

where there were people admiring the roofing, and talking of the benefactions; and the end of their conversation led them to enumerate the tricks of the *chevaliers d'industrie*. These, which in any case might be difficult to follow, are made yet more so by the description being in rhymed prose, whence there is much that is uncertain in the explanation. In any case they include such methods as hypnotizing the victim, and what is called the confidence trick.

The trick in the list that most resembles "jumping over the threshold" is that of the man "who bursts in at the door in the guise of a guest, or enters the house in the form of a visitor."¹ His predatory intentions are apparently concealed under the disguise of familiarity, to be adopted in case he is observed. The *modus operandi* is not quite clear, any more than it is with most of the tricks enumerated: but "bursting in at the door," seems a fair analogue to "leaping over the threshold," and the two may have been done with the same intent.

D. S. MARGOLIOUTH.

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

IV.

THE CREDIBILITY OF THE WITNESS—THE BURIAL.

ONE of the most touching scenes in Goethe's *Faust* is where the heart-sick sceptic, about to drain the poison-goblet, is turned from his purpose by hearing the ringing of the Easter bells, and the choral hymns, proclaiming that the Lord is risen. "I hear your message," is his first comment, "but I have not faith. Miracle is faith's favourite child."² In this we hear the voice of to-day. But the sweet sounds,

¹ Hamadhâni, *Makâmahs*, ed. Beyrut, 1889, p. 162.

² "Das Wunder ist des Glaubens liebstes Kind."

with their tidings of victory and joy for the world, melt and conquer—for the time.

Sing ye on, sweet songs that are of heaven !
Tears come, Earth has her child again.

It is this "Easter Message," fraught with such infinite consolation for mankind, which is again placed in question. The mood of the sceptic is resumed. Faith may, if it will, believe that Jesus lives with God ; that He has not in spirit succumbed to death. But the historical fact on which the Church has hitherto reposed its confidence in His victory over death—His Resurrection in the body from the grave—is negatived as incredible, and the evidence on which the belief rests is declared to be valueless as proof of so great a wonder. A little has already been said of the methods by which the breaking down of the evidence is attempted on the part of historical criticism. Much is made of the secondary character of the narratives, of their contradictions, of the mythical and legendary elements alleged to be apparent in them. The accounts are pitted against each other, are picked to pieces, and attacked in their separate details ("divide and conquer.")¹ Their larger coherences, the connexion with the life of Christ as a whole, their antecedents and consequents in revelation and history—all this is left out of view or minimized. It is time to come to closer quarters with this bold challenge of the evidence, and to ask how far the denial rests on satisfactory grounds.

One or two general remarks are pertinent at the outset.

It is customary to urge as decisive against the narratives of the Gospels that not any of the writers are first-hand witnesses. This, however, as already hinted, is to take

¹ Cf., amongst recent works, *Die Auferstehung Christi*, by Arnold Meyer (1905), and the work of Prof. Lake repeatedly referred to, *The Historical Evidence for the Resurrection of Jesus Christ*. (Now Abbé Loisy's *Les Évangiles Synoptiques*.)

much too narrow a view. If the Fourth Gospel, as is here presumed, and as indications in its Resurrection narratives themselves tend to show, is a genuine work of the Apostle John, we have one witness of foremost rank who *was* an eye-witness. St. Mark, according to a tradition which there seems no reason to doubt, was the "interpreter" of St. Peter¹—another primary witness. St. Luke lays stress upon the fact that the things which he relates rested primarily on the testimony of those "which from the beginning were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word."² The Gospel of St. Matthew, if not directly the work of that Apostle, must have been written by one in such close intimacy with the Apostle—another first-hand witness—that his Gospel ever after passed as St. Matthew's own.³ St. Paul's appeal is to eye-witnesses.⁴

But there is more than this. It is never to be forgotten that, as the words of St. Luke above cited imply, the writers of the Synoptical Gospels, like Confucius in China, were not "originators" but "transmitters." Their business was not to create, but simply to record, as faithfully as they could, a tradition already existing and well established in the Church—a tradition derived originally from Apostles, circulating in oral and written form, and well preserved by careful catechetical teaching. It is to be remembered that the Apostles, with numerous other eye-witnesses, lived for years together at Jerusalem, continuously engaged in the work of instruction; that during this period they were in constant communication with each other, with their con-

¹ Papias, in Eusebius, *Ecc. Hist.* iii. 39, and generally in the ancient Church. Cf. Meyer, Weiss, Westcott, Salmon, Zahn, etc.

² Luke i. 2.

³ Cf. Zahn, *Einleitung*, ii. 259. All early writers agree in accepting the Greek Gospel as St. Matthew's, even while declaring that he wrote in Aramaic.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 5-8.

verts, and with the Churches which they founded ; that the witness which they bore necessarily acquired a fixed and familiar form ; and that the deposit of the common tradition which we have in the Gospels has behind it, in its main features, all the weight of this consentient testimony—is, therefore, of the highest value as evidence. If it is not the testimony of this or that single eye-witness, it may be something better.

Next, as to the “contradictions.” These, it will be seen immediately, are greatly exaggerated. But even on the points which present undeniable difficulties, certain things, in fairness, are to be borne in mind. We see how minute, faithful, and life-like are the narratives of the Lord’s Crucifixion. The events of the Resurrection morning could not be less well known. The Apostles were, above all things else, witnesses to the Resurrection.¹ Within a few weeks of the Crucifixion they were proclaiming the Resurrection of Jesus in the streets of Jerusalem, and making multitudes of converts by their preaching.² The facts must have been constantly talked about, narrated in preaching, experiences compared, particular incidents connected with this or that person or group of persons, either as original informants, or as prominent persons in the story. It is further to be remembered that the Resurrection day was necessarily one of great excitement. Events and experiences, as the tale was told, would be mingled, blended, grouped, in a way which no one who was not an eye-witness, like St. John, would be able afterwards clearly to disentangle. Yet the essential facts, and even the chief details of the story, would stand out beyond all reasonable question. This is what we would expect in the narratives of the Gospels, and what, in fact, we find. No one of the Evangelists professes to give a complete account of everything that happened on

¹ Acts i. 22, ii. 32, iii. 15, iv. 33, 1 Cor. xv. 15.

² Acts ii.-iv.

that wonderful Easter morning and day. Each selects and combines from his own point of view; gives outstanding names and facts, without disputing or denying that others may have something else to tell; in default of more exact knowledge, sometimes generalizes. It is here that St. John, with his more precise and consecutive narration, affords valuable aid,¹ as he does so frequently in matters of chronology in the Gospels.

In narratives of this description, however credible in origin and substance, it is clearly as hopeless as it is unfair to adopt the methods of a pettifogging attorney, bent at all costs on tripping the witness up on small details. No two of the Evangelists, e.g., agree precisely in the terms they employ as to the time of the visit of the women to the tomb.² Yet in all four it is plainly implied that the visit took place in early morning, when dawn was merging into day, and that it was full daylight before the visit was completed. One Evangelist names certain women; others add a name or two more—names familiar in all the accounts. How small such points are as the basis of a charge of irreconcilable contradictions! How few statements of public events, even where stricter accuracy of expression is aimed at, could endure to have such methods applied to them!³

Two examples may illustrate.

Prof. Huxley was a man of scientific mind, from whom

¹ It is possible to agree with Renan here. "In all that concerns the narrative of the Resurrection and the appearances," he says, "the Fourth Gospel maintains that superiority which it has for all the rest of the Life of Jesus. If we wish to find a consecutive logical narrative, which allows that which is hidden behind the allusions to be conjectured, it is there that we must look for it" (*Les Apôtres*, p. ix.). Attention may again be drawn to R. H. Hutton's essay on "The Historical Problems of the Fourth Gospel" (*Theol. Essays*, No. vii.).

² On this and the next example, see after.

³ Critics are always girding at the doctrine of "verbal inspiration." Yet their own objections rest on the postulate of the narrowest view of verbal inspiration, and lose their force on any other hypothesis.

accurate statement in an ordinary narrative of fact might justly be expected. It happens, however, that in Huxley's *Darwiniana* the scientist makes two references in different papers to the origin of the breed of Ancon sheep. It is instructive to put the two passages side by side.

Here is the first :—

With the 'cuteness characteristic of their nation, the neighbours of the Massachusetts farmer imagined that it would be an excellent thing if all his sheep were imbued with the stay-at-home tendencies enforced by Nature on the newly-arrived ram, and they advised Wright to kill the old patriarch of his fold, and instal the Ancon ram in his place. The result justified their sagacious anticipations.¹

Here is the other :—

It occurred to Seth Wright, who was, like his successors, more or less 'cute, that if he could get a stock of sheep like those with the bandy legs, they would not be able to jump over the fences so readily ; and he acted upon that idea.²

Here, manifestly, are "discrepancies" which, on critical principles, should discredit the whole story. In the latter narrative we have Seth Wright alone ; in the former, neighbours ; ["the second narrative," we might say in the usual style, "knows nothing of neighbours" ; the longer version is plainly a later expansion.] In the latter, the idea is Seth Wright's very own—the product of his own 'cuteness ; in the other, the 'cuteness is wholly in the neighbours, and Seth Wright only acts on their advice. Yet how contemptuously would any sensible person scout such hypercriticism !

A second instructive example is furnished in a recent issue of the *Bibliotheca Sacra*.³ A class in history was studying the French Revolution, and the pupils were asked to look the matter up, and report next day by what vote Louis XVI. was condemned. Nearly half the class reported

¹ *Darwiniana*, pp. 38-9.

² P. 409.

³ Oct. 1907, pp. 768-9.

that the vote was unanimous. A considerable number protested that he was condemned by a majority of one. A few gave the majority as 145 in a vote of 721. "How utterly irreconcilable these reports seemed! Yet for each the authority of reputable historians could be given. In fact, all were true, and the full truth was a combination of all three." On the first vote as to the king's guilt there was no contrary voice. Some tell only of this. The vote on the penalty was given individually, with reasons, and a majority of 145 declared for the death penalty, at once or after peace was made with Austria, or after confirmation by the people. The votes for *immediate* death were only 361 as against 360. History abounds with similar illustrations.¹

It helps, further, to set this question in its right light, if it is kept in mind that the Gospel narratives take for granted the Resurrection of Jesus as a fact universally accepted, on Apostolic testimony, and aim primarily, not at proof of the fact, but at telling how the event came about, and was brought on that Easter morning to the knowledge of the disciples, with the surprising consequences. It is not evidence led in a court of law, but information concerning an event which everybody already knew and believed in, which they furnish. This explains, in part, their naïve and informal character. It reminds us also that, while the value of these narratives, as contributing to the evidence of the fact, cannot be exaggerated, the certainty of the fact itself rests on a prior and much broader basis—the unfaltering apostolic witness.² The origin of the Christian Church, it

¹ As an example of another kind, reference may be made to Rev. R. J. Campbell's volume of *Sermons Addressed to Individuals*, where, on pp. 145-6 and pp. 181-2, the same story of a Brighton man is told with affecting dramatic details. The story is no doubt true in substance; but for "discrepancies"—let the reader compare them, and never speak more (or Mr. Campbell either) of the Gospels!

² As shown in a previous paper, the *belief* in the Resurrection is admitted

will hereafter be argued, can simply not be explained except on the assumption of the reality of the fact. Meanwhile it is to be inquired what credit attaches to the Gospel relation of the circumstances of this astonishing event which has changed the whole outlook of the generations of mankind upon the future.

Let the chief points be taken in order, and their credibility examined. The force of the objections of a destructive historical criticism can then be tested.

A first fact attested by all the witnesses is that *Jesus died and was buried*. St. Paul sums up the unanimous belief of the early Church on this point in the words: "That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried."¹ The reality of Christ's death, as against the swoon theories, was touched on before, and need not be re-argued. No one now holds that Jesus did *not* die!

"He was buried," St. Paul says. How He was buried is told by the Evangelists. The facts must have been perfectly well known to the primitive community, and the accounts in all four Gospels, as might be expected, are in singular agreement.² Combining their statements, we learn that Joseph of Arimathæa, an honourable councillor (Mark and John), and secret disciple of Jesus (Matthew, John), a "rich man" (Matthew), one "looking for the kingdom of God" (Mark, Luke), "a good man and a righteous" (Luke), begged from Pilate the body of Jesus (all four), and, wrapping it in a linen cloth (all), buried it in a new (Matthew, Luke, John) rock-tomb (all) belonging

on all hands. R. Otto, in his *Leben und Wirken Jesu*, says: "It can be firmly maintained: no fact in history is better attested than, not indeed the Resurrection, but certainly the rock-fast conviction of the first community of the Resurrection of Christ" (p. 49). It is here contended that the belief is inexplicable, under the conditions, without the fact.

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.

² Matt. xxvii. 57-61; Mark xv. 42-7; Luke xxiii. 50-6; John xix. 38-42.

to himself (Matthew, cf. John), in the vicinity of the place of crucifixion (in "a garden," John says), and closed the entrance with a great (Matthew, Mark, implied in the others) stone. St. John further informs us that Nicodemus assisted in the burial, bringing with him costly spices. Phraseology differs in the accounts, and slight particulars furnished by one Evangelist are lacking or unnoticed in the others. St. Mark alone, e.g., tells of Pilate's hesitation in granting Joseph's request, and alone relates that Joseph "bought" a linen cloth. Yet the story, on the face of it, is harmonious throughout, and what any Evangelist fails to state the rest of his narrative generally implies. St. Luke and St. John do not even mention the rolling of the stone to the door of the tomb (the fact was one so well known that it could be omitted). But it is told how the stone was found removed on the Resurrection morning.¹

What has historical criticism to say to this story? One method is simply to deny or ignore it, and to aver, in teeth of the evidence, that the body of Jesus was probably cast by the Jews to the dunghill,² or otherwise disposed of. This, however, is generally felt to be too drastic a procedure, and the tendency in recent criticism has been to accept the main fact of Joseph's interment of the body of Jesus,³ but usually with qualifications and explanations which deprive the act of the character it has in the Gospels. Professor Lake's book may again serve to illustrate the process. According to this writer, the narrative which, to the ordinary

¹ Luke xxiv. 2; John xx. 1.

² Thus Strauss, Réville, etc. Réville, quoted by Godet, says the Jews perhaps cast the body of Jesus on the dustheap, and adds, "as was generally done with the bodies of executed criminals." Godet points out that "such a custom was not in conformity with Jewish or Roman law" (*Defence of the Christian Faith*, E. T., p. 106).

³ Thus Renan, H. J. Holtzmann, O. Holtzmann, Prof. Lake, etc. Strauss allows that Roman law permitted the handing over of the body to friends (*Ulpian*, xlviii. 24).

eye, reads so harmoniously is honeycombed with contradictions. The variations and omissions in the accounts form, indeed, a difficulty in the way of the Marcan theory—e.g., the omission of St. Mark's mention of the hesitation of Pilate (Matthew, Luke), or of the names of the women at the tomb (Luke)—but this is got over, or minimized, by the suggestion of an "Ur-Markus."¹ Then the path is open to assume that St. Matthew's "rich man," and St. Luke's "good man and righteous," are but varying interpretations ("paraphrases") of St. Mark's "a councillor of honourable estate";² that the discipleship of St. Matthew, said to be unknown to, and in contradiction with, St. Mark, is an attempt to find a "motive" for the burial;³ that St. Luke, by the use of the term "hewn in stone" (λαξεύρω) contradicts the description of the tomb in the other Synoptics;⁴ while St. John goes still further astray in regarding the tomb as "a kind of mausoleum,"⁵ etc. "The discipleship ascribed to Joseph in John [as in Matthew] is not really to be reconciled with the Marcan account."⁶ The probable truth is held to be that Joseph, a member of the Sanhedrim, and acting as its representative,⁷ was moved to do what he did solely by regard for the precept in Deuteronomy xxi. 22 ff.: that the body of a criminal hanged on a tree should be buried before sunset.⁸

But how far-fetched and distorted is all this theorizing! The contradictions in the narratives hunted out with such

¹ *Res. of Jesus Christ*, pp. 52-4.

² Pp. 50-1.

³ Pp. 48, 50, 61, 173, etc.

⁴ Pp. 51. "In Mark we have an ordinary rock-tomb; in Luke, a tomb of hewn stone; in John, a mausoleum with a place for the body in the centre" (p. 176).

⁵ Pp. 172-3.

⁶ P. 172.

⁷ Pp. 177, 182. Mr. Burkitt, on the other hand, seems to question that *βουλευτής* means a member of the Sanhedrim, and hints that St. Luke has here again mistaken St. Mark (*Gospel History*, p. 56). There is no reason to doubt Luke's accuracy in his understanding of the word.

⁸ Pp. 130, 182.

painstaking zeal simply do not exist. To take first the question of discipleship. If the *word* "disciple" is not used by St. Mark and St. Luke, is not the *fact* of discipleship to the degree intended—a secret sympathy now coming to avowal—written across their narratives as plainly as across those of St. Matthew and St. John? What else but discipleship of this kind could move a member of the Sanhedrim ("he had not," St. Luke tells us, "consented to their counsel and deed."¹), on the very day of Christ's crucifixion, to come boldly forward ("having dared," St. Mark says²), to ask from Pilate the body of the Crucified; then, having bought linen, to wrap it therein and give it reverent burial in a rock-tomb (according to St. Matthew, his own; ³ according to St. Matthew, St. Luke, St. John,⁴ new)? Indeed, does not the very expression used by St. Mark and St. Luke, "looking for the kingdom of God," imply, *for them*, a measure of discipleship?

Is it probable, Professor Lake asks, that a disciple would have been a member of the Sanhedrim, or have omitted the anointing?⁵ "If Joseph was not a disciple, he probably did not anoint the body; if he was, he probably did."⁶ Then the absence of the mention of the anointing in St. Mark is taken as a proof that Joseph was not a disciple. But in St. Matthew's narrative, where the discipleship is asserted, there is no anointing either. On Professor Lake's showing, it should nevertheless be presupposed.⁷ "Mark

¹ Luke xxiii. 51. ² Mark xv. 43. ³ Matt. xxvii. 60.

⁴ Matt. xxvii. 60; Luke xxiii. 53; John xix. 41. "In the first Gospel," says Strauss, "Joseph is a disciple of Jesus—and such must have been the man who, under circumstances so unfavourable, did not hesitate to take charge of His body" (*Life of Jesus*, iii. p. 297). Renan follows the narratives without hesitation, including the anointing (*Life of Jesus*, chap. xxvi.).

⁵ *Ut supra*, p. 171. ⁶ P. 173.

⁷ In another place he says, "He [Matthew] had given an explanation of the burial by Joseph of Arimathea—discipleship—which rendered it improbable that the latter had omitted the usual last kindnesses to a dead

says that Joseph was a member of the Sanhedrim, and that he did not anoint the body."¹ St. Mark makes no such statement. What Professor Lake converts into this assertion is an inference of his own from a later part of the narrative, where St. Mark speaks of the purchase of spices by the women with a view to *their* anointing on the first day of the week.²

The attempt to make out a discrepancy about the tomb is even less successful. In the adjective *λαξεύτω* in St. Luke Professor Lake seems to have discovered a signification unknown to most students of the language. One asks, by what right does he impose on this word, occurring here alone in the New Testament, a sense contrary to that of the corresponding word in the other Gospels? In the one case in which it occurs in the LXX (Deut. iv. 49), it cannot well mean aught else than hewn out of the rock. Meyer appears to give the meaning correctly, "hewn in stone, therefore neither dug nor built."³ But the tomb, it is objected, was not necessarily Joseph's own, as St. Matthew affirms. Surely, however, the very use of it for the burial of the Lord's body, which all the Evangelists attest, is the strongest of proofs that it was. The tomb was evidently one of some distinction. Three witnesses describe it as "new," "where never man had yet lain" (Matthew, Luke, and John), and it was situated in "a garden."⁴ Can those who write thus have thought of it as other than the property of the councillor who used it? Or was it the custom in Judaea for people simply to appropriate anyone's rock-tomb that

friend's body" (p. 61). St. Matthew should at least be cleared of contradiction to St. John.

¹ P. 171.

² Mark xvi. 1.

³ *Com. in loc.* On Jewish tombs and burial customs, cf. Latham, *The Risen Master*, pp. 33-6, 87-8, and plates.

⁴ John xix. 41.

pleased them ?¹ Professor Lake finds a discrepancy even in St. Luke's omitting to mention the closing of the door with a stone ! But he adds in a footnote : " But the stone is implied in Luke xxii. 2. Either St. Luke forgot his previous omission or the latter was, after all, accidental ! " ²

The futility of the counter-explanation offered of Joseph of Arimathæa's action hardly needs elaboration. Is it credible that any member of the Sanhedrim, without living sympathy with Jesus—still more the Sanhedrim as a body or their representative—should behave in the manner recorded from the simple motive of securing that a criminal who had undergone execution should be buried before sunset ? The answer may be left to the reader's own reflections.

Connected with the burial is the story of *the guard at the tomb*, narrated only by St. Matthew³—therefore lacking the breadth of attestation of the main history. It is not, on that account, as is very frequently assumed, to be dismissed as legendary. If it has behind it the authority of St. Matthew, it is certainly not legendary ; even if not his, it may come from some first-hand and quite authentic source. It will fall to be considered again in connexion with the events of the Resurrection. Meanwhile it need only be remarked that its credibility is at least not shaken by many of the objections which have been urged against it.⁴ If the Gospel narratives are to be believed, the action,

¹ Cf. Ebrard, *Gospel History*, E.T., p. 446 ; Godet, *Com. on St. John*, E.T., iii. p. 282. O. Holtzmann's theory of the Resurrection, as will be seen later, turns on the very point that the tomb was Joseph's (*Leben Jesu*, p. 392). A. Meyer's conjecture (*Die Auferstehung*, p. 123) that the tomb was a chance, deserted one, not only contradicts the evidence, but is out of harmony with St. Mark's narrative of the loving care shown in Christ's burial. The circumstance that St. John gives the proximity of the tomb as a reason for the burial (xix. 42) in no way contradicts the ownership by Joseph.

² *Ut supra*, p. 51.

³ Matt. xxvii. 62-9 ; cf. xxviii. 4, 11-15.

⁴ See these in Meyer's *Com. on Matthew*, *in loc.*

teaching, and miracles of Jesus—including the Resurrection of Lazarus¹—had made a deep impression on the authorities. Especially had the events of the past week stirred them to the depths.² Had they not on the previous night condemned Jesus for a blasphemous claim to Messiahship? Had not mysterious words of His about the building of the temple in three days been quoted against Him?³ Had the betrayer dropped no hints of sayings of Jesus in which, repeatedly, He had spoken of His being put to death and rising again the third day?⁴ If such things came to the ears of the chief priests and Pharisees, as it is implied they did, do they not furnish sufficient motive for what followed? Herod's conscience-stricken thought about Jesus, that He was John the Baptist risen from the dead,⁵ shows that such ideas as Resurrection were not far to seek. Even if the guilty consciences of those responsible for Christ's crucifixion prompted no such fears, was not the fact that the body had been committed to Christ's friends enough to create the apprehension that His disciples might remove it and afterwards pretend that He had risen? It was with this plea that they went to Pilate and obtained the watch they sought. To make security doubly sure, they sealed the tomb with the official seal. The sole result, under providence, was to afford new evidence for the reality of the Resurrection.

The events of the Resurrection morning itself now claim our attention. But a minor point already alluded to, connecting the Resurrection narratives with those just con-

¹ Cf. John xi. 47-57.

² Matt. xxi. 12-16, xxiii., xxvi. 3-5, etc.

³ Matt. xxvi. 61; Mark xiv. 58; cf. John ii. 18-22.

⁴ Matt. xvi. 21, xvii. 22, 23, xx. 18, 19 (so Mark, Luke).

⁵ Matt. xiv. 2; Mark vi. 14-16; Luke ix. 7-9. O. Holtzmann accepts and builds upon the genuineness of these sayings (*Leben Jesu*, p. 388). So earlier, *Renan*, in part (*Les Apôtres*, ch. i.).

sidered, viz., the *purpose* attributed to the holy women by two of the Evangelists¹ of *anointing the body of Jesus*, may first be touched on. In regard to it several difficulties (“contradictions”) have been raised.

There is first the supposed inconsistency between this intention of the women of Galilee and the fact recorded by St. John alone,² that the anointing had already been done by Joseph and Nicodemus, with lavish munificence, at the time of burial. The women were present at that scene.³ Why then should they contemplate a repetition of the function? Then contradictions are pointed out in the narratives of the Synoptics themselves, inasmuch as St. Matthew, from a motive which Professor Lake thinks he can divine,⁴ omits this feature altogether, while St. Mark places the purchase of the spices on the Saturday (“when the Sabbath was past”),⁵ and St. Luke on the Friday⁶ evening. Are these difficulties really formidable? In a fair judgment it is hard to believe it. The difficulty is rather with those who suppose that St. Matthew, with St. Mark’s Gospel before him, designedly omitted or changed this particular, or that St. Matthew and St. Luke, both copying from St. Mark, fell into contradiction with each other,⁷ and with their source. Grant independent narration, and the difficulties mostly vanish.

¹ Mark xvi. 1; Luke xxiii. 56, xxiv. 1.

² John xix. 39, 40. Strauss elaborates this objection. Renan finds no difficulty.

³ Matt. xxvii. 61; Mark xv. 49; Luke xxiii. 55.

⁴ *Ut supra*, p. 61. The motive, as stated above, is that St. Matthew presupposes an anointing by Joseph. He has also a guard at the tomb. A. Meyer (*Die Auferstehung*, pp. 108, 111) contents himself with the guard.

⁵ Mark xvi. 1.

⁶ Luke xxiii. 56.

⁷ St. Luke is thought to have been ignorant of, or to have momentarily forgotten, the Jewish method of reckoning days—a likely supposition (p. 59). Is it not St. Luke himself who tells us in verse 54: “And the Sabbath drew on” (Greek, “began to dawn”)?

With reference to the first point, it should be observed that, in strictness, St. John, in his narrative of the burial, says nothing of "anointing." The "mixture of myrrh and aloes" need not have been an ointment, and the language of the Gospel, "bound it [the body] in linen cloths with the spices,"¹ suggests that it was not.² But not to press this point, the circumstances have to be considered. The burial by Joseph of Arimathæa was extremely hurried. The permission of Pilate had to be obtained, the body taken down, linen and spices bought, the body prepared for burial and interred, all within the space of two or three hours—possibly less.³ It was probably cleansed, and enswathed within the linen sheet or bandages with the spices without more being attempted. There was plainly room here for the more loving and complete anointing which the devotion of the women would suggest.⁴ Probably this was intended from the first. It is not, at least, surprising that their affection should contemplate such an act, and that steps should immediately be taken, perhaps a beginning of purchases made, to carry out their purpose.

Next, with respect to the alleged Synoptic inconsistencies, Professor Lake being witness, St. Matthew's text, albeit silent, does not exclude, but presupposes, such an anointing—if anointing it was—as that described by St. John.⁵ Much less, surely, can it be held to exclude the intention, recorded

¹ John xix. 40. Luthardt comments: "Probably, of pulverized gum, myrrh and aloë-wood, that was strewn between the bandages" (*Com. in loc.*). St. Luke distinguishes, as a physician would, between "spices" and "ointments" (xxiii. 56).

² Cf. Latham, *The Risen Master*, pp. 9 (quoting Ellicott), 36-7.

³ The haste was due to the nearness of the Sabbath (Mark and Luke).

⁴ If, in modern custom, wreaths were placed on the grave of a friend in a hurried burial, would this preclude the desire of other mourners, who had not earlier opportunity, to bring *their* wreaths? or would they carefully reckon up whether enough had not already been done? Cf. Ebrard, *Gospel History*, p. 446.

⁵ *Ut supra*, p. 61.

in St. Mark and St. Luke, of the women to anoint—a circumstance probably left unnoticed because never carried into effect,¹ or because soon overshadowed by greater events. The point is very immaterial as to when precisely the purchases of spices were made. The “internal probability,” as Professor Lake would say, is that the purchases were commenced in the short space that remained before the Sabbath began, and were completed after the Sabbath ended. Most likely some women made purchases at one time, others at another. In stating, however, that “they returned, and prepared spices and ointments,”² St. Luke is probably not intending to fix any precise time: perhaps had not the means of doing it. The next verse [“And on the Sabbath they rested, according to the commandment”] as the *μὲν* shows, and the R.V. correctly indicates, begins a new paragraph.

With the narratives of the wonderful events of the Easter morning, which are next to be considered, the core of the subject is reached. It is conceded on all hands that the Resurrection narratives present problems of exceptional interest and difficulty. It is not simply the so-called “discrepancies” in the narratives which create the problems. These, as said before, may prove to be of minor account. What are they all compared with the tremendous agreement in the testimony which Strauss himself thus formulates: “According to all the Gospels, Jesus, after having been buried on the Friday evening, and lain during the Sabbath in the grave, came out of it restored to life at daybreak on Sunday” ?³ The problems arise from the fact that now, in the historical inquiry, an unequivocal step is taken into

¹ The reasons assigned by the critics are quite gratuitous. St. Matthew has in view, like the others, an anointing for burial (cf. the story of Mary of Bethany, chap. xxvi. 13. Strauss makes adroit use of this incident for his own purpose, *New Life of Jesus*, ii. pp. 397-8).

² Luke xxiii. 56. ³ *New Life of Jesus*, i. p. 397.

the region of the supernatural. Naturalism or supernaturalism—there is no escape from the alternative presented. There are consequently two, and only two, possible avenues of approach to these narratives, and according as the one or the other is adopted, the light in which they appear will be different. If they are approached, as they are by most “moderns,” with the fixed persuasion that there is, and can be, no resurrection of the dead, it is impossible to avoid seeing in them only a farrago of contradictions and incredibilities. For it is undeniably a supernatural fact which they record—the revivification of the Son of God, the supreme act of triumph by which the Redeemer of the world, through the might of the Father, resumed the life He had voluntarily laid down.¹ The element in which they move is the supernatural—the earthquake which opens a path from the tomb and scatters the guards; angelic appearances and messages; manifestations of the Risen Lord Himself. If nothing of this can be accepted, the narratives, with the faith which they embody, and the effects of that faith in history, remain an enigma, incapable, as the attempts at the reading of their riddle show, of solution.²

Here then, a choice must be made. If Strauss' dictum, “Every historian should possess philosophy enough to be able to deny miracles here as well as elsewhere,”³ is accepted, it becomes an insult to intelligence to speak of the narratives as evidence of anything. If, on the other hand, with scope for the discussion of details, the presence

¹ John x. 17, 18; cf. Matt. xx. 28, etc.

² Justly has Prof. F. Loofs said: “He who has never felt that, with the message, ‘Christ is risen,’ something quite extraordinary, all but incomprehensible to natural experience, has entered into the history of the world, has not yet rightly understood what it is to preach the Risen One” (*Die Auferstehungsberichte*, p. 7).

³ Quoted by Godet, *Com. on St. John*, iii. p. 323.

of the supernatural in the heart of the narratives is frankly acknowledged, harmony speedily begins to manifest itself where before there was irreconcilable confusion. As R. H. Hutton, a man of no narrow intellect and a cultured judge of historical evidence, puts it: "The whole incredibility which has been felt in relation to this statement [the Lord's Resurrection] arises, I imagine, entirely from its supernatural and miraculous character. . . . A short statement of how the matter really stands will prove, I think, that, were the fact *not* supernatural, the various inconsistencies in the evidence adduced of it would not weigh a jot with any reasonable mind against accepting it."¹

It is in this spirit that the discussion of the Resurrection narratives will be approached in succeeding papers. The evidence will be taken as it is given—not with the *a priori* demand for some other kind of evidence, but with the aim of ascertaining the value of that actually possessed. It will be fully recognized that, as before allowed, the narratives are fragmentary, condensed, often generalized,² are different in points of view, difficult in some respects to fit into each other, yet generally, with patient inspection, furnishing a key to the solution of their own difficulties—receiving also no small elucidation from the better-ordered story of St.

¹ *Theol. Essays*, 3rd Edit., p. 131. The whole essay should be consulted.

² In illustration of what is meant by "generalizing," the following may be adapted from Ebrard (*Gospel History*, pp. 450-1). A friend is at the point of death. On returning from a journey, I am met in succession by different persons, one of whom tells me of his illness, two others inform me of his death, while a fourth gives me a parting message. In writing later to an acquaintance, I state briefly that on my way home I had met four friends, who had given me the particulars of his illness and death, and conveyed to me his last dying words. Of what interest would it be to the recipient of the letter to know whether all the friends came together, or separately, which came first and which brought the message? In the same way, it mattered little to the readers of the Synoptic Gospels to know whether the women all went together to the grave, or whether one went before the rest, etc. Yet in this lies most of the difficulty.

John. In contrast with the extraordinary treatment accorded to them by the newer school, the study, it is hoped, will do something to create or strengthen confidence in their credibility.

JAMES ORR.

THE PARABLE OF THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD.

THIS parable, as we now have it, is enclosed within two texts which form, as it were, the title and the conclusion. They are Matthew xix. 30 : *But many shall be last that are first, and first that are last* ; and Matthew xx. 16 : *So the last shall be first, and the first last*. That the words in these two verses mean precisely the same thing is obvious, though supposed differences between the two have not infrequently been suggested. Words to the same effect occur in Mark ix. 35, x. 31, Luke xiii. 30 ; in each case it can be shown that the connexion is the same as in the verses before us ; this applies also to their occurrence in the *New Oxyrhynchus Sayings* ; that the saying in question concludes with these words " shows that the speaker is discouraging undue confidence in reference to the final award."¹ That in the Matthaean passages this meaning is present is certain, only it is felt that here they have a further meaning, and express in very pregnant manner the teaching of the parable we are about to consider. Allen, in his recent admirable commentary on St. Matthew's Gospel, says : " The connexion of this clause (xix. 30) with the preceding is obscure in Matthew and in Mark. It would seem that the πολλοί must refer to Christian disciples. All will inherit life everlasting, but many who are now first shall then be last. . . . The ambiguity lies in the ' first ' and ' last. ' Does He mean,

¹ Swete in the *Expository Times*, xv. p. 492.