

mist, became in the matter of unfulfilled prophecy definite even to a fantastic exactness, and thus added the movement which bears his name to the list, not of great achievements, but of brilliant failures.

“Now was the time of harvest”—so thought Edward Irving. “Mr. Irving thinks,” says our journal, “that the coming of the Lord will take place in thirty years.” So he began to busy himself with Armageddons and Men of Sin, with Scarlet Women and Little Horns, till at length he almost seemed to catch the first streaks of the fiery dawn of the great and terrible day. Surely these revived gifts of the Spirit were the cry to go forth to meet the bridegroom, these prophetic voices were giving forth plain and unmistakable directions for the reaping of the world’s harvest. So for himself the practical outcome of his teaching, while witnessing to much that the Church had forgotten and needed to revive, was to follow his disciples out into the wilderness, there to build with the desert sand and to pursue wandering fires.

J. G. SIMPSON.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

I.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE QUESTION.

A RESTATEMENT of the grounds of belief in the great fact of the Lord’s Resurrection seems called for in view of the changed forms of assault on this article of the Christian faith in recent years. It is difficult, indeed, to isolate this particular fact, outstanding as it is, from its context in the Gospel history taken as a whole, every point in which is made subject to a like minute and searching criticism. On the other hand, the consideration of the evidence for the Resurrection may furnish a vantage ground for forming a better estimate of the value of the methods by which

much of the hostile criticism of the Gospels is at present carried on.

As preliminary to the inquiry, it is desirable that a survey should be taken of the changed lights in which the question appears in past and in contemporary thought.

Time was, not so far removed, when the Resurrection of Jesus was regarded as an immovable corner-stone of Christianity. A scholar and historian like the late Dr. Arnold, of Rugby, summed up a general belief when he wrote : " I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them ; and I know of no fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God has given us, that Christ died and rose again from the dead." ¹ It will be recognized by any one familiar with the signs of the times that this language could not be employed about the state of belief to-day.

It was not that this article of Christian belief had not been long enough and violently enough assailed. The Resurrection of Jesus has been a subject of controversy in all ages. The story which St. Matthew tells us was in circulation among the Jews " until this day " ²—that the disciples had *stolen* the body of Jesus—was still spread abroad in the days of Justin Martyr. ³ It re-appears in that grotesque mediæval concoction, the *Toledoth Jeschu*. ⁴ Celsus, whom Origen combats, ridicules the Christian belief, and, with modern acuteness, urges the contradictions in the Gospel narratives. ⁵ Deistical writers, as Woolston and Chubb,

¹ Sermon on the Sign of the Prophet Jonas.

² Matt. xxviii. 15.

³ *Dial. with Trypho*, 108.

⁴ With some difference, in both the Wagenseil (1681) and the Huldreich (1705) recensions.

⁵ Origen, *Against Celsus*, ii. 56-63 ; v. 56, 58.

made the Resurrection a chief object of their attacks.¹ On the Continent, from Reimarus to Strauss, the stream of destructive or evasive² criticism was kept up. Strauss must be regarded as the most trenchant and remorseless of the assailants even to the present hour.³ What escaped his notice in criticism of the narratives is not likely to have much force now. If, therefore, faith in the Resurrection till recently remained unshaken, it was not because the belief was not contested, but because of the confident conviction that the attack all along the line had failed. Other elements in the Gospel tradition might be doubtful, but here, it was supposed, was a rock on which the most timorous might plant his feet without fear. Details in the Resurrection narratives themselves might be, probably were, inaccurate; but the central facts—the empty grave, the message to the women, the appearances to the disciples, sustained as these were by the independent witness of Paul in 1 Corinthians xv. 7, the belief of the whole Apostolic church—stood secure. This temper of certainty is excellently reflected in the Apologetic textbooks of the most recent period. In these the discussion travels along fixed and familiar lines—theories of imposture, of swoon, of subjective hallucination or visions, of objective but *spiritual* manifestations, all triumphantly refuted, and leaving the way open for the only remaining hypothesis, viz., that the event in dispute actually happened.

It is not suggested that Apologetic, up to this recent point, had failed in its main object, or that its confidence

¹ Replied to by Sherlock, West, Paley, etc.

² Several writers in this period advocated the theory that Christ's death was only a case of swoon or suspended animation (thus Paulus, Schleiermacher, Hase, etc). Strauss may be credited with having given this theory its death-blow. See his *New Life of Jesus* (E.T.), i. pp. 13-32; 408-12.

³ For the full strength of Strauss's criticism the original *Life of Jesus* (1835) should be consulted.

in the soundness of its grounds for belief in the Resurrection was misplaced. It is not implied, even, that the evidence which sufficed then is not adequate to sustain faith now. It may turn out that it is, and that in the *essence* of both attack and defence less is really changed than the modern man supposes. Still even the casual observer cannot fail to perceive that, in important respects, the state of the controversy is very different to-day from what it was, say, fifteen or twenty years ago. Forces which were then only gathering strength, or beginning to make themselves felt, have now come to a head, and the old grounds for belief, and the old answers to objections, are no longer allowed to pass unchallenged. The evidence for the Resurrection may be much what it has been for the last nineteen centuries, but the temper of the age in dealing with that evidence has undeniably altered. The subject is approached from new sides, with new presuppositions, with new critical methods and apparatus, with a wider outlook on the religious history of mankind, and a better understanding, derived from comparative study, of the growth of religious myths; and, in the light of this new knowledge, it is confidently affirmed that the old defences are obsolete, and that it is no longer open to the instructed intelligence—"the modern mind," as it is named—to entertain even the possibility of the bodily Resurrection of Christ from the grave. The believer in this divine fact, accordingly, is anew put on his defence, and must speak to purpose, if he does not wish to see the ground taken away from beneath his feet.

It has already been hinted, and will subsequently become more fully apparent, that the consideration of Christ's Resurrection cannot be dissociated from the view taken of the facts which make up the Gospel history as a whole. This should be frankly acknowledged on both sides at the outset. Christ is not divided. The Gospel story cannot

be dealt with piecemeal. The Resurrection brings its powerful attestation to the claims made by Jesus in His earthly ministry ;¹ but the claim to Messiahship and divine Sonship, on the other hand, with all the evidence in the Gospels that supports it, must be taken into account when we are judging of the reasonableness and probability of the Resurrection. No one can, even if he would, approach this subject without some prepossessions on the character, claims, and religious significance of Jesus, derived from the previous study of the records of His life, or, going deeper, from the presuppositions which have governed even that study. The believer's presupposition is Christ. If Christ was what His Church has hitherto believed Him to be—the divine Son and Saviour of the world—there is no antecedent presumption against His Resurrection ; rather it is incredible that He should have remained the prey of death.² If a lower estimate is taken of Christ, the historical evidence for the Resurrection will assume a different aspect. It will then remain to be seen which estimate of Christ most entirely fits in with the totality of the facts. On that basis the question may safely be brought to an issue.

This leads to the remark that it is really this question of *the admissibility of the supernatural* in the form of miracle which lies at the bottom of the whole investigation. The repugnance to miracle which is so marked a characteristic of the "modern" criticism of the Gospels can hardly, without an ignoring of the course of discussion for at least the last century and a half, be spoken of as a "new" thing. It underlay the rationalism of the older period, and some of the most stinging words in Strauss's *Life of Jesus* are directed against the abortive attempts of well-meaning mediating theologians to evade this fundamental

¹ Rom. i. 4.

² Acts ii. 24.

issue. Strauss's own position is made clear beyond possibility of mistake, and anticipates everything the "modern" man has to urge on the subject. "Our modern world," he says, "after many centuries of tedious research, has attained a conviction that all things are linked together by a chain of causes and effects, which suffers no interruption. . . . The totality of things forms a vast circle, which, except that it owes its existence and laws to a superior power, suffers no intrusion from without. This conviction is so much a habit of thought with the modern world, that in actual life the belief in a supernatural manifestation, an immediate divine agency, is at once attributed to ignorance and imposture."¹ Strauss at this stage is persuaded that "the essence of the Christian faith is perfectly independent of his criticism"; that "the supernatural birth of Christ, His miracles, His resurrection and ascension, remain eternal truths, whatever doubts may be cast on their reality as historical facts"; and that "the dogmatic significance of the life of Jesus remains inviolate."² At a later period, in his book on *The Old and the New Faith*, he reached the true gravitation-level of his speculations, and in answer to the question, "Are we still Christians?" boldly answered "No."³

The "modern" man has thus no reason to plume himself on his denial of miracle as a brand-new product of the scientific temper of the age in which he lives. His "modernity" goes back a long way in its negations. What is to be admitted is that the magnificent advance of the sciences during the past century has accentuated and reinforced this temper of distrust (or positive denial) of the miraculous; has given it greater precision and wider diffusion; has fur-

¹ The words are from the fourth edition (1840) of the (older) *Life of Jesus* (E.T.) i. p. 71.

² *Ibid.* Pref. p. xi.

³ In 1872.

nished it with new and plausible reasons, and made it more formidable as a practical force to be encountered. There is no doubt, in any case, that this spirit rules in a large proportion of the works recently issued on the Gospels and on the life of Christ, and is the concealed or avowed premiss of their treatment of the miraculous element in Christ's history, and notably of His resurrection.¹ The same temper has insensibly spread through a large part of the Christian community. Dr. Sanday truly enough describes "the attitude of many a loyal Christian" when he says that "he [the Christian] accepts the narratives of miracles and of the miraculous as they stand, but with a note of interrogation."² Others frankly reject them altogether. A chief difficulty in dealing with this widely-spread tendency is that it is, in most cases, less the result of reasoning than, as just said, a "temper," due to what Mr. Balfour would call "a psychological climate,"³ or Lecky would describe as "the general intellectual condition" of the time.⁴ Still, it is only by fair reasoning, and the adducing of considerations which set things in a different light, that it can be legitimately met; apart, that is, from a change in the "climate" itself, a thing continually happening. When this is done, it is remarkable how little, in the end, it is able to say in justification of its sweeping assumptions.

It is not only, however, in the general temper of the

¹ One may name almost at random such writers as A. Sabatier, Harnack, Pfeleiderer, Wernle, Weinel, Wrede, Wellhausen, Schmiedel, Bousset, Neumann, O. Holtzmann, E. Carpenter, Percy Gardner, G. B. Foster (Chicago), N. Schmidt, K. Lake, etc.

² *The Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 103.

³ "A psychological 'atmosphere' or 'climate' favourable to the life of certain modes of belief, unfavourable, and even fatal, to the life of others."—*Foundations of Belief*, fourth edition, p. 218.

⁴ See the "Introduction" to Lecky's *History of Rationalism in Europe*, and his interesting summary of the causes of "The Declining Sense of the Miraculous" in the close of chap. ii. of that work.

time that a change has taken place in the treatment of our subject ; the new spirit has armed itself with new weapons, and, first of all, with those supplied to it in the methods and results of the *later textual and historical criticism*. Even the tyro cannot be unaware of the almost revolutionary changes wrought in the forms and methods of New Testament criticism—following in the wake of Old Testament criticism¹—within the last generation. There is, to begin with, an enormous increase in the materials of criticism, with its results in greater specialization and increased urgency in the demand for a many-sided equipment in the textual critic, commentator, and historical writer.² Then, with extension of knowledge, has come a sharpening of intelligence and increased stringency of method—a painstakingness in research, an attention to detail, aptitude in seizing points of relation and contrast, skill in disentangling difficulties, fertility in suggestion—above all, a boldness and enterprise in speculation³—which leave the older and more cautious scholarship far in the rear. Doubtless, if the Resurrection be a truth, the application of these stricter methods should only make the truth the more apparent. But it is obvious also that, for those who care to use them in that way, the methods furnish ready aids for the disintegration of the text and evaporation of its historical contents. If a passage for any reason is distasteful, the resources in the critical arsenal are boundless for getting it out of the way. There is slight textual variation, some MS. or version omits or alters, the Evangelists

¹ It is a sign of the times that Old Testament scholars like Wellhausen and Gunkel are now transferring their attentions to the New Testament.

² See the remarkable catalogue of qualifications for the commentator set forth in the Preface to Mr. W. C. Allen's new commentary on St. Matthew (*Intern. Crit. Com.*)

³ Dr. Sanday notes this as a characteristic of recent work on the Gospels. See his *Life of Christ in Recent Research*, p. 41.

conflict, it is unsuitable to the speaker or the context, if otherwise unchallengeable, it is late and unreliable tradition. Wellhausen's *Introduction to the First Three Gospels* is an illustration of how nearly everything which has hitherto been of interest and value in the Gospels—Sermon on the Mount and parables included—disappears under this kind of treatment.¹ Schmiedel's article on the "Gospels" in the *Encyclopædia Biblica* is a yet more extreme example. The application of the method to our immediate subject is admirably seen in Professor Lake's recent book on *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*. A painfully minute and unsparing verbal criticism of the Gospel narratives and of the references in Paul results naturally in the conclusion that there is *no* evidence of any value—except, perhaps, for the general fact of "appearances" to the disciples. No fibre of the history is left standing as it was. Material assistance is afforded to this type of criticism by the theory of the relations of the Gospels which is at present the prevailing one—what Mr. Allen believes to be "the one solid result of literary criticism,"² viz., the dependence of the first and third Gospels, in their narrative portions, on the "prior" Gospel of St. Mark. It is temptingly easy, on this theory, to regard everything in these other Gospels which is not found in, or varies from, St. Mark, as a wilful "writing up" or embellishment of the original simpler story; as something, therefore, to be at once set aside as unhistorical.³

These which have been named are dogmatic and literary assaults; but now, from yet another side, a formidable

¹ See his *Einleitung*, pp. 52-57, 68-72, 86-87, 90-93, etc.

² *St. Matthew*, Pref. p. vii. It is not to be assumed that this judgment, on which more will be said after, is acquiesced in by every one.

³ This is pretty much Wellhausen's method, except that Wellhausen attaches little or no historical value even to St. Mark. Prof. Lake follows in the same track.

attack is seen developing on the historicity of the narratives of the Resurrection—namely, from the side of *comparative religion and mythology*. It is in itself nothing new to draw comparisons between the Resurrection of Jesus, and the stories of death and resurrection in pagan religions. Celsus of old made a beginning in this direction.¹ The myths, too, on which reliance is placed in these comparisons are, in many cases, really there,² and frequently collections have been made of them for the purpose of discrediting the Christian belief. The subject may now be said to have entered on its scientific phase in the study of comparative mythology—for instance, in such a work as Dr. J. G. Frazer's *Golden Bough*³—and as the result of the long train of discoveries throwing light on the religious beliefs and mythological conceptions of the most ancient peoples—Babylonian, Egyptian, Arabian, Persian, and others. In its newest form—sometimes called the “Pan-Babylonian,” though there is yet great diversity of standpoint, and no little division of opinion, among the writers to whom the name is applied—the movement has already attained to imposing proportions, and has given birth to an important literature. Among its best known representatives on the Continent, of different types, are H. Winckler, A. Jeremias, H. Gunkel, P. Jensen; Dr. Cheyne may speak for it here. A chief characteristic of the school is that, declining to look at any people or religion in isolation from general history, it aims at explaining any given religion from the circumstances of its environment, and from analogies and parallels drawn from other religions. Conceptions derived ultimately from Babylonia were

¹ Origen, *Against Celsus*, ii. 55–58.

² Myths of death and resurrection are prominent in the ancient Mysteries. This phase of the subject will be discussed after.

³ Cf. also L. R. Farnell's book, *The Evolution of Religion*.

spread through the whole East, and these, entering through many channels, had a powerful influence in moulding, first the Israelitish, then the Christian religions. Winckler boldly applied his theory to the religious ideas and history of the Old Testament; Gunkel and the others named¹ extend it to the New. "Conservative theologians," writes Dr. Cheyne, "will have to admit that the New Testament now has to be studied from the point of view of mythology as well as from that of philological exegesis and Church-history. . . . For that harmonious combination of points of view which is necessary for the due comprehension of the New Testament, it is essential that the help of mythology, treated of course by strictly critical methods, should be invoked. In short, there are parts of the New Testament—in the Gospels, in the Epistles, and in the Apocalypse—which can only be accounted for by the newly-discovered fact of Oriental syncretism, which began early and continued late. And the leading factor in this is Babylonian."²

The story of the Resurrection is naturally one of the "legends" on the rise of which the new Babylonian theory is supposed to be able to cast special light, and Dr. Cheyne gratefully accepts its help.³ Professor Lake regards it as a theory which, while not proved, "one has seriously to reckon with."⁴ Even Dr. Cheyne, however, is outdone, and is stirred to active protest, by the astonishing lengths to which the theory is carried by Professor Jensen in his recent massive work, *The Gilgamesh Epic in World Literature*,⁵ which literally transforms the Gospel history into a version of the story of that mythical Babylonian hero! It is the saving fact

¹ Cf. Gunkel's *Zum Religionsgeschichtlichen Verständnis des neuen Testaments*. Jeremiah is an exception to the general position in so far that, while accepting the analogies, he does not deny the New Testament facts. See his *Babylonisches im N.T.*

² *Bible Problems*, pp. 18, 19.

³ *Ibid.* pp. 21, 115 ff.

⁴ *Ut Supra*, p. 263.

⁵ *Das Gilgamesch-Epos in der Weltliteratur*, Bd. I.

in theories of this kind that they speedily run themselves into excesses which deprive them of influence to right thinking minds.¹

Yet another point of view is reached (though it may be combined with the preceding), when the attempt is made to show that *the idea and spiritual virtue* of Christ's Resurrection can be conserved, while the belief in a bodily rising from the tomb is surrendered. This is the tendency which manifests itself especially in a section of the school of theologians denominated Ritschlian. It connects itself naturally with the disposition in this school to seek the ground of faith in an immediate religious impression—in something verifiable on its own account—and to dissociate faith from doubtful questions of criticism and uncertainties of historical inquiry. Ritschl himself left his relation to the historical fact of the Resurrection in great obscurity. Of those usually reckoned as his followers, some accept and defend the fact,² but the greater number sit loose to the idea of a bodily Resurrection, claiming that it cannot be established by historical evidence, and in any case is not an essential element of faith.³ Most *reject* the bodily rising as inconsistent with an order of nature. The certainty to which the Christian holds fast is that Christ, his Lord, still lives and rules, but this is, as Herrmann would say, a "thought of faith"—a conviction of Christ's abiding life, based on the estimate of His religious worth, and not affected by any view that may be held as to His physical resuscitation. There can be no doubt that the feeling which this line of argument represents is very widely spread.

The name which most readily occurs in connexion with the

¹ The general theory will be discussed in a future paper.

² E.g., Kaftan, Loofs, Häring.

³ Among those who take this position may be named Herrmann, J. Weiss, Wendt, Lobstein, Reischle, etc. Some of these admit supernatural impressions." (See below.)

view of the Resurrection now indicated is that of Professor Harnack, whose Berlin lectures, translated under the title, *What is Christianity?*¹ have helped not a little to popularize it. Harnack had earlier unambiguously stated his position in his *History of Dogma*. "Faith," it is there contended, "has by no means to do with the knowledge of the form in which Jesus lives, but only with the conviction that He is the living Lord." "We do not need to have faith in a fact, and that which requires religious belief, that is, trust in God, can never be a fact which would hold good apart from that belief. The historical question and the question of faith must, therefore, be clearly distinguished here." He seeks to show the weakness of the historical evidence—"even the empty grave on the third day can by no means be regarded as a certain historical fact"—and declares: "(1) That every conception which represents the Resurrection of Christ as a simple reanimation of His mortal body [no one affirms that it is] is far from the original conception, and (2) that the question generally as to whether Christ has risen can have no evidence for any one who looks at it apart from the contents and worth of the Person of Jesus."² Quite to the same effect, if in warmer language, Harnack distinguishes in his Berlin lectures between what he calls "the Easter message" and "the Easter faith"—the former telling us of "that wonderful event in Joseph of Arimathæa's garden, which, however, no eye saw"; the latter being "the conviction that the Crucified One still lives; that God is just and powerful; that He who is the firstborn among many brethren still lives." The former, the historical foundation, faith "must abandon altogether, and with it the miraculous appeal to our senses." Nevertheless, "Whatever may have happened at the grave and in the manner of the appearances, one thing is certain:

¹ *Das Wesen des Christentums*. ² Eng. trans. i. pp. 85-86.

this grave was the birthplace of the indestructible belief that death is vanquished, that there is a life eternal.”¹ The logic is not very easy to follow, but this is not the place to criticise it. Enough if it is made clear how this mode of conceiving of the Resurrection of Christ, which imports a new element into the discussion, presents itself to the minds that hold it.

The “appearances” to the disciples, however, still are there, variously and well attested, as by Paul’s famous list in 1 Corinthians xv. 4–8, as to which even Strauss says: “There is no occasion to doubt that the Apostle Paul heard this from Peter, James, and perhaps from others concerned (cf. Gal. i. 18 ff., ii. 9), and that all of these, even the five hundred, were firmly convinced that they had seen Jesus who had been dead and was alive again.”² What is the explanation? Were they simply, as Strauss thought, visions, hallucinations, delusions? Here is a new dividing-line, even among those who reject the reality of the Lord’s bodily Resurrection. The appearances were too real and persistent, they feel, to be explained as the mere work of the imagination. Phantasy has its laws, and it does not operate in this strange way. There were appearances, but may they not have been *appearances of the spiritually risen* Christ, manifestations from the life beyond the grave by one whose body was still sleeping in the tomb? So thought Keim, who argued powerfully against the subjective visionary theory³—so thinks even Professor Lake.⁴

The idea is not wholly a new one,⁵ but Keim brought new support to it in his *Jesus of Nazara*, and since then it has commended itself to many minds, who have found in

¹ *What is Christianity?* E.T., 1900, pp. 161–2.

² *New Life of Jesus*, i. p. 400.

³ *Jesus of Nazara* (E.T.), vi. pp. 323 ff.

⁴ *Ut Supra*, pp. 271–6.

⁵ It appears in Schenkel, Weisse, Schweitzer, and others.

it a *via media* between complete denial of the Resurrection and acceptance of the physical miracle of the bodily rising. It has obtained the adhesion of not a few of the members of the Ritschlian school.¹

All this belongs to the older stage of the controversy. It perhaps would not have sufficed to bring about a revival of the theory but for the new turn given to speculation on appearances of the dead by the investigations and reports of the Society of Psychological Research. It is to "the type of phenomena collected" by this Society, "and specially by the late Mr. F. W. H. Myers," that Professor Lake attaches himself in his hypothetical explanation.² His position, as stated by himself, is a curious inversion of the older one. Formerly, the Resurrection of Jesus was thought to be a guarantee of the future life—of immortality. Now, it appears, the future life "remains merely a hypothesis until it can be shown that personal life does endure beyond death, is neither extinguished nor suspended, and is capable of manifesting its existence to us."³ Professor Lake has not the sanguineness of Professor Harnack. He thinks that "some evidence" has been produced by men of high scientific standing connected with the above Society, but "we must wait until the experts have sufficiently sifted the arguments for alternative explanations of the phenomena before they can actually be used as reliable evidence for the survival of personality after death."⁴ The belief in the Resurrection of Christ even in the *spiritual* sense—that is, as survival of personality—depends on the success of these same experiments of the Psychological Research Society.

This theory, it will naturally occur, is not a theory of

¹ Among these Bornemann, Reischle, and others, leave the question open: J. Weiss argues for supernatural impressions, etc.

² *Ut Supra*, p. 272.

³ *Ibid.* p. 245.

⁴ *Ibid.*

“Resurrection,” in the New Testament sense of that word, at all ; but we have to do here with the fact that some people believe that it is, or, at least, that it represents the reality which lies behind the narratives of Resurrection in the Gospels. Mr. Myers himself identifies the two things, and, as illustrating this phase of speculation, which has assumed, in an age of unbelief in the supernatural, a semi-scientific aspect, it may be useful in closing, to quote his own words :—

“I venture now,” he says, “on a bold saying : for I predict that, in consequence of the new evidence, all reasonable men, a century hence, will believe the Resurrection of Christ, whereas, in default of the new evidence, no reasonable men, a century hence, would have believed it. The ground of the forecast is plain enough. Our ever-growing recognition of the continuity, the uniformity of cosmic law has gradually made of the alleged uniqueness of any incident its almost inevitable refutation. . . . And especially as to that central claim, of the soul’s life manifested after the body’s death, it is plain that this can less and less be supported by remote tradition alone ; that it must more and more be tested by modern experience and inquiry. . . . Had the results (in short) of ‘psychical research’ been purely negative, would not Christian evidence—I do not say Christian *emotion*, but Christian *evidence*—have received an overwhelming blow ?

“As a matter of fact—or, if you prefer the phrase, in my own personal opinion—our research has led us to results of a quite different type. They have not been negative only, but largely positive. We have shown that, amid much deception and self-deception, fraud and illusion, veritable manifestations do reach us from beyond the grave. The central claim of Christianity is thus confirmed, as never before. . . . There is nothing to hinder

the conviction that, though we be all 'the children of the Highest,' He came nearer than we, by some space by us immeasurable, to that which is infinitely far. There is nothing to hinder the devout conviction that He of His own act 'took upon Him the form of a servant,' and was made flesh for our salvation, foreseeing the earthly travail and the eternal crown."¹

JAMES ORR.

LEXICAL NOTES FROM THE PAPYRI.

IV.

A WORD of preface is necessary in returning to these Notes after an interval of nearly four years. Arrangements had been made for the publication in book form of the lexical matter contained in the three previous articles, together with further material collected subsequently. To this task I addressed myself when the completion of my *Prolegomena* gave me breathing space; but I soon realized that a mere casual supplementing of the original papers—themselves made up of mere pickings by the way—would not be worth attempting. Something like a systematic search of the papyri, and to a less extent the later inscriptions, seemed necessary, that the New Testament student might have before him a tolerably complete exhibition of the use of New Testament words in the Hellenistic vernacular. He has already in Wetstein and later commentators, and in such a dictionary as Thayer's Grimm, a fairly exhaustive account of the literary use of every word. What he needs now is a similar apparatus for the Greek of common life, as revealed in the mass of vernacular documents which are becoming accessible in increasing numbers to-day. To make a beginning in this work is the object

¹ *Human Personality and its Survival*, ii. pp. 288-9.