

But to dross my gain is turning,  
 And my heart is full of weeping,  
 Vigil keeping,  
 And I come, all longing, yearning  
 Just to lay me at Thy feet,  
 For Thy pity, Lord, most sweet.

I have missed the palm-branch waving;  
 I have missed the children's greeting  
 At Thy meeting,  
 When Thou camest for Love's saving—

In Thy triumph I've no part,—  
 Yet I bring my broken heart.

Wilt thou pour Thy pity in it?—  
 And though far Thy peace is shining  
 Past my pining,  
 Grant, O Lord, that I may win it,  
 When the glory of Thy day  
 Rolls the gloom of night away.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> L. Maclean Watt.

## The Living Christ and the Historical Jesus.

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### I.

1. THE foundation of the Christian Church is the Divine Saviour and Lord, in whom the historical Jesus and the living Christ are one. At no period in the history of the Christian Church has there been among Christian believers any doubt or question about the identity of the historical Person who lived, taught, healed, died, and rose again, and the spiritual presence, in whom Christian faith, hope, and love have their permanent and universal object. To-day, however, that identity is being so persistently and confidently challenged, that it is one of the most urgent tasks for Christian theology to resist these assaults of unbelief, which threaten not an outwork, but the citadel of Christianity itself. So far has doubt or denial advanced, that on the one hand the spiritual presence is dismissed as a subjective illusion, and on the other the historical person is declared never to have had any objective existence. We are told that it does not matter at all whether Jesus lived, or, if He lived, was at all as the New Testament represents Him. Even if the Christian conception of Christ be a myth, we are asked to believe that its value as embodying in a tale the truth of the soul's dying to a lower life and rising to a higher remains unchanged. Such comfort the Christian Church will not, and cannot accept. If the object of faith be not identical with the person who was a fact in history, the Church must with Mary lament: 'They have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him.'

2. But the comfort offered by unbelief is pre-

mature, and the lament of faith is not yet necessary. He that believeth shall not make haste; he need not be in a hurry or a flurry, for the foundation of God standeth sure, and yet it is a duty to test the foundation, and to show how unshakable it is. We must now examine the method by which unbelief severs the living Christ from the historical Jesus, and then rids itself of both. What used to be called the Higher Criticism is now entitled *the religious-historical method*. Such modification of principle or practice as there may be is due to the growing interest and importance of the study of comparative religion and the science of religious psychology. All religions are to be treated alike, and none is to be regarded as of so exceptional a character as to have any right to exemption from the application of the method in all its vigour and rigour. Christianity too is put in the dock, and when its trial is over, there remains a Christ conception which has no contact with historical reality, and a man Jesus who has no significance for religious faith. There are three stages in the argument. There comes first of all the *criticism* of the documents, although in that criticism the other two rules of the method are already assumed. Secondly, there is the *correlation* of the facts accepted in an historical process which is kept strictly in the bounds of the natural. Thirdly, there is the *comparison* of beliefs, rites, etc., with those of other religions, with the assumption of the uniformity of religious life.

3. The standard of judgment applied to the Christian writings, to sift the wheat of historical truth from the chaff of theological illusion, is the twofold assumption that religion cannot transcend

the limits of the natural, and that in different religions we are to expect uniformity. If this twofold assumption is warranted, then the criticism of the literary sources of the Christian religion, which rests upon it, claims respectful consideration. But if, as the writer believes, the assumption has no justification, the criticism need not seriously disturb us. We may take as a concrete illustration of a criticism which has at least the frankness of proclaiming the assumption it rests on, Schmiedel's now famous (or shall we say rather notorious?) nine foundation pillars of a genuinely scientific Life of Jesus. It is assumed that Jesus must have been but a man, and as a man He cannot have been sinless, though the New Testament so represents Him, and He cannot have been worthy of the worship the Christian Church offered Him. The sayings of His which are historically certain are those which contradict the Christian conception of Him, and only such other sayings as are not inconsistent with these. Schmiedel has expressed his indignation at being so misunderstood that he is represented as accepting as genuine only these nine sayings; but if he accepts only what is consistent with these sayings, it is permissible to insist that the historical reality is for him defined by them. He has decided, before he examines the Gospel testimony, what alone can be historical, and what must be un-historical.

4. Before dealing in greater detail with what, in the title of Schweitzer's recent book is described as *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, the writer ventures to offer reasons why this twofold assumption should be challenged as the only proper standard of judgment in the criticism of the New Testament. (i.) It may be confidently argued that in religion, by its very nature, there must be a transcending of the natural. For, first of all, personality itself cannot be regarded as merely a product of nature, subject in its development to a rigid causal process. There is in man, as knowing and willing, a transcendence of the phenomenal order. And secondly, if religion is not an illusion, it is in contact with the divine, and the divine transcends the natural, and who shall limit the possibility of the transcendence of the natural by the human when it is in contact with the divine? (ii.) Again, it may be strongly insisted on, that in history we are not entitled to expect uniformity as in nature. As different nations have had different historical developments of originally different racial character-

istics, so have they discharged different functions for mankind. It is not incredible that as Rome excelled in government, and Greece in culture, so to the Hebrew people it was given to carry religion to a higher stage of development than any other nation attained. As that higher stage involved a closer contact of the divine and the human, so it is not incredible that the development culminated in a contact so close in one personality that in Him divine and human became one. History does not show only uniformity, it has room for uniqueness.

## II.

1. The first action to reduce Jesus to the measure of a man is to strip Him of His miracles. This was attempted by rationalism, in explaining the miracles as natural occurrences which had been misunderstood. Paulus, for instance, explains the feeding of the five thousand in the following way: 'When Jesus saw the multitude an hungered, He said to His disciples, "We will set the rich people among them a good example, that they may share their supplies with others," and He began to distribute His own provisions, and those of the disciples, to the people who were sitting near them. The example had its effect, and soon there was plenty for every one' (Schweitzer's *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 52). In His miracles of healing, 'sometimes Jesus worked through the spiritual power in the nervous system of the sufferer, sometimes He used medicines known to Him alone.' The 'raisings from the dead' were 'deliverances from premature burial,' in which Jesus was guided by a presentiment that death had not really taken place (p. 53). As Jesus' death was but a swoon, so His resurrection was but a recovery of consciousness. By a fortunate coincidence an earthquake rolled away the stone from the mouth of the grave, so that Jesus could come out from it. The Ascension is but Jesus' withdrawal, as His hands were lifted up in blessing His disciples, into a cloud passing over the Mount of Olivets, by which His retreating form was hidden from them. These instances will suffice to show what strained ingenuity is needed to escape the miraculous while accepting the Gospel records.

2. Strauss did not stop short at any such half-measures. The distinction of Strauss, according to Schweitzer, is that he 'truly grasped and consistently applied the conception of myth' to get

rid entirely of the supernatural in the life of Jesus. He advances the mythological explanation as the synthesis of the supernaturalistic and the rationalistic. Most of the history of Jesus is invented by the religious consciousness which recognized in Him the actual realization of God-manhood. The Old Testament served as a pattern for many of the tales. Passages which were either Messianic, or were at least so understood, suggested other stories. In some narratives there may be an historical tradition preserved, but that has been amplified and embellished by the pious imagination. Although Strauss gets rid of all that savours of the supernatural by his mythical theory, yet he does not deny that Jesus was an historical personality. 'The historic Personality which emerges from the mist of myth is a Jewish claimant of the Messiahship, whose world of thought is purely eschatological' (p. 95). He assigns to John's Gospel a position far inferior to that of Matthew's and Luke's; but shows a strong prejudice against the Gospel of Mark, to which modern scholars now generally assign the priority. In order to make his theory even probable, he has to deny that 'any of our evangelists was an eye-witness, or stood in such relations with eye-witnesses as to make the intrusion of myth unthinkable,' but he assumes that 'even if only one generation elapsed between the death of Jesus and the composition of the Gospels,' the time would suffice to mix myth with history. The conclusions of more recent inquiry regarding the authorship of the Gospel make Strauss' theory appear much less plausible. The sources of the Synoptic Gospels, Matthew and Luke, now generally recognized are the Gospel according to Mark, in much the same form as we now have it, and the Logia, or collection of sayings of Matthew. These sources were probably in existence before the generation that had known Jesus had passed away, and can probably be traced to eye-witnesses. The miraculous element is already found in both. The conditions for the development of a mythology about Jesus such as Strauss required are not here present.

3. Harnack admits the historical value of the Synoptic Gospels as regards Jesus' moral and religious teaching to a far greater extent than does Strauss; but he, too, seeks to exclude the miraculous. He admits the works of healing, but seeks to explain them by what Matthew Arnold called *moral therapeutics*, an explanation to which we must again return. The nature miracles he entirely

rejects. Yet he justifies his use of the Gospels as mainly historical documents of early date by a rather sweeping assumption, that as there was no strict conception of the order of nature, and of miracles as an interruption of it, miracles were commonly attributed to prominent persons almost immediately after their death. But his statement is surely self-contradictory. There was a conception of exceptional and extraordinary acts, and in the New Testament these are described by three terms—*wonders, signs, and powers*. If such acts were 'almost something commonplace,' how is it that such acts were ascribed to prominent persons, and regarded as evidence of special endowment or function? However rudimentary the conception of the order of nature, the acts described by these terms in the New Testament are regarded as proofs of God's presence with, and power through, the person performing them. In ascribing miracles to Jesus, the Evangelists knew that they were affirming something exceptional of Him, and it is difficult to understand how their historical credit can be preserved, if they did this without any evidence of such occurrences in the testimony of eye-witnesses. The impression of the New Testament, upon the writer at least, is that the reporters of Jesus' life and work had too much intelligence to be deceived, and too much honesty to deceive. The explanation by which Harnack tries to keep the healing ministry as historical has been subjected to a close scrutiny by a medical man, Dr. R. J. Ryle, in *The Hibbert Journal*, vol. v. p. 572, and he comes to the conclusion that there are many of the miracles to which the theory is quite inapplicable, as the diseases described are of such a nature as not to be curable by any such means. If the miraculous is to be excluded, as Harnack maintains, very much of the record even in the two earliest sources must go, not only the bare narrative of these acts, but also all the teaching which is closely connected with them. We are not here discussing the possibility of miracles; but simply concerned with showing that the records of miracles are so woven into the texture of the Gospels that if we tear them out, it is very doubtful whether we have enough that is certain left to give us the historical Jesus.

### III.

1. In the opinion of many scholars to-day, to get the historical Jesus we must not only get rid of

the miraculous, but we must exclude the metaphysical also. In the Synoptists there is the one utterance in Mt 11<sup>25-27</sup> and Lk 10<sup>21.22</sup> in which Jesus distinctly claims the unique relation to God as the only Son known by, and knowing and revealing, the Father, which is not contradicted by, but corresponds with, other teaching. The attempt has been made to get rid of this testimony by describing it as a Johannine block of marble that has somehow strayed among the plain synoptic bricks; but Harnack ascribes it to the source generally known as the Logia in this form: 'All has been delivered to me by the Father, and no man has known (the Son but only the Father, and none has known) the Father but only the Son, and he to whom the Son wills to reveal it.' The words in brackets he regards as doubtful (see *Sprüche und Reden Jesu*, pp. 17, 18, 94, 183-4, 188 ff.). It is, however, in the Fourth Gospel that the metaphysical element is brought into prominence. The Prologue explicitly applies the conception of the Logos to Jesus as the explanation of His person. Whether the writer borrowed directly from Philo or not, whether Palestinian or Hellenic influences most affected his standpoint, are questions of interest to scholars, which for our present purpose we need not discuss. What we have to ask, however, is this, does the Prologue so dominate the Gospel that it is to be regarded merely as the development of a metaphysical doctrine; or is the Prologue merely an introduction to commend to philosophical readers the attempt that follows to present a history so that it will illustrate and confirm a religious doctrine?

2. If the Fourth Gospel is to be regarded as merely the development in the guise of history, but with no contact with history, of a philosophical thesis, it is evident that we need not seek the historical Jesus there. But if we can accept the other alternative, that the Prologue does not determine the standpoint of the Gospel throughout, then there may be still so much history as to warrant us in supplementing the Synoptic by the Johannine representation. Mr. Scott, who has written a very able exposition of the theology of *The Fourth Gospel*, holds the former standpoint. 'In the body of the Gospel,' says Mr. Scott, 'John makes no further mention of the specific theory of the Logos, and appears to concern himself entirely with the historical Person of Jesus. He abandons, it might seem, the speculative idea, and seeks to

reproduce the impression made on him by the actual life. But while it is partly true that the explicit doctrine of the prologue passes out of sight, the endeavour is still maintained to discover the presence of the Logos in the earthly life of Jesus. His humanity is different in essence from that of the men around Him. Through all His acts and words a "glory" shines out and reveals Him as the only-begotten of the Father' (p. 163). Harnack, on the contrary, says: 'The Prologue of the Gospel is not the key to the understanding of the Gospel, but it prepares the readers for it. It seeks a point of contact with an entity known to them, the Logos, manipulates it, and transforms it in order to substitute for it Jesus Christ, the *μωυουγενής Θεός*, that is, to reveal it as this Jesus Christ' (*Dogmengeschichte*, Vierte Auflage, i. p. 109). We may at least examine the Gospel to see if it is, and how far it is, history, without letting the Prologue prejudice us.

3. Setting aside at this point the difference between the Synoptic teaching and the Johannine discourses, the matter peculiar to the Fourth Gospel, though not found in the Synoptic Gospels, need not, for that reason only, be dismissed as unhistorical. The Synoptic Gospels do not necessarily give an account complete in itself of the whole ministry of Jesus. It is not at all improbable that Jesus did exercise a fuller ministry in Judæa than appears from the Synoptists. It is in the highest degree likely that He as Jewish Messiah began His work at the centre of the religious life of the nation. The Synoptic account of the last days in Jerusalem does presuppose previous activity of Jesus in that city. While not ignorant of the fact of a Galilean ministry, and including a few incidents of it in his record, the dominant interest of the fourth Evangelist is in Jerusalem; and this increases the difficulty of believing that he was himself a Galilean, as was John the son of Zebedee. If the Evangelist was a Jerusalemite, as the writer holds, the familiarity the Gospel shows in matters relating to Jerusalem is explained as well as his dominant interest, which has determined his selection of incidents. The evidence of an eye-witness, which has been fully exhibited by Westcott, cannot be so easily set aside as those who deny the historical character of the Gospel seem to think. It must frankly be admitted that the record is intended to illustrate and confirm the doctrine. A practical interest of faith, and not a theoretical

interest of history, determines what is, and how it is, recorded; but the narrative generally is too lifelike to be merely an invention of symbols for moral and religious ideas. We can discover in the Fourth Gospel something more than in the Synoptics of the historical Jesus.

4. It must be frankly conceded that the discourses are the great difficulty. Not only is it probable that the teaching of Jesus was in the Synoptic manner, but the Fourth Gospel itself shows that the Evangelist makes John the Baptist and Jesus speak in his own peculiar phraseology. No theory of partition is satisfactory, as the Gospel presents too great a unity, too close a continuity, to be thus portioned out between the earlier Evangelist and his later editor. But to the writer it seems certain that we can again and again in the Gospel trace the process by which the Evangelist's reminiscences, in his brooding on them, developed into reflexions so organically related to them that he himself was not conscious of passing from record to interpretation. Brief utterances of Jesus, such as the Synoptists record, were pregnant with meaning for the Evangelist, who, as conscious of the Spirit's guidance in his meditation, saw no betrayal but rather a defence of the truth in giving to the world, not only the words he remembered, but also the meanings these had disclosed. Throughout, however, we feel that we are in contact with reality; the impression of Jesus on the Evangelist was his inspiration. The Son of God whom the Evangelist discovers in the Jesus of history is not merely a metaphysical abstraction, but essentially a man, so completely dependent on, unbrokenly in communion with, and absolutely submissive to, God, that He proves Himself more than man, even the Son of God. Christian thought will take full account of the metaphysics of the Gospel; but what now alone claims emphasis is, that the metaphysics does not so obscure the history as to make the historical Jesus here undiscoverable.

#### IV.

1. If the historical Jesus can be found in the Fourth Gospel as in the other three, He must be regarded as at least a moral and religious genius with so unique a character and a consciousness that, if He is not altogether cut off from humanity, He must yet be raised far above other men. If, however, we can limit our regard to the Synoptists,

by a severe criticism of them it seems possible to some modern scholars to reduce Jesus still more to the measure of a man. If the Kingdom of God, of which Jesus spoke, is conceived apocalyptically in accordance with current Jewish religious thought, and if all His other teaching, in so far as it is accepted as genuine, is interpreted from the standpoint of this conception, He can be represented as but one in the prophetic line, who saw visions and dreamed dreams, but was not morally or spiritually transcendent. According to Schweitzer, this is 'the third great alternative which the study of the life of Jesus had to meet. The first was laid down by Strauss; either purely historical or purely supernatural. The second had been worked out by the Tübingen school and Holtzmann; either Synoptic or Johannine. Now came the third: either eschatological or non eschatological' (*The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, p. 237). It was Johannes Weiss who, in 1892, in his book on *The Preaching of Jesus concerning the Kingdom of God*, definitely raised this issue. His purpose was to show that Jesus' conception of the Kingdom was entirely future, eschatological, transcendent.

2. According to the generally accepted view, the idea of the Kingdom of God in the teaching of Jesus is complex, both present and future, ethical and eschatological, progressive and catastrophic. Passages can be quoted to support both these aspects of it. The tendency in orthodox theology generally has been both to relegate the conception itself to a less important position than it undoubtedly holds in the teaching of Jesus, and, when it is considered, to translate it too thoroughly into an entirely moral and religious good. It is necessary to insist that Jesus did take up and carry on the prophetic hope of a decisive divine intervention in the affairs of men, and did not confine Himself to stating universal and permanent principles of morality and religion. Weiss, however, is not content with this; he will recognize only the eschatological aspect. 'All modern ideas, he insists, even in their subtlest forms, must be eliminated from it; when this is done, we arrive at a Kingdom of God which is wholly future. . . . Being still to come, it is at present purely supra-mundane. . . . Jesus does not "establish it," He only proclaims its coming.' Convinced that the Kingdom could not come because of the insufficiency of the penitence awakened by His preaching,

He at last resolved that 'His own death must be the ransom-price.' He expected His own return in splendour and glory within that generation. His ethic even was only 'a penitential discipline.' On earth He regarded Himself as only a prophet; His Messianic dignity, conceived apocalyptically, awaited Him in the future (*ibid.*, pp. 238-239).

3. Wide currency has been given to this one-sided view by its adoption by Roman Catholic Modernism. To the presentation of the liberal Protestant view by Harnack in his book, *What is Christianity?* Loisy opposed the Roman Catholic Modernist view in his book, *The Gospel and the Church*. The writer has given an account of the controversy in his volume on *The Christian Certainty amid the Modern Perplexity*, pp. 279-321, and a brief summary of it in the article 'Christianity' in Hastings' *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, vol. iii., and he need not therefore repeat it here. For the present purpose it will suffice to note that Harnack represents the historical Jesus as having a unique consciousness of His relation to God as Son, and of His function to reveal God as Father to men. It is the moral and religious teaching of Jesus that he emphasizes; and he is hindered from coming nearer to the common faith of the Christian Church by his rejection of miracles and his aversion to metaphysics. Apart from these limitations, the representation of the historical Jesus bears a close resemblance to the living Christ as the Church has hitherto conceived Him. Whereas, although Modernism claims that His eschatological teaching is the original germ of which Roman Catholicism is a necessary development, yet it is only by a *tour de force*, intellectual and moral, that the creed, code, and worship of the Church can be represented as no more than the evolution under God's providence of the religious impulse given by Jesus in proclaiming the coming Kingdom.

4. On this eschatological representation of the historical Jesus, three considerations may be offered. First of all, a very drastic criticism of the Gospels has to be indulged in. Whatever in the record gives support to the other aspect of the Kingdom must be got rid of as the reflexion of the beliefs in the Christian Church after the death of Jesus. If so, the disciples must have been very much greater than the Master. What distinguishes Christianity from Judaism in its moral ideal and

religious idea is thus represented as not due to Jesus, but to His followers. But can the contents we now most prize in the Gospels have thus arisen? Is there not the impress of one great personality in the moral character and religious consciousness presented to us in the Gospels? Secondly, the view of the Kingdom insisted on is that current in the apocalyptic literature of Judaism.\* It is assumed that Jesus in His teaching must be rigidly correlated to the opinions and beliefs of His own age and people. He cannot be allowed to transcend them. But, if this other teaching comes from the early Church, how did the disciples succeed where the Master failed? Is it not more likely that He, as the Gospels represent, had this profounder moral discernment and sublimer spiritual vision? Thirdly, the Jesus of this view does not seem great or unique enough to have given the original impulse of which the Christian Church is the continuation. Gloze it as we will, if Jesus was exclusively, or even primarily, such a visionary, He was altogether deluded, and the Christian Church has lived by and drawn its strength from an illusion in supposing Him its Founder and Head.

## V.

1. This, however, is not the last step that has so far been taken in the quest of the historical Jesus. Schweitzer has written his book, already alluded to, to force upon modern theology, as the fourth alternative, either thorough-going scepticism or thorough-going eschatology. He insists that 'the historical Jesus of whom the criticism of the future . . . will draw the portrait, will be a Jesus who was Messiah, and lived as such, either on the ground of a literary fiction of the earliest Evangelist, or on the ground of a purely eschatological Messianic conception' (p. 396). That Mark's Gospel, generally recognized as the earliest, is altogether untrustworthy in representing Jesus as Messiah is the contention of Wrede in his book, *Das Messiasgeheimnis in den Evangelien*. The view of this Gospel generally taken by critics is set aside, and it is represented as interpolating into the tradition many incongruous dogmatic elements. 'The Messiahship of Jesus, as we find it in the Gospels, is a product of early Christian theology connecting history according to its own conceptions' (p. 336). 'The general picture offered by the Gospel is not an historical representation of

the Life of Jesus. Only some faded remnants of such an impression have been taken over into a supra-historical religious view. In this sense the Gospel of Mark belongs to the history of dogma' (Wrede, quoted by Schweitzer, p. 337). What Wrede leaves as historical in the Gospels after he has cut out all that concerns the Messiahship does not really matter much; the issue of his method of treating the Gospels must be far-reaching scepticism.

2. The historical Jesus so reduced does not account for the origin of Christianity. What then does? Scepticism must find such an explanation as leaves it indifferent whether there ever was a Jesus or not. Drews in his book, *The Christ Myth*, sets himself 'the task to explain Christianity, without the assumption of the historical personality of Jesus as founder, entirely out of the Christ-myth of Western Asia and India' (Windisch, *Theologische Rundschau*, 1910, p. 164). He asserts confidently, 'We know nothing of Jesus, of an historical personality of this name, to whom the events and words recorded in the Gospels refer' (quoted *ibid.*, pp. 175-176). And in *The Hibbert Journal*, Dr. Anderson, making haste to adopt these recent views, tries to argue that the Christ-myth as expressive of the soul's experience in dying to live is of greater value to religion than the historical Jesus could possibly be. As religion lives, moves, and has its being in eternal idea and ideals, it may be entirely indifferent to historical facts. We are to take back the whole of the New Testament, and find our counsel and comfort in it, yet not as history but as mythology; as the imaginative expression of the inner life each is called to live for himself. The living Christ remains only as the symbol of the divine life in man, but has no connexion with the historical Jesus, whose existence is to be regarded as of no significance or value for religion. It is in this that the quest for the historical Jesus has for some persons ended. Criticism has so reduced Him to the measure of a man that He at last slips altogether out of its grasp.

3. What is the conclusion of the whole matter? It is not that criticism is not to be applied to the Gospels, for it is criticism which can heal the wounds itself has made. Among the scholars of Germany, who are least influenced by any theological prepossessions, the most thorough opposition to both the sceptical and the eschatological view

is to be found. The Liberal Protestant school maintains the existence of an historical Jesus of unique moral character and religious consciousness, the real and sufficient source of the Christian ideal and the Christian experience. Yet it, too, has to exclude much from the Gospels in order to reach its presentation of the founder of the Christian Church. Regarding this Liberal Protestant view one may ask two questions. Is Christianity as it has actually been in history, not as it exists in a sublimated essence in the mind of the German professor, accounted for by the non-miraculous, non-metaphysical Jesus? If this be indeed the historical Jesus, the living Christ of the Church's faith is most subtly blended *Wahrheit und Dichtung*. So far one may agree with Dr. Anderson that this Jesus is not identical with the Christ of the New Testament. But, further, does not the criticism of the Gospels, which seeks to exclude the miraculous and metaphysical altogether, so discredit them as trustworthy historical documents, that there is some encouragement given to a criticism which goes much further in the direction of scepticism? The assumption of a human Jesus, however richly endowed in moral character and religious consciousness, challenges not the accidents but the essence of the evangelical representation of Him.

4. But it may be asked, Why should we be so concerned about being sure of the historical Jesus? Is faith not independent of fact? Why should religion descend from the eternal in which it has its home to the temporal where it must needs be an alien? Frankly let it be answered, that a contemplation of ideas and ideals is not Christian faith, is not the Christian religion. The Christian revelation is essentially a redemption of man from sin and death, from present troubles in the temporal world. It is in history that man advances morally and spiritually; events in time are conditions of his moral progress and his religious growth. He is himself not merely a thinker but a doer, and so far the pragmatist grasps truth, more doer than thinker. If he is to have personal relations to God which will reach him where and as he is, and meet his needs, God for him must be a doer also. Sin and death are facts of man's present experience. Is God's forgiveness of sin and deliverance from death also a fact greater and surer even than these facts are? The Christian believes that in the historical Jesus, identical with

the living Christ, there is the supreme and most certain fact of human history, God's own act to save and bless men where and as they are. A myth projected out of man's own consciousness has not, and cannot have, the same significance and value as a history which expresses God's

reality as saving grace towards sinful mankind. Hence we cannot be content with the quest of the historical Jesus that leaves us without the living Christ, the Divine Saviour and Lord as one with Him, as both eternal idea and ideal and historical reality.

## Literature.

### THE MEDIÆVAL MIND.

THE historian, like the poet, is born not made. And he is just as rare and precious. We have no great English-speaking poet, they say, at present, and we have no great historian. But have they observed the work done by Henry Osborn Taylor? His most important work until now was 'Ancient Ideals,' a study of intellectual and spiritual growth from early times to the establishment of Christianity, though he has also written a book on 'The Classical Heritage of the Middle Ages.' His new work is a 'History of the Development of Thought and Emotion in the Middle Ages.' Its title is *The Mediæval Mind* (Macmillan; 2 vols. 21s. net).

The first claim that we make upon a historian is for accuracy. It is the first claim that we make upon every artist and every man. It is truthfulness, sincerity, fidelity to conscience. For where that is not, no other thing is right. Now the easiest way to test a historian's accuracy is to verify his footnotes. He that is unfaithful in that which is least is unfaithful in all. He that cannot refer to a book by its proper title and give the correct number of its editions, cannot write history. Mr. Taylor has few footnotes. In this respect he is like Froude, the most inaccurate who ever obtained the name of historian. But it is not of carelessness, still less to hide his inaccuracy, that Mr. Taylor has few footnotes. It is part of his method as a historian. He writes for the multitude. Those footnotes which he has are accurate. When he refers to Migne—and he has to refer to Migne as often as to anybody—he gives the volume and the column, so that it is always possible to find the passage referred to. But it is not every reader that will care whether the references to Migne are right or wrong. Can the history itself be relied on? Can it be relied on as history? It is con-

ceivable that a man might be accurate in detail and inaccurate in the general impression. To test Mr. Taylor in his broader generalizations, turn to the chapter on 'The Growth of Mediæval Emotion.'

In the centuries immediately preceding and following the Christian era there took place a remarkable growth of the pathetic or emotional element in Greek and Roman literature. Yet during the same period Stoicism, the most respected system of philosophy, kept its face as stone, and would not recognize the ethical value of emotion in human life. But the emotional elements of paganism, which were stretching out their hands like the shades by Acheron, were not to be restrained by philosophic admonition, or Virgilian *Desine fata deum flecti sperare precando*. And though the Stoic could not consent to Juvenal's avowal that the sense of tears is the best part of us, Neo-Platonism soon was to uphold the sublimated emotion of a vision transcending reason as the highest good for man. Rational self-control was disintegrating in the Neo-Platonic dialectic which pointed beyond reason to ecstasy. That ecstasy, however, was to be super-sensual, and indeed came only to those who had long suppressed all cravings of the flesh. This ascetic emotionalism of the Neo-Platonic *summum bonum* was strikingly analogous to the ideal of Christian living pressing to domination in the patristic period.

No need to say that the Gospel of Jesus was addressed to the heart as well as to the mind; and for times to come the Saviour on the Cross, and at its foot the weeping mother, were to rouse floods of tears over human sin, which caused the divine sacrifice. The words *Jesus wept* heralded a new dispensation under which the heart should quicken and the mind should guide through reaches of humanity unknown to paganism. This Christian