup> "There is no reason to doubt," says O. Holtzmann, "that the women did not carry out their intention of anointing, because they found the grave empty."<sup>7</sup> Renan does not dream of questioning the fact.

Many critics, including Professor Lake,<sup>8</sup> think it impossible that Jesus should have spoken of His death and Resurrection on the third day. Others, as A. Meyer<sup>9</sup> and O. Holtzmann,<sup>10</sup> find in such sayings of Jesus an important element in the development of belief in the Resurrection.

A favourite view, shared by Strauss, Weizsäcker, Keim, Pfeiderer, A. Meyer, Professor Lake, is that the disciples, immediately after the Crucifixion, fled to Galilee, there, and not at Jerusalem, receiving the visions which convinced them that the Lord had risen.<sup>11</sup> On this hypothesis, the

<sup>1</sup> *Ut supra*.

<sup>2</sup> *Jesus of Nazara*, E.T., vi. p. 296.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Apôtres*, ch. i.

<sup>4</sup> *Die Synoptiker*, p. 105.

<sup>5</sup> *Die Auferstehung Christi*, pp. 120-25.

<sup>6</sup> *Ut supra*, pp. 297-8.

<sup>7</sup> *Leben Jesu*, p. 391.

<sup>8</sup> *Ut supra*, pp. 255-259.

<sup>9</sup> *Ut supra*, pp. 181-2.

<sup>10</sup> *Ut supra*, p. 388.

<sup>11</sup> Weizsäcker, i. pp. 2, 3; Keim, vi. pp. 281 ff.; A. Meyer, pp. 121, 127-30, etc.

women, even if they visited the tomb, had no share in the origin of the belief in the Resurrection.<sup>1</sup> Most, on the other hand, who, like Renan<sup>2</sup> and H. J. Holtzmann,<sup>3</sup> accept the visit to the tomb, hold that the Apostles were still in Jerusalem on the Easter morning.

To return to the positive investigation. It has already been seen that no doubt can rest on the cardinal fact that Jesus *did* die, and was buried; and Harnack will allow a connexion of the Easter Message with "that wonderful event in Joseph of Arimathæa's Garden," which, however, he says, "no eye saw."<sup>4</sup> What was the nature of that connexion?

1. It is the uncontradicted testimony of all the witnesses that it *was* the *Easter morning*, or, as the Evangelists call it, "the first day of the week," or *third day* after the Crucifixion, on which the event known as the Resurrection happened; in other words, that Jesus rose from the dead *on the third day*. The four Evangelists, whatever their other divergences, are agreed about this.<sup>5</sup> The Apostle Paul, who had conversed with the original witnesses only eight or nine years after the event,<sup>6</sup> confirms the statement, and declares it to be the general belief of the Church.<sup>7</sup> Not a ripple of dubiety can be shown to rest on the belief. "There is no doubt," Professor Lake allows, "that from the beginning the Resurrection was believed to have taken place on the third day."<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A. Meyer, p. 124; Lake, p. 195.

<sup>2</sup> *Les Apôtres*, ch. i.

<sup>3</sup> *Ut supra*, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *Ut supra*, p. 161.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2; Luke xxiv. 1; John xx. 1. The predictions of Jesus of His rising on the third day may be added, if only as evidence of the belief.

<sup>6</sup> Galatians i. 18, 19, ii. 1, 9. Strauss says, "There is no occasion to doubt that the Apostle Paul had heard this from Peter, James, and others concerned." (*New Life of Jesus*, i. p. 400.)

<sup>7</sup> 1 Corinthians xv. 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ut supra*, p. 253; cf. p. 264.

Here, then, it might seem, is an unchallengeable basis from which to start, for a whole Christian Church can hardly be conceived of as mistaken about an elementary fact connected with its own origin. But the fact is not unchallenged. Nothing in this history is. Strauss long ago set the example in endeavouring to show how the belief might have originated from Old Testament hints.<sup>1</sup> Professor Lake, who thinks it rests "on theological rather than historical grounds,"<sup>2</sup> devotes some twenty-five pages of his book, in different places, to weaken its foundations.<sup>3</sup> The new Babylonian school derives it from pagan myths.<sup>4</sup> A writer like A. Meyer combines all the standpoints, and would explain it from Old Testament passages, predictions of Jesus, and Greek, Persian, and Babylonian analogies.<sup>5</sup>

It is difficult to know what to make of a criticism of this kind, which so boldly sets aside existing evidence to launch out on assertions for which no proof can be given. It is the more difficult in Professor Lake's case, that in the end he accepts the Marcan tradition of the visit of the women to the tomb—or what they took to be the tomb—on the morning of the third day after the Crucifixion, for the purpose of anointing.<sup>6</sup> If they did—and who can reasonably doubt it?—why all this pother in seeking an explanation from Old Testament suggestions, Babylonian mythology, and other obscure quarters? It is argued, to be sure, that even the experience of the women was not a proof that the Resurrection did not take place on the *second* day rather than on the *third*, and mythology is called in to help to fix the day.<sup>7</sup> One reads even: "It is never stated, but only implied in Mark that the Resurrec-

<sup>1</sup> *Ut supra*, i. pp. 438-9.

<sup>2</sup> *Ut supra*, p. 264.      <sup>3</sup> Cf. pp. 27-33, 191-3, 196-9, 253-65.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Cheyne, *Bible Problems*, pp. 110 ff.; Lake, pp. 197-8, 261.

<sup>5</sup> *Ut supra*, pp. 178-85.

<sup>6</sup> *Ut supra*, pp. 182, 196, 246, etc.      <sup>7</sup> Pp. 254, 259-63.

tion was on the third day.”<sup>1</sup> As if, in St. Mark’s time, a single soul in the Church had a doubt on that subject! The treatment of St. Paul’s testimony to “the third day” is not less arbitrary. The attempt is made by Professor Lake to separate St. Paul’s mention of the third day from his witness to the appearances; “the strongest evidence for the alternative [negative] view” being, that it requires that St. Paul should have said, “and was seen on the third day,” not “and was raised on the third day.”<sup>2</sup> One asks, Could Jesus have been seen until He was raised? It is granted that St. Paul was acquainted with the Jerusalem tradition which embraced this fact.<sup>3</sup> Yet several pages discuss, with indecisive result, whether “the third day” was not “merely a deduction from Scripture.”<sup>4</sup> The conclusion is that, whatever St. Paul’s reason (it is allowed later on that it is “not impossible” that his reference may be to the experience of the women),<sup>5</sup> “we can only be almost certain that it cannot have been anything which he was able to rank as first-hand evidence of the Resurrection.”<sup>6</sup> Is not the unreality of such reasoning itself a powerful corroboration of the historicity of the Gospel and Pauline statements.

2. The next important element in the witness, in part implied in the preceding, is *the visit of the women to the tomb of Jesus* at early morning on the third day.<sup>7</sup> Here, again, with some variation, we have a substantial nucleus of agreement. The differences will be looked at immediately; but how little they touch the main matter is apparent from the circumstance that, even among the extremer sceptics, the greater number admit that the

<sup>1</sup> P. 198.<sup>2</sup> Pp. 27-8.<sup>3</sup> P. 41.<sup>4</sup> Pp. 29-32.<sup>5</sup> P. 196.<sup>6</sup> P. 32.<sup>7</sup> Matthew xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 1, 2; Luke xxiv. 1, 10; cf. xxiii. 55; John xx. 1.

women—the same named in the Gospels—*did* go to visit the tomb of Jesus on that memorable morning. Strauss can hardly admit it, for he throws doubt on the previous fact of the burial. But most who allow that Jesus was laid in the (or *a*) rock-tomb admit that the sorrowing women who had followed Him from Galilee, and had witnessed the Crucifixion and entombment,<sup>1</sup> or members of their company, did, as was most natural, come to the tomb on the morning after the close of the Sabbath, as day was breaking, for the purpose of anointing the body. Professor Lake admits this; the two Holtzmanns admit it; even A. Meyer, although, without the least ground, he disconnects the incident from the third day, concedes that visits were made.<sup>2</sup> Renan gives a summary of the facts, yet with a touch of inconsistency with his previous statements which, in the Evangelists, would be called “contradiction.” He tells, e.g., of “the Galilean women who on the Friday evening had hastily embalmed the body,”<sup>3</sup> forgetful that earlier he had correctly described the embalming as performed by Joseph and Nicodemus.<sup>4</sup>

The essential point being thus conceded, long time need not be spent on the alleged discrepancies with regard to (i) the *names and number* of the women. St. John’s account in this connexion will be considered by itself. Meanwhile what must strike every careful reader is, that the names of all, or most, of the women concerned are, if not directly in the narratives of the Resurrection, yet in the related accounts of the closing scenes, given by each of the Evangelists. It is St. Mark, the supposed source, that tells how, at the Crucifixion, “there were

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Matthew xxvii. 55, 56; Mark xv. 40, 41; Luke xxiii. 49; John xix. 25.

<sup>2</sup> *Ut supra*, p. 124. His account is referred to below.

<sup>3</sup> *Les Apôtres*, p. 6.

<sup>4</sup> *Vie de Jésus*, p. 431.



also women beholding from afar : among whom were both Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome, who, when He was in Galilee, followed Him and ministered unto Him ; and many other women which came up with Him to Jerusalem ;<sup>1</sup> and how, at the burial, "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where He was laid."<sup>2</sup> These two, with Salome, are then described as buying spices and coming to the tomb on the Resurrection morning.<sup>3</sup> St. Matthew gives the like story of "many women beholding from afar, which had followed Jesus from Galilee," "among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee (Salome),"<sup>4</sup> and tells, as before, of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary "sitting over against the sepulchre."<sup>5</sup> It is extravagant to suppose that because St. Matthew, following up this statement, speaks of "Mary Magdalene and the other Mary"<sup>6</sup> coming to the sepulchre on the first day of the week, and omits the mention of Salome, he designs to contradict St. Mark, who includes her.<sup>7</sup> St. Luke, likewise, knows of "the women that followed with Him from Galilee,"<sup>8</sup> and who (therefore not the two Maries only) beheld where He was laid,<sup>9</sup> and came with their spices on the first-day morning.<sup>10</sup> St. Luke gives the list afterwards as "Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them." (Salome is omitted and Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, appears.)<sup>11</sup> St. John

<sup>1</sup> Mark xv. 40.<sup>2</sup> Ver. 47.<sup>3</sup> Mark xvi. 1.<sup>4</sup> Matt. xxvii. 55, 56.<sup>5</sup> Ver. 61.<sup>6</sup> Matthew xxviii. 10.

<sup>7</sup> It would be as reasonable to accuse St. Mark of contradiction because in one verse he speaks of "Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses," and in another of "Mary the mother of Joses" only.

<sup>8</sup> Luke xxiii. 49.<sup>9</sup> Ver. 55.<sup>10</sup> Luke xxiv. 1.<sup>11</sup> Ver. 10.

corroborates the others in speaking of Christ's "mother and His mother's sister [probably Salome, so Meyer, Alford, etc.], Mary the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene,"<sup>1</sup> at the Cross; but at the Resurrection he speaks only of Mary Magdalene,<sup>2</sup> of whom he has a special story to tell. The "we," however, in St. John xx. 2, implies the presence of others.

Is there really any difficulty of moment in these various narratives? They are incomplete, but surely they are not contradictory! The same group of women is in the background in each; Mary Magdalene and "the other Mary," are the prominent figures in all: the mention of other names is determined by the preference or special object of the Evangelist. It is most natural that the mourning women should repair at the earliest moment on the morning after the Sabbath to the tomb of their Crucified Master, to "see" it, as St. Matthew says,<sup>3</sup> and, if access could be obtained, to complete the rites of burial. There is no need for supposing that they came together; it is much more probable that they came in different groups or companies—perhaps Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, or these, with Salome, first, to be joined after by Joanna and other members of the Galilean band.<sup>4</sup> Nothing, as was before noted, can be inferred from St. Matthew omitting to mention the design of anointing. His story of the guard, as rendering the anointing impossible, may have influenced him: only that the women knew nothing of the guard. It is not that the Evangelist was ignorant

<sup>1</sup> John xix. 25.

<sup>2</sup> John xx. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew xxviii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> After enumerating the women Renan says: "They came, probably each on her own account, for it is difficult to call in question the tradition of the three Synoptical Gospels, according to which several women came to the tomb: on the other hand, it is certain that in the two most authentic narratives [?] which we possess of the Resurrection, Mary Magdalene alone played a part." (*Les Apôtres*, p. 6.)

of the custom of anointing ;<sup>1</sup> but, following up the picture he had drawn of the two Marias "sitting over against" the sepulchre at the burial,<sup>2</sup> he gives prominence to the yearning of love these women felt to see again where the Lord slept.<sup>3</sup>

There remains (ii) the *time* of this visit of the women, as to which, again, discrepancy is frequently alleged. Certain of the notes of time in the Evangelists raise interesting exegetical questions (e.g., St. Matthew's "late on the Sabbath day";<sup>4</sup> St. Mark's "when the sun was risen"<sup>5</sup>); but real contradiction it is hard to discover. What can be readily observed is that no one of the Evangelists employs the precise expression of another—a strong proof of independence;<sup>6</sup> and further, that all the expressions imply that the visits took place at, or about, early dawn, or daybreak, when darkness was passing into day. St. Matthew gives the description, "late on the Sabbath" (ὄψε δὲ σαββάτων), as it began to dawn (τῇ ἐπιφωσκούσῃ) towards the first day of the week.<sup>7</sup> St. Mark says: "Very early (λίαν πρῶι) on the first day of the week . . . when the sun was risen (ἀνατείλαντος τοῦ ἡλίου)."<sup>8</sup> St. Luke has the expression: "At early dawn" (ὄρθρου βαθείος).<sup>9</sup> St. John has: "Early (πρῶι), while it was yet dark"<sup>10</sup> The discrepancies between these expressions are formal only. If contradiction there is, it lies chiefly in St. Mark's own apparently inconsistent clauses, "very early," and

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Matthew xxvi. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew xxvii. 61.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew xxviii. 1.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>5</sup> Mark xvi. 2.

<sup>6</sup> Alford wrote: "The independence and distinctness of the four narratives in this part have never been questioned" (on Matthew xxviii. 1). This, too, needs qualifying.

<sup>7</sup> Matthew xxviii. 1. Meyer observes: "Consequently the point of time mentioned here is substantially identical with that given in Luke xxiv. 1, and in John xx. 1" (*in loc.*).

<sup>8</sup> Mark xvi. 2.

<sup>9</sup> Luke xxiv. 1.

<sup>10</sup> John xx. 1.

“when the sun was risen.”<sup>1</sup> As the Evangelist cannot be supposed to intend verbally to contradict himself within the compass of one verse, his language must reasonably be construed to mean: “At early dawn, when the sun was just above the horizon.” Similarly, St. Matthew’s “late on the Sabbath” cannot reasonably be put into contradiction with his own explanatory clause: “As it began to dawn towards the first day of the week.” It is not, as the context shows,<sup>2</sup> Saturday night that is meant, but the period of darkness ending at dawn of the following morning (thus Meyer, Alford, etc.). The view advocated by some that St. Matthew, borrowing from St. Mark, here combines inconsistent clauses by dropping out St. Mark’s mention of the purchase of spices between, is,<sup>3</sup> as Meyer remarks, untenable. It is not St. Mark’s language that is used, and St. Matthew may be credited with sufficient knowledge of Greek to keep him from perpetrating so obvious a blunder. St. John’s “while it was yet dark” presents no difficulty when the situation is recalled. The women began to arrive just as day was breaking, and it was daylight before they left the place. Mary Magdalene had light enough to see that the stone was taken away.<sup>4</sup>

3. The third crucial fact in the history—one which,

<sup>1</sup> Scholars are well agreed that the aorist participle here can only bear the sense: “After the sun was risen.”

<sup>2</sup> Some, as McClellan, *The New Testament*, pp. 512–13, insist that St. Matthew’s “late on the Sabbath” can only mean Saturday evening, and explain the subsequent clause by the help of Luke xxiii. 54, “And the Sabbath drew on” (*ἐπέφωκε*). But the events that follow in St. Matthew plainly belong to the morning of the first day. McClellan acknowledges that “nearly every modern writer of importance [a long list] interprets St. Matthew’s phrases as of Sunday morning.”

<sup>3</sup> Thus Lake, p. 57; W. C. Allen, *St. Matthew*, pp. 300–1, etc.: so, too, Caspari, (*Chron. Introd.*, E.T., p. 240). Allen says: “Matthew, by omitting Mark’s reference to the purchase of perfumes, has combined two entirely inconsistent notes of time.” But see Meyer, *in loc.*

<sup>4</sup> John xx. 1: “Twilight in that latitude does not last for more than a quarter of an hour” (Latham, *The Risen Master*, p. 225).

in connexion with succeeding incidents, establishes the reality of the Resurrection, is that, when the women reached the tomb of Jesus on that Easter morning, after much dubiety as to how they were to obtain entrance, they found *the stone rolled away and the tomb empty*. Here, again, there is entire unanimity among the witnesses.<sup>1</sup> St. Matthew alone tells of *how* the stone was removed—of “a great earthquake,” and the descent of an angel of the Lord, who rolled away the stone, and sat upon it, before whose dazzling aspect the keepers became as dead men.<sup>2</sup> But all the Evangelists agree that the stone, the rolling away of which had caused the women much concern (“who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the tomb?”)<sup>3</sup> was found rolled away, and that the tomb was empty, when the women arrived. In St. Mark’s words: “And looking up, they see that the stone is rolled back; for it was exceeding great.”<sup>4</sup> Or in St. Luke’s: “And they found the stone rolled away from the tomb. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.”<sup>5</sup> According to St. John, the emptiness of the tomb was subsequently verified by St. Peter and St. John himself.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, while St. Matthew alone gives the story of the rolling away of the stone by the angel, the implication in all the other narratives is that the stone was removed by supernatural power. No human hand had effected this wonder. St. Matthew, therefore, only narrates in objective fashion—a reflection, possibly, of the terrified imagination of some of the guards—what the other Evangelists postulate. What really had happened the women

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xxviii. 2-7; Mark xvi. 3-6; Luke xxiv. 2-6; John xx. 1, 11, 12.

<sup>2</sup> Matthew xxviii. 2-4.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xvi. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Verse 4.

<sup>5</sup> Luke xxiv. 2, 3.

<sup>6</sup> John xx. 3-9; cf. Luke xxiv. 12.

were soon to learn from angelic announcements to themselves. Jesus had risen, as He said.<sup>1</sup>

Here, then, are two facts in the history of the Resurrection—the stone rolled away, and the empty tomb—attested about as well as facts can be, with the belief of the whole primitive Church behind them. There is not a hint anywhere that the fact of the empty tomb was ever questioned by either friend or foe. It would have been easy to question or disprove it when the Apostles were boldly proclaiming the Resurrection in Jerusalem a few weeks later.<sup>2</sup> But no one appears to have done so. The other fact of the rolling away of the stone with which the tomb had been closed is involved in the tomb being found empty. Taken as they stand—much more when taken in connexion with what succeeds—the two facts support belief in the Resurrection. What is to be said of them?

There are here only two courses if the Resurrection is disputed. Either (1) the facts may be denied, and the evidence set aside, as when it is argued that the empty tomb is itself an inference from belief in the Resurrection.<sup>3</sup> Or (2) the facts may be admitted, and a “natural” explanation be sought for them. The extremest view has already been alluded to, and need not longer detain us. It is interesting only for its implied admission that the belief of the Apostolic Church was belief in a bodily Rising. Undoubtedly every believer in the Resurrection of Christ, St. Paul included, held as part of that belief that the tomb of Jesus was left empty. But the emptiness of the tomb was not a deduction from prior belief in the Resurrection—the Apostles were guilty of no such *hysteron proteron*—but was a fact by itself, adequately attested, and one of the grounds of belief in that divine occurrence. In

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xxviii. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Acts ii. 24, 31; iii. 15; iv. 10, etc.

<sup>3</sup> Thus Strauss, Weizsäcker, Keim, etc.

recent times, accordingly, the other alternative is that more commonly adopted. It is becoming usual to accept the fact of the empty tomb, and to seek for it, since the Resurrection is not admitted, some natural explanation. The study of these explanations is extremely instructive. Dr. Rashdall is quoted by Professor Lake as saying that "were the testimony fifty times stronger than it is, any hypothesis would be more possible than that" of a physical resuscitation.<sup>1</sup> Only in the light of these "more possible" explanations is the strength of the evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus fully disclosed.

If the tomb was empty on the morning of that third day, and Jesus did not rise, some other hands must secretly have removed the body. Who did it? The old theory of fraud on the part of the disciples<sup>2</sup> has now no respectable advocates, and may be put out of account. Who, then, effected the removal? Pilate? The Sanhedrim—the enemies of Jesus? This has been actually defended,<sup>3</sup> but may also be passed over.<sup>4</sup> But glance at more recent solutions.

O. Holtzmann gives the following account. The honourable councillor, Joseph of Arimathæa, having first, as the Gospels relate, permitted the burial of Jesus in his rock-tomb, felt on reflection that it would not do to have the body of a man who had been crucified lying among the dead in his respectable family vault. He, therefore, when the Sabbath was past, had the body of Jesus secretly removed, and buried elsewhere. Such, this author thinks, is "the simplest explanation of the mysterious occur-

<sup>1</sup> Lake, *ut supra*, p. 269.

<sup>2</sup> Reimarus and some of the Deists. The calumny noted in Matthew xxviii. 12-15, is an additional proof that the tomb was found empty.

<sup>3</sup> E.g., by A. Réville, Schwartzkopff, etc.: cf. A. Meyer, *ut supra*, pp. 17-18.

<sup>4</sup> Renan admits the empty tomb, but judiciously refrains from explanations. Cf. Latham, *The Risen Master*, pp. 6-9.

rence.”<sup>1</sup> It is implied, of course, that the secret was carefully kept from the disciples, who were allowed to believe that their Master had risen. This interesting little deception of Joseph, so likely in a good man, and first brought to light in these last years, successfully took in the whole Christian Church, and, combined with imaginary appearances, created its faith in the Resurrection!

So transparent a piece of trickery does not appeal to Professor Lake, who gives a solution on different lines. The facts, he thinks, were probably these. The women came in the dusk of morning to an empty tomb, which they mistakenly took to be that of Jesus. The neighbourhood of Jerusalem was full of rock-tombs, and it was easy to go wrong. A young man, standing near, tried to convince them of their error, and pointed them to where the Lord really lay. [This is the young man, as previously seen, whom legend, according to Professor Lake, transforms into an angel, and also into the Risen Lord.] But the women fled. Professor Lake's own words deserve to be quoted: “The women came in the early morning to a tomb which they thought was the one in which they had seen the Lord buried. They expected to find a closed tomb, but they found an open one; and a young man, who was in the entrance, guessing their errand, tried to tell them that they had made a mistake in the place. ‘He is not here,’ said he; ‘see the place where they laid Him,’ and probably pointed to the next tomb. But the women were frightened at the detection of their error, and fled, only imperfectly or not at all understanding what they heard. It was only later on, when they knew that the Lord had risen [from visions of the disciples in Galilee],

<sup>1</sup> *Leben Jesu*, pp. 392-3. The germ of the theory is found in H. J. Holtzmann's, *Die Synoptiker*, p. 105. Cf. the criticism in A. Meyer, pp. 118-19.



and—on their view—that His tomb must be empty, that they came to believe that the young man was something more than they had seen; that he was not telling them of their mistake, but announcing the Resurrection, and that his intention was to give them a message for the disciples.”<sup>1</sup>

As a “natural” explanation, this fairly rivals Paulus. But will any one believe that such a mistake of a few women is really the foundation on which the Christian Church has built its Easter hope, or affords an adequate explanation of the revolutionary effects in the faith and hope of the disciples which, according to all the narratives, were wrought by the experiences of that Easter morning? If so, he has a strange idea of the relation of causes and effects. The theory, it need hardly be pointed out, is itself an invention, without historical support or probability—a travesty of the narratives as we have them. There is no evidence of a mistake of the women, who knew too well where the Lord was laid;<sup>2</sup> or of the presence of the obliging young man, weeks after identified with an angel *within* the tomb; or of a mistake of the import of the message. Were the women the only persons who visited the spot? Did no one think of verifying their tale? Did they never themselves go back and discover their error? Whence this consentient and mistaken conviction that the tomb was found empty on the third day, and that a message came from it that the Lord had risen? As a “more possible” hypothesis Professor Lake’s theory may safely be set aside.

A last example is taken from A. Meyer, who, in his book *Die Auferstehung Christi*, after criticising and rejecting previous theories, gives what he conjectures may be the

<sup>1</sup> *Ut supra*, pp. 251–2.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xv. 47; Luke xxiii. 55.

true version of events. The passage is an excellent example of the process of manufacturing history out of moonshine. He says: "If one seeks for an historical kernel behind the narrative of Mark, it is not difficult to picture to oneself how, perhaps, after some time [indefinite], in the early morning, veiled women, disciples of Jesus, crept forth, sad and despairing, to seek the tomb and the body; how they, perchance, had inquired about the place, how they stood some time helpless before a huge stone, and said, 'Oh, if only some one would roll away that stone for us'; then again in doubt before an empty cave, not knowing whether the Lord might have lain there, and some one have taken Him away; how they may have often repeated such search, until at last the news and summons came from Galilee, 'Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not there, give up your seeking: He is long ago risen and has appeared to Simon and the others; come and hear it for yourselves.'" <sup>1</sup> It has only to be said of this flight of fancy that, when compared with the narrative of the Gospels, it has no substance or feature of reality in it. It contradicts the tradition at every point. There is no "historical kernel," for the ground of history is abandoned for imagination. The visit of the women is cut away from the third day: is unhistorically represented as repeated and resultless; the message which came from the tomb is brought weeks later from Galilee, etc. Opposed to the Gospels, it is opposed equally to the theories already adduced. Unbelief here also lacks unity in its hypotheses. It shatters itself against the moveless rock of the facts.

4. And now the Easter history reaches its climax. The facts already reviewed—the third day, the visit of the women, the stone supernaturally removed, the empty tomb—lead up to, and find their natural culmination in,

<sup>1</sup> P. 124.

*the angelic vision and message that the Lord had risen.*<sup>1</sup> Here once more it is permissible to speak of at least essential agreement in the narratives. Particulars and phraseology in the accounts vary, as before, in a manner incompatible with dependence. St. Luke, e.g., speaks of two angels where St. Matthew and St. Mark mention only one; and in the part of the angel's message relating to Galilee St. Luke gives the words a quite different turn from what they have in the other Gospels.<sup>2</sup> St. John's account stands again by itself. Yet all the Synoptical narratives agree that, while the women stood, perplexed and affrighted at or within the tomb, they received a vision of angels; that the announcement was made to them that the Lord had risen; that they were invited to see the place where He had lain; that they had given them a message to take to the disciples. In the central part of the message: "He is not here; He is risen," there is *verbal* agreement: only St. Matthew and St. Luke reverse the order of the clauses. St. Mark breaks off with the women fleeing from the tomb in "trembling and astonishment";<sup>3</sup> but there can be no reasonable doubt that his Gospel also, not less than the others, contemplated a report of the angelic message to the disciples, and a narrative of certain of the appearances.<sup>4</sup> According to St. Matthew and St. Luke, the report was made on the same day.<sup>5</sup> The Apostles were, therefore, still in Jerusalem, and the fiction of their having already dispersed to Galilee is proved to be baseless.

The Lord had risen! There were no witnesses of that august event; but the fact was made certain to the faith

<sup>1</sup> Matthew xxviii. 5-8; Mark xvi. 6-8; Luke xxiv. 4-11; John xx. 1, 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> Luke xxiv. 6, 7; cf. Matthew xxviii. 7; Mark xvi. 7.

<sup>3</sup> Mark xvi. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. the remarks in Menzies, *The Earliest Gospel*, p. 120.

<sup>5</sup> Matthew xxviii. 3; Luke xxiv. 9-11, 22, 23.

of the disciples by the empty grave, by the angelic vision, and by the subsequent appearances of Jesus Himself. The time of the Resurrection is not told, but it is implied that it synchronized with the convulsion of nature which St. Matthew describes, and with the rolling away of that stone by the angel which terrified and prostrated the guards. It therefore anteceded by some time the visit of the women. There is no need to suppose that the guards were still there when the women arrived. It may rather be presumed that, on recovery from their terror, they betook themselves away as speedily as they could. Neither need the angel of St. Matthew be understood to be still sitting on the stone as at the first. His language to the women—"Come, see the place where the Lord lay"—rather implies that, as in other Gospels, he addresses them from *within* the tomb.

It is not to be gainsaid that we have here a story of supernatural events. The narratives are steeped in the supernatural. The supernatural element may be resisted, but it must at least be conceded that the account goes together on its own assumption that a tremendous miracle—the Resurrection of the Lord—really took place. It was before remarked that in all the Gospels there is the implication of supernatural power in the removal of the stone. A physical convulsion was the natural accompaniment of so great a marvel.<sup>1</sup> The appearance of the angel is in keeping with what is told of the later appearances of the angels to the women. The reality of the angelic appearances, again, is vouched for by the message which, according to all the witnesses, the women received, and which they subsequently conveyed to the disciples. That message is the kernel of the whole story. It is the "Easter Message"

<sup>1</sup> Cf. the darkness, earthquake, and rending of the Temple veil at the Crucifixion. Matthew xxvii. 15, 51; Mark xv. 33, 37; Luke xxiii. 44, 45.

which has changed the face of the world. If anything stands fast in the Resurrection history, it is that this message did not spring from their own sad, despairing hearts, but was given them by celestial visitants at the tomb.

So closely, in truth, is this message which the women received bound up with the "vision of angels,"<sup>1</sup> that it is difficult to see how the one is to be believed, if the other is rejected.<sup>2</sup> The difference in the accounts of the vision, though Strauss and later sceptics have made much of them, are not of a nature to occasion serious difficulty. There may really have been two angels, as in the experience of Mary Magdalene,<sup>3</sup> though only one is mentioned by St. Matthew and St. Mark: or St. Luke, in his summary narrative, may be combining the experience of Mary Magdalene with that of the other women. But there is a further consideration suggested by the nature of vision itself. Whether or not it is right to speak of "ecstasy" in such an experience, it is certain that the state of "vision" (*ὄπτασις*) is not simply an extension of ordinary perception. It is not a state of pure objectivity. It is not on the outer but on the inner senses that an impression is made in the apprehension of the supersensible. There is, in Old Testament phrase, an "opening of the eyes,"<sup>4</sup> a raising of consciousness to a higher plane. What is seen is real, but there is a subjective element in the seeing. It follows that in a vision like that of the women at the tomb the experience of one is not necessarily the measure of the experience of another. When notes were compared, all would not be found to have had exactly the same percep-

<sup>1</sup> Luke xxiv. 23.

<sup>2</sup> There seems to the present writer no incredibility in the supposition of a higher spiritual world capable of manifesting itself, but much to favour the idea. Whatever the theory of Christ's knowledge, this is precisely one of the things on which His intuition might be trusted.

<sup>3</sup> John xx. 12.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Numbers xxiv. 3, 16; 2 Kings vi. 17, etc.

tions. Especially would this be the case if there were different companies, or if the experiences registered were not those of the same moment. Yet in the main the perceptions *did* agree. Forms of men ("a young man," Mark; "two men," Luke);<sup>1</sup> "appearance like lightning, and raiment white as snow" (Matthew); "arrayed in white robe" (Mark); "in dazzling apparel" (Luke); "in white" (John). Above all do the narratives agree in the words of comfort: "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which hath been crucified. He is not here; for He is risen, even as He said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay" (Matthew). "Be not amazed; ye seek Jesus, the Nazarene, which hath been crucified: He is risen; He is not here; behold the place where they laid Him!" (Mark). "Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen" (Luke).

From St. Mark and St. Luke<sup>2</sup> we learn that the women had "entered" and inspected the tomb before this wonderful experience befell them. It is not strange that, when it came, they were "amazed" (Mark) and "affrighted" (Luke), and needed the reassurance given them. The message they received for the disciples, that Jesus was going before them into Galilee, where they would see Him, with its important variation in St. Luke, will better be considered in connexion with the appearances. The events at the tomb ended with the hasty departure of the women—"with fear and great joy," says St. Matthew;<sup>3</sup> "with trembling and astonishment," because of their fear, declares St. Mark,<sup>4</sup> saying nothing to any one, as

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Latham's idea that the "visitants to the tomb" (and at the Ascension) may have been persons (Essenes?) from Jerusalem (*Risen Master*, pp. 412-19), is a strange aberration. The rationalistic theory that the women may have been deceived by the glint of the grave clothes is left unnoticed.

<sup>2</sup> Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 5.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew xxviii. 8.

<sup>4</sup> Mark xvi. 8.

they hastened to fulfil their commission to the disciples. St. Mark's Gospel, at this point, on the usual view, breaks off: not, however, before it has told us the things it is most essential for us to know.<sup>1</sup>

JAMES ORR.

### THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE LAW.

"THE Prophets are the beating heart of the Old Testament. Later study has shown that they were the real makers of the unique religious life of Israel." With these words, Professor Rauschenbusch begins his stimulating chapter on the social teaching of the Old Testament.<sup>2</sup> As a matter of fact, on this side of the prophetic teaching, there is far more affinity with the Law than is often supposed. As Professor Kent has remarked, "Law and prophecy are not antithetic, as is often imagined, but rather different expressions of the same divine revelation, one through the life and struggles of the nation, the other through the experience and mind of single divinely enlightened men. . . . The lawgivers were in closest touch with that life, and, therefore, in their writings picture it most concretely and vividly."<sup>3</sup> It is true, indeed, that the prophets have been the great proclaimers of social righteousness, not only for Israel, but for the world as a whole. But after all the prophets were but voices crying in the wilderness. Their discourses have the air of one long protest. For the real spirit of Hebrew life, or rather for what was best in that life, we must turn to the Law.

<sup>1</sup> The Gospel, ending at chap. xvi. 8, is manifestly incomplete. Dean Burgon unquestionably makes out a strong case for suspense of judgment with regard to the remaining verses (9-20). (Cf. his *Last Twelve Verses of St Mark*). But it is safer to regard the verses as an early appendix. The problems which this raises must here stand over.

<sup>2</sup> *Christianity and the Social Crisis*, p. 3.

<sup>3</sup> *Israel's Laws and Legal Precedents*, p. v.