

the deepest confidence and hope in the prospect of His appearing hereafter as our Lord and Saviour, and at the same time "to pass the time of our sojourning here in fear," in the belief that He will then appear also as our Judge. In this faith in His prophetic word, we shall strive so to abide in Him, "that when He shall appear we may have confidence, and not be ashamed before Him at His coming." HENRY WACE.



ART. II.—LIGHT FROM THE ALMANACK.

Matt. xiv. 22-33 ; Mark vi. 45-52 ; John vi. 14-21.

IN the three accounts of our Lord's walking on the sea there are, I think, some undesigned coincidences of considerable importance. If so, it is hardly likely that I am the first to discover them. But I do not happen to have seen the thing written out, and I will try what I can do.

St. Matthew and St. Mark give substantially the same account, though St. Mark has, as usual, some graphic touches peculiar to himself, as that when our Lord was on the mountain above He *saw* the disciples on the sea; that when He came to them "He would have passed by them"; and that they *all* saw Him. St. John's account is independent, yet with some exact correspondences with St. Matthew and St. Mark, notably in the words, "It is I; be not afraid." St. John says, chap. vi. 3, that the Passover was near. Jesus had crossed the sea of Tiberias with His disciples "to rest awhile," probably as a suitable preparation for the approaching festival, which, as devout Jews, He and His disciples would keep at Jerusalem, as before His last Passover He retired to the "city called Ephraim." But it was a time when many were on their way to Jerusalem; and it seems to be for this reason that St. John notices the time, as it accounts for so large a number of people, chiefly *men*, following our Saviour into His retreat.

It was "late," says St. Matthew, or, as St. Mark tells us, "the day was far spent" before the feeding of the five thousand took place. This, with the gathering of the fragments, would take some time; so that the dismissal of the disciples to their boat could not have been long before sunset, which in Palestine at that time of year would be soon after six o'clock. St. John says "it was late" when the disciples went on board. Then followed the dismissal of the multitude and our Lord's ascent of the mountain. And again we have the same expression, "It was late." Thus, there are *three* "lates" in the story

It was late in the day before the five thousand were fed ; it was still later, near upon sunset, when the disciples embarked ; and it was late in the evening, most likely after sunset, when our Lord was alone on the mountain and the disciples encountered the storm. How, then, could our Lord *see* the disciples ? We need not suppose that when St. Mark speaks of our Lord seeing them they had rowed the whole of twenty-five or thirty furlongs from their starting-point. " In the midst of the sea " does not necessarily mean half-way across. But the disciples would be some distance westward from the shore, and our Lord would be some distance eastward on the mountain. If we could ascertain exactly what part of the mountain He stood upon, and exactly where the disciples embarked, we might give a more exact account of what took place. But there would be *some* considerable distance between our Lord and the boat. How could He *see* it and its crew ? Of course, a miracle would account for anything. But it is a wise rule not to introduce a miracle where Scripture does not seem to require it.

He would see them by *moonlight*. At the Passover the moon would rise about sunset and set about sunrise. Sunrise and sunset at the Passover season would each be about six o'clock. A few days before the Passover the moon would rise about three in the afternoon, reach its greatest height about nine, and set about three in the morning. St. Mark says our Lord *saw* the disciples out at sea from His place on the mountain. St. John says that when He came to the disciples it was dark. St. Matthew says He " went " (*ἀπῆλθε*) to them in the fourth watch of the night. St. Mark says it was about the fourth watch of the night when He " cometh " (*ἔρχεται*) to them. The Revisers, usually so exact, have here omitted to mark this little difference. It was probably before the moon set that He left the mountain, and soon after it had set that He came to the disciples. The moon enabled Him to see them at a considerable distance. The darkness, after the moon was set in the fourth watch of the night—say four o'clock in the morning—would prevent the disciples from recognising their Master even when He was within a few yards of them. St. Mark tells us that Jesus saw the disciples from the mountain at a distance, and that the disciples could not distinctly see Him when He was near them on the sea. But he does not tell us what enabled Him to see them at first, nor what hindered them from seeing Him afterwards. St. John says nothing about His seeing them from the land, but says, as St. Matthew and St. Mark imply, but do not say, it was dark when He came to them, and from his mention of the Passover we are warranted in concluding that it was light, moonlight, with a moon nearly full, shining on to the sea first

from the south-west, next from the south, lastly from the west, on its way towards its setting, in neither case, perhaps, in so good a position for showing any object on the sea as if it had been shining in the east, and so behind our Lord. But when we remember that the eastern banks of the Sea of Galilee are 2,000 feet high (Smith's Dictionary), we see that an observer thus placed would have a great advantage. The little touch in St. Matthew, that He went, departed, set out, in the fourth watch, may not count for much. But it seems to complete the picture by leaving our Lord on the height in prayer almost as long as He could see, and representing Him as using the last light of the declining moon, which would now shine full on the face of the cliff, to come down the 2,000 feet by one of the many ravines (Smith) to the shore, and set out on His miraculous walk of three or four miles on the water. How St. Mark knew that the Lord *saw* the disciples we cannot say. But probably He told them, and Peter told Mark.

That neither St. Mark nor St. John mentions St. Peter's attempt to walk on the sea is scarcely more remarkable than that St. Luke omits our Lord's own walking on it, or that St. Mark omits the special promise to Peter after his confession of faith. St. John seems to have recorded our Lord's walking on the sea as an almost necessary connecting-link between the feeding of the five thousand and the discourse at Capernaum.

Comparing the ἤθελον λαβεῖν of St. John vi. 21 with the ἤθελε παρελθεῖν of St. Mark vi. 48, we might doubt, at first sight, whether St. John meant us to understand that Jesus actually got into the boat. But St. John's usage in i. 43 (or 44), v. 35, and viii. 44, as others have pointed out, clears up the difficulty. ἤθελον λαβεῖν αὐτόν practically = they would take Him = they took Him. The *primâ facie* difficulties about the two Bethsaidas, St. Mark and St. Luke, and the Capernaum of St. John have been well cleared up. Others have also pointed out that there would be *grass* near the shore in March or April, the time of the Passover, as St. Mark and St. John say there was—"on the green grass"; "there was much grass in the place"; also that the four thousand sat on the *ground*, perhaps at another time of the year.

All this looks like fact. It makes, at least, a high presumption that the miraculous feeding of the five thousand and the walking on the water really took place. If by piecing together two or three separate narratives we had come upon the statement that shortly before the Passover it was dark from sunset to three in the morning, and light for the

rest of the night, or that grass was green and abundant near the Lake of Galilee in July or August, but not in March or April, we should, at least, have found ourselves far less ready to credit the rest of what had been written by writers thus inaccurate than when, as at present, St. John and St. Mark fit one another like the key and wards of a lock, though without any obvious attempt to agree with one another, and, indeed, in such a way as to make it all but absolutely certain that no such thought entered either writer's mind. The little touch in St. Matthew is but little, but it is in the same direction.

J. FOXLEY.

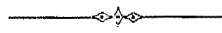
. Since this paper was written I have seen that Dr. Edersheim mentions part of the argument in his "Life and Times of the Messiah."

. In the year 29, which I take to be the year in which these miracles took place, the Paschal full moon fell either on March 18 or on April 17, the same days as those on which full moons occurred in those months in 1897. (See Lewin's "Fasti Sacri," p. 241; or Browne's "Ordo Sæculorum," from which Lewin quotes, p. 55.)

The following details are taken from Whitaker's Almanack for 1897. The hours are for Greenwich, but, so near the equinox, I suppose they would not differ much from the hours in Palestine :

Day in 1897.	Moon rose.	Moon southed.	Moon set.
March 15	1.50 afternoon	9.38 evening	4.46 next morning
March 16	3.13 "	10.28 "	5.6 " "
April 13	2.8 "	9.4 "	3.25 " "
April 14	3.33 "	9.53 "	3.40 " "

Perhaps some astronomer will tell us the exact times, etc., at which the moon rose, southed, and set at Tiberias for a few days before March 18 and April 17, A.D. 29. Is it known whether March 18 or April 17 was taken for the Paschal full moon that year? One table that I have gives April 17 only; the anonymous writer refers to a paper by the Rev. J. R. Lunn in the *Sacristy* for 1872, p. 234, which I have not seen.



ART. III.—TIGLATHPILESER, KING OF BABYLON :
THE KEY TO ISAIAH XIII. 1 TO XIV. 27—III.

IN the extracts from Professors Sayce and McCurdy given in a previous article, reference is made to the remarkable financial system instituted by Tiglathpileser—remarkable because then so novel. It was not merely that this great conqueror every now and then exacted enormous tributes from some vanquished foe, as, for instance, when his general,