

# Theology on the Web.org.uk

*Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible*

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



**PATREON**

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

**PayPal**

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

---

A table of contents for *The Churchman* can be found here:

[https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles\\_churchman\\_os.php](https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_churchman_os.php)

office clerks and carriers have been granted in Paris and elsewhere. In this respect there seems to be a growing disposition to follow the example of London. Great efforts have also been made throughout France to arrange for the closing of the railways' goods-offices, at least of the *petite vitesse*, after 10 a.m., on Sundays and fêtes. Indeed, a general order to that effect was issued not long since by the Minister of Public Works, and although it is evaded by the clerks being kept at work inside, this evil it is hoped will ere long be remedied. In 1893 the largest shop in the world, the "Grand Magasins du Louvre" in Paris, sent out a circular letter to 10,000 of their customers, asking if it would be inconvenient to them should goods bought on Saturdays be delivered on Mondays instead of Sundays, and 9,780 negative answers were received, with expressions of approval of the new arrangement. It is, then, evident that this excellent movement is slowly but surely advancing. The public mind is being gradually educated on the subject, and probably before many years have passed this precious boon and rightful heritage of the sons and daughters of toil will be generally enjoyed. Still, so long as theatres, exhibitions, and places of amusement remain open on the Lord's Day, and excursion trains, trams, and omnibuses carry their hundreds of thousands of passengers on that day, the pleasure of the million must involve the slavery of many. A day of amusement must be more or less a time of grinding labour to a large number.

WILLIAM BURNET.



#### ART. V.—TESTIMONIES TO THE NATURE OF CHRIST.<sup>1</sup>

"Who is this?"—ST. MATT. xxi. 10.

ON the last occasion when I addressed you, I endeavoured to put before you some thoughts concerning the being and nature of the awful, omnipotent, and omnipresent Spirit, who is antecedent to all things, and in whom all things consist. To-day I wish to ask you whether there is anything theoretically improbable in the belief that this Almighty Power, the Eternal, has concentrated one aspect of Himself into a human intelligence for the instruction, inspiration, salvation, and elevation of those creatures, so marvellously capable of improvement, whom we find inhabiting this earth—the only one, of the million or more of globes which extend

<sup>1</sup> Preached before the University of Oxford, May 8, 1898.

through the starry heavens, of which we have the slightest knowledge. Its size is, of course, very small; it is surpassed to an inconceivable degree in size and splendour by the myriads of glorious suns which flame in the midnight sky, each attended, without doubt, through these terrific spaces by satellites as important and as invisible as our own little planet. But, at any rate, this is the only one of all the rest of which we have any knowledge whatever, except as to their chemical composition. There is not the smallest reason to suppose the conditions of our earth to be rigidly true of all other bodies. There is one Divine Spirit in whom the whole are poised; and He works out His Divine providence according to the varying circumstances of each. As far as we know, there is no more communication between any of the stellar units than there is between the members of our own little system; each is as isolated as ourselves. The Divine Power alone is present at every point. To Him nothing is small, nothing great. In His Divine purpose of surrounding Himself with conscious beings capable of happiness, and made after the likeness of His own mind, there is nothing unreasonable in believing that He could as easily reveal Himself in a human character as that He could roll together the materials for a new constellation.

There is, indeed, an antecedent probability that there would be such a revelation. Just as we ourselves may become partakers of the Divine nature through faith, so we claim that every good gift, every spark of truth, which has shone through human nature, comes down from the Divine Spirit, the Father of Lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Abraham, Moses, David, the Psalmists, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, the other Prophets, all had inspiration from the Eternal tending towards the establishment of truth; and in a less degree we cannot deny some similar draughts of everlastingness to Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster; to the Greek philosophers, especially to Socrates and Plato; to Cicero, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, Epictetus, and the like. The Hebrew sacred writers had a gift of insight into the nature of God, and of foresight as to a coming personal revelation, which for ever distinguishes them from all other religious and moral teachers, and places their works on a plane entirely by themselves; but the beaming forth of eternal truth through human intelligence, wherever it may be that truth is found, is a fact which cannot be denied. There is therefore an antecedent likelihood that on one rare and unique occasion, in one solitary combination of circumstances, in one supreme, unparalleled and unapproachable human being, the whole glory of God, the full presence of His Divine Word or Reason,

would be revealed in a human being capable of bearing so tremendous a weight. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth; and we behold His glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father." "Who, being the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as He hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Such an admission was made by the late John Stuart Mill, who from his birth had received an almost irretrievable bias against faith:

"On the hypothesis of a God, Who made the world, and in making it had regard, however that regard may have been limited by other considerations, to the happiness of His sentient creatures, there is no antecedent improbability in the supposition that His concern for their good would continue, and that He might once or oftener give proof of it by communicating to them some knowledge of Himself beyond what they were able to make out by their own unassisted faculties, and some knowledge or precepts useful for guiding them through the difficulties of life."<sup>1</sup>

And Conder, in his "Basis of Faith":

"It is inconceivable that the Parent Mind, if loving men as His offspring and desiring their welfare, should withhold from them that knowledge which must be the noblest, the most desirable, and the most useful—the knowledge of Himself."<sup>2</sup>

Such was the yearning aspiration of the best of the ancients:

"We will wait," says Plato, "for One, be it a God or a God-inspired man, to teach us our religious duties, and to take away the darkness from our eyes." "Oh, if one only might have a guide to truth!" sighs Seneca.

We believe, for a combination of reasons which appear to us to be overwhelming in their force, that this Divine guide has come; that the true Light has shone in the darkness, even though the darkness comprehended Him not; that He came unto His own, even though His own received Him not. It has been true in a ratio increasing every generation, every year, every day, that as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His name. It is therefore exactly what we should expect, when we find that the Being whom we have been led to worship as the revelation of God to man has received on all

<sup>1</sup> "Three Essays on Religion," p. 215.

<sup>2</sup> "Basis of Faith," p. 295.

sides the profound homage of many who have been unable either from their training to take home His message, or from their imperfect self-control to follow His practice.

There appears to be reason in the tribute of Jean Jacques Rousseau :

“Can a book, at once so sublime and so simple, be the work of men? Can the Person, whose history it relates, be himself but a mere man? Does it contain the language of an enthusiast or an ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manners! What affecting goodness in his instructions! What sublimity in his maxims! . . . What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind! What ingenuity and what justness in his replies! . . . Whence could Jesus have derived among his countrymen this elevated and pure morality, of which he alone has given the precept and example? From the bosom of the most furious bigotry, the most exalted wisdom is heard, and the simplicity of the most heroic virtues honours the vilest of the people. . . . Yes, if the life and death of Socrates are those of a philosopher, the life and death of Jesus Christ are those of a God. Should we suppose the Gospel was a story, invented to please? It is not in this manner that we forge tales, for the actions of Socrates, of which no person has the least doubt, are less satisfactorily attested than those of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without removing it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one only should furnish the subject of it.”<sup>1</sup>

Lessing speaks in the same tone :

“And so Christ was the first certain practical Teacher of the immortality of the soul. . . . Certain, through the prophecies which were fulfilled in Him; certain, through the miracles which He achieved; certain, through His own revival after a death through which He had sealed His doctrine. . . . To enforce an inward purity of heart in reference to another life was reserved for Him alone. . . . For seventeen hundred years past [the New Testament Scriptures] have exercised human reason more than all other books, and enlightened it more, were it only through the light which the human reason itself threw into them.”<sup>2</sup>

I would ask you to listen to Fichte :

“It remains certain that we, with our whole age and with all our philosophical inquiries, are established on, and have proceeded from, Christianity; that this Christianity has

<sup>1</sup> “Emilius and Sophia,” vol. iii., Bk. IV., pp. 136-139. English trans., 1767.

<sup>2</sup> “Education of the Human Race,” pp. 49, 51, 54. English trans.

entered into our whole culture in the most varied forms ; and that, on the whole, we might have been nothing of all that we are, had not this mighty principle gone before us in Time."

"Even to the end of Time all wise and intelligent men must bow themselves reverently before this Jesus of Nazareth ; and the more wise, intelligent, and noble they themselves are, the more humbly will they recognise the exceeding nobleness of this great and glorious manifestation of the Divine Life."<sup>1</sup>

Richter speaks of our Lord as—

"The holiest among the mighty, and the mightiest among the holy, who has lifted up with His pierced hand empires off their hinges, has turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages."<sup>2</sup>

It is Goethe who says :

"I esteem the Gospels to be thoroughly genuine, for there shines forth from them the reflected splendour of a sublimity proceeding from the person of Jesus Christ, and of as Divine a kind as was ever manifested upon earth."<sup>3</sup>

"No criticism will be able to perplex the confidence which we have entertained of a writing whose contents have stirred up and given life to our vital energy by its own."<sup>4</sup>

"Let mental culture go on advancing, let the natural sciences progress in ever greater extent and depth, and the human mind widen itself as much as it desires—beyond the elevation and moral culture of Christianity, as it shines forth in the Gospels, it will not go."<sup>5</sup>

Theodore Parker seems constrained in the following passage to admit more than is justified by his position as a Unitarian :

"[Christ] unites in himself the sublimest precepts and divinest practices, thus more than realizing the dream of prophets and sages ; rises free from all prejudice of his age, nation, or sect . . . and pours out a doctrine beautiful as the light, sublime as heaven, and true as God." "Try him as we try other teachers. They deliver their word, find a few waiting for the consolation, who accept the new tidings, follow the new method, and soon go beyond their teacher, though less mighty minds than he. . . . Though humble men, we see what Socrates never saw. But eighteen centuries have passed since the Sun of humanity rose so high in Jesus ; what man, what sect, what Church, has mastered his thought, comprehended his method, and so fully applied it to life?" And again : "Measure his religious doctrine by that of the time

<sup>1</sup> "Doctrine of Religion," Lect. VI., p. 473. Smith's edition, 1873.

<sup>2</sup> Works, xxxiii., 6, p. 194.

<sup>3</sup> "Conversations with Eckerman," p. 567.

<sup>4</sup> Autobiography, Bk. XII.

<sup>5</sup> "Conversations with Eckerman," p. 568.

and place he lived in, or that of any time and place! Yes, by the doctrine of eternal truth. Consider what a work his words and deeds have wrought in the world. . . . Remember that the greatest minds have seen no farther, and added nothing to the doctrine of religion; that the richest hearts have felt no deeper, and added nothing to the sentiment of religion, have set no loftier aim, no truer method, than his of PERFECT LOVE TO GOD AND MAN. Shall we be told, "Such a man never lived—the whole story is a lie"? Suppose that Plato and Newton never lived, that their story is a lie. But who did their works, and thought their thought? It takes a Newton to forge a Newton. What man could have fabricated a Jesus? None but a Jesus."<sup>1</sup>

It is interesting to remember that it was not a theologian, but Napoleon Bonaparte, who said:

"The Bible contains a complete series of facts and of historical men to explain time and eternity such as no other religion has to offer. Everything in it is grand and worthy of God. Book unique! Who but God could produce that idea of perfection equally exclusive and original?"

"The Bible is more than a book; it is a living being, with an action, a power which invades everything that opposes its extension. Behold it is upon this table, this book surpassing all others! I never omit to read it, and every day with new pleasure.

"Everything in Christ astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and His will confounds me. Between Him and whoever else in the world there is no possible term of comparison; He is truly a being by Himself. His ideas and His sentiments, the truth which He announces, His manner of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things.

"Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and myself founded empires. But on what did we rest the creations of our genius? Upon force. Jesus Christ alone founded His empire upon love; and at this hour millions of men would die for Him.

"Truth should embrace the universe. Such is Christianity—the only religion which destroys sectional prejudices; the only one which proclaims the unity and the absolute brotherhood of the whole human family; the only one which is purely spiritual; in fine, the only one which assigns to all, without distinction, for a true country, the bosom of the Creator, God."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Discourses on Religion," pp. 294, 302, 303, 362, 363.

<sup>2</sup> "The First Napoleon's Testimony to Jesus Christ," R.T.S., Every Week Series, 952.

Still more striking is the deliberate opinion of John Stuart Mill, which, if our premise be admitted, is an admirable illustration of its truth and actuality :

“Whatever else may be taken away from us by rational criticism, Christ is still left : a unique figure, not more unlike all his precursors than all his followers, even those who had the direct benefit of his personal teaching. It is of no use to say that Christ as exhibited in the Gospels is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of his followers. . . . But who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee . . . still less the early Christian writers. . . . But about the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality, combined with profundity of insight, which . . . must place the Prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion cannot be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavour so to live that Christ would approve our life.”<sup>1</sup>

Even Strauss, with all his qualifications so untrue to history, is compelled to declare that our Lord, by embodying the ideal of humanity in His own Person, had given that ideal the most living warmth, while the society that proceeded from Him has secured for it the widest reception amongst mankind.

Carlyle speaks of “the most important event ever transacted in this world—the life and death of the Divine Man in Judæa, at once the symptom and cause of immeasurable change to all people in the world.”<sup>2</sup>

And the language of Renan is hardly consistent with the view which he has chosen to adopt, of an entirely human Christ. It seems almost impossible for any conscientious writer to describe the Light of the World in terms far short of the transcendent truth :

“Jesus is in every respect unique, and nothing can be compared with him.” “This Christ of the Gospels is the

---

<sup>1</sup> “Three Essays on Religion,” pp. 253-255.

<sup>2</sup> “Heroes and Hero-Worship,” Lect. II.

most beautiful incarnation of God, in the fairest of forms, viz., moral man—truly the son of God and the son of Man—God in man." "For long ages yet he is king. What do I say? His beauty is eternal, his reign shall have no end. . . . So long as one noble heart shall yearn after moral beauty, whilst one lofty soul shall be seized with joyful ecstasy before the realization of the Divine, Christ will have worshippers by reason of the part of his being which is truly eternal."<sup>1</sup>

"Be the unlooked-for phenomena of the future what they may, Jesus will not be surpassed. His worship will renew its youth without end, his story will draw forth ceaseless tears, his sufferings will melt the best hearts, all the ages will proclaim that among the sons of men there has not been born one greater than Jesus."<sup>2</sup> "The day when he pronounced these words, he was truly the Son of God. . . . He founded the pure worship, belonging to no special period or country, which in truth all lofty souls shall practise to the end of time."<sup>3</sup> "Noble Initiator, repose now in thy glory! Thy work is finished, thy divinity is established. . . . A thousand times more living, a thousand times more loved, since thy death, than during the days of thy course here below, thou shalt become the corner-stone of humanity, inasmuch as to tear thy name from this world would be to shake it to its very foundations. No more shall men distinguish between thee and God."<sup>4</sup>

Far more consistent with the facts is the delineation of our Lord which is given by Professor Seeley in "Ecce Homo." When asking the question what it was that made men so thankfully worship Christ in all the full claims of the Divine royalty which He maintained, that devout and thoughtful writer says that it was largely His temperance in the use of the supernatural power which they knew Him to possess, that power which touched the hearts of men, and always will touch them. It is a moral miracle superinduced upon a physical. This repose in greatness makes Him surely the most sublime image ever offered to the human imagination. It was this which (as the manifestation of His Divine being) gave Him His immense and immediate ascendancy over men. It was partly for His miracles that Christ, was worshipped, partly for the great beauty of His teaching, partly for His winning personal character, partly for the persecutions which He endured with such Divine magnanimity, partly for His death for our sakes. Even the resurrection itself, had it stood alone, apart from these other indications of Deity, would not have

<sup>1</sup> "Études d'Hist. Rel.," pp. 175, 213, 214.

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Jesus," chap. 28.    <sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 14.    <sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, chap. 25.

impressed men in the same degree. It was all these things in part, but none of them separately. It was the inimitable whole, the unexampled unity, which these characteristics made when they were taken together. In other words, it was for this: that He, whose power and greatness, as shown in His miracles, were overwhelming, denied Himself the use of that power, treated it as a slight thing, walked among men as though He were one of them, relieved them in distress, taught them to love each other, bore with undisturbed patience a perpetual hailstorm of calumny; and, when His enemies grew fiercer, continued still to endure their attacks in silence, until, petrified and bewildered with astonishment, men saw Him arrested and put to death with torture, refusing steadfastly to use in His own behalf the power which He held for the benefit of others. It was the combination of this Divine greatness, and this self-sacrifice for the sake of the whole world, which won their hearts; the mighty powers held under a mighty control for one great object, the unspeakable condescension, the Cross of Christ. Our Lord Himself, knowing all things, knew this. "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto Me." He would not force men, He would not astonish them merely, He would not confound them; He would attract them. St. Matthew uses Isaiah's words about Him: "He shall not strive, nor cry; neither shall any man hear His voice in the streets." He would win men to love Him. He laid all who knew Him under an obligation which knew no bounds or description. He convinced them that He was a person of a greatness altogether beyond understanding, One who needed nothing at their hands, One whom it was impossible to benefit by conferring on Him riches, or fame, or dominion; and that, being so great, He had devoted Himself of utter loving-kindness and pity to their benefit and salvation. He showed them that for their sakes He lived a hard and laborious life, and exposed Himself to the utmost malice of powerful men. They saw Him hungry, though they believed Him able to turn the stones into bread. They saw His royal claims spurned, though they believed that He could in a moment take into His hand all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them; they saw His life in danger, though they believed that, had He willed it, He could have been defended by all the angels of heaven; they saw Him, at last, expire in shame and agonies, though they believed that, had it been His pleasure, the raging priests and Pharisees would have been like the waves and the wind when He stilled them, and that, had He thrown Himself down from the topmost pinnacle of the Temple, He would have been as safe as when He walked on the sea. Witnessing His sufferings, and convinced by the miracles

which they saw Him work that they were endured of His own free will, men's hearts were touched. They believed that He was indeed the Messiah, the Saviour of mankind. They remembered the words of John the Baptist: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Pity for weakness blending strangely with wondering admiration of unlimited power, an agitation of gratitude, sympathy, astonishment, and belief, such as nothing else could ever excite, sprang up in them; and when, turning from His deeds to His words, they found that this very denial of self which had guided His own life, set forth the principle which should guide theirs, then their gratitude broke forth in joyful obedience; self-denial produced self-denial; and the Law and the Lawgiver together were enshrined in their inmost hearts.

Such is a summary or paraphrase of the argument from "Ecce Homo." It is plain that the writer does not attribute sufficient weight to the fact of the resurrection, which became the foundation-stone of the preaching of all the Apostles; but there is much that is strikingly true and beautiful in his presentation of the character of our Lord, and of its effect on those who saw His glory. Thus we are led on from writer to writer, from homage less full to that which is more complete, from tribute somewhat reluctant to tribute unrestricted and devout, until we reach our own standpoint, that which is alike our inalienable right, our highest privilege, and our most imperative duty, the humble acceptance of the Christ presented to us in Gospels and Epistles—God manifest in the flesh. You remember how Mill asked, and could obtain no satisfactory answer from his point of view, who it was that suggested to the Evangelist the more Divine features of Jesus, or those which have led the kingdom of Christ to take Him for Divine. According to Mill himself, it is the Eternal incarnate, more than the Eternal as known to the Jews, or the Eternal as displayed in Nature, who, being idealized, has taken so great and salutary a hold on the mind of men. We know, of course, that the Eternal as known to the Jews, and the Eternal in Nature, and the Eternal incarnate, are all one and the same Divine Being. But if the Evangelists could not have invented, as he grants they could not, the human Christ, how much less could they have idealized Him into God?

"A history which has led the vast majority of readers in all ages to feel that it was more than human is confessedly beyond human construction. Christian theology itself is baffled when it tries to state in propositions the two natures of Christ and the relation between them. The decrees of councils and the terms of creeds are useful and important, but it will save us much incomplete religion if we remember that they rather exclude

error than grasp the full truth. But here, admittedly, in the narratives of the Evangelists, the impossible is achieved. The living Christ walks forth, and men bow before Him. Heaven and earth unite all through this simplest of all portraiture; power with gentleness, solitary and unapproachable greatness with familiar intimacy, ineffable purity with forgiving pity, unshaken will with unfathomable sorrow. There is no effort in these writers, but the character rises touch by touch, incident by incident, saying by saying, till it is complete and incomparable. It is thus not only truer than fiction and abstraction, but truer than all other history, carrying through utterly unimaginable scenes the stamp of simplicity and sincerity, creating what was to live for ever, but only as it had lived already, and reflecting a glory that had come so near, and been beheld so intently, that the record of it was not only full of grace, but of truth.<sup>1</sup>

We see Him delineated by the different minds of the four Evangelists, by St. Paul, by the writers of the various Epistles; each has touches of his own, but through all shines the same person and life. Never is Christ panegyricized, or the attention called to His merits as in the case of earthly stories: He is simply portrayed as faultless, and we are left to draw our own inferences. We see Him fulfilling in the most natural and direct manner the visions and predictions of the long roll of ancient seers, themselves the most remarkable phenomenon in the history of literature. We see Him coming at a time when all the world was looking for a deliverer, when Plato for the Greeks, and Virgil for the Romans, had been themselves unconsciously prophesying. We see Him confirming the apprehension of men's minds of the poisonous nature of sin, by sacrificing Himself as the propitiation for all rebellion against the moral law. We see Him revealing the wholesome and necessary indignation as well as the love of God. We see Him solitary, walking in darkest shadows; we hear again and again His cry, His groan, the utterance of the deep woe that oppresses His soul; we see His heart filled with human degradations not His own, yet meeting everything with meekness and love; we know that He has bent His head to the stroke of righteousness, and felt that to avert it from His human brothers is the greatest and most Divine of His offices. To read any meaning apart from this into the life of our Lord is altogether uncritical and unhistoric. It is as the Lamb of God taking away the sin of the world that He forms the central and predominant figure of the whole literature of revelation.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Principal Cairns, "Christ the Central Evidence of Christianity," R.T.S., "Present Day Tracts," vol. i.

Thus, the perfect moral example, embracing in its range the whole of the hopes and fears and sorrows of mankind, revealing the will of God, bridging over the separation between God and man, showing man at once how low he has fallen, and yet calming all his fears and giving him complete reassurance about the awful mysteries of the impending future, has an attractive power which nothing can ever diminish. It is a law of human nature that those who act on us with the greatest and most lasting effect are not those in lower moral condition than our own, nor those on our own level, whose ways we know and understand, but the highest and best of our kind. The nobler the character, the more permanent its impression. There is nothing more lovely or beautiful than the character of the Lord Jesus Christ—nothing more thrilling than the assurance that this character is Divine, throned on the right hand of God, ever living to help us to come nearer to God—nothing more touching than the belief that the sorrows He bore in His humiliation were for the forgiveness and reconciliation of the human family. From the time of His ascension to this very hour, the Lord Jesus Christ has looked down with indescribable tenderness on all the outcasts, the sinners, the miserable, the satiated, the dejected, the despondent, the despairing, and has ever stretched out His Divine arms to the suffering crowd; every hour He has been reaching to their level, and making them understand His living power and His message, and has lifted them up from their woes and struggles with those words of calm, unassailable certainty and infinite pity which no other son of man could ever say: "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Thus we come unto Christ. We are indeed weary and heavy laden. The times are out of joint, and evils are multiplied all round about us to a degree that is without precedent or parallel. The sceptic laughs at our belief, and cries out at us that we ought to be content with nothing less than knowledge. But Christ is enough for us. We let the world rave and rage; we allow ourselves to be surrounded by its schemes, its pleasures, its journals, its advertisements, its literature. Christ is all the time the real power, the true secret of strength and health and civilization. He is with us; we have His grace; we are glad with His power. Noise and tumult may be about us; doubts and difficulties may make sad the timid, the faint-hearted, the misunderstanding; but we have found rest unto our souls. The oftener we turn to those outstretched arms and that tender voice, the deeper and truer our peace; and the Word of the Lord, which has so often been true, is true once more to-day, and will be true with even greater

truth hereafter: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you."

WILLIAM SINCLAIR.

---

ART. VI.—SOME THOUGHTS FROM "THE LIFE OF DEAN BUTLER."

WE have no intention of examining this work in detail. All we purpose doing is to state a few reflections which a careful study of its contents has suggested to us. In many respects the book is exceedingly interesting; we think it may also prove to be instructive, for it seems to give a rather remarkable insight into certain effects of the Oxford or Tractarian Movement, effects which are very visible and palpable to-day. It helps us to trace the development of those effects: it bridges over for us, if we may use the expression, the interval between the position of the first leaders of the movement and that of the extreme High Churchmen at the present time. By its assistance we get a clearer insight into the reasons for the remarkable influence of the movement in some directions, and for its even greater want of influence in others.

The compiler of the Life has been very candid. The story is a plain tale, and plainly told. We can even imagine some of Dean Butler's friends wishing there had been exercised a more judicious reticence. To take a single instance. In a letter written from Bayeux in August, 1885, we read:

"I was fortunate enough to make the acquaintance of the curé of S. Ouen. . . . He is a most agreeable and intelligent man, one of the few who really understand and enter into the Anglican position. 'Il n'y a qu'un cheveu entre nous.' And when we parted, he loaded us with photographs" (p. 336).

We have given the whole of the letter as printed in the Life. Such words from the Dean of an English Cathedral are certainly startling. It is just possible they may be more suggestive than their writer ever intended them to be. But we cannot help asking ourselves, What was Butler's conception of "the Anglican position"?

Butler was ordained as curate to Charles Dyson, an intimate friend of Keble, Manning, and Henry Wilberforce. He came at once under the influence of these men, and especially under that of Keble. From the position he then accepted he never afterwards swerved. Possibly the strangest feature in the Life is the apparent absence of any *intellectual* development. Of any books that he read, other than a few Catholic devotional works, or of any study into which he entered, there is singularly