

of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear,' and then comes harvest. The more we read of Christ, the more we are inclined to repose absolutely on His judgment; the more exactly we can place ourselves in His point of view, the surer we are that our point of view is right. It is not so much that we trust Him because He is God or the Son of God. Even before we have come that length, He seems to us trustworthy. Judging Him just by our ordinary standards, He impresses us as being the absolute truth. No mind ever was so well balanced as His; none so free from passion, prejudice, narrowness, one-sidedness. His judgment seemed like the going forth of rays of light. And when to this we add His perfect moral life, we are constrained to say, Here is the absolutely true life and thought. And we fall back upon Him in all things. We believe in God because He believed in God. And we believe in Him because He believed in Himself. And we believe in the destiny of mankind now that He has come into it, because He had great hopes of it, and looked forward to a great harvest of the seed which He sowed.

2. *And when is the harvest to be?* The answer is, when the fruit is ripe, when it offers itself as the full ripe corn in the ear. Not a moment is to be lost; from the time when the seed is sown it begins to grow; and as soon as it has done growing the sickle is put to it, and it is gathered in. And so, too, we each of us have been sent into the world to ripen for eternity; our whole life is but the time between sowing and ripening. And as soon as ever we are ripe, God puts in His sickle and gathers us.

Sometimes the young and tender plant shows all

its fruit, and He sees all its possibilities, accepts graciously unfulfilled intentions, and garners the bare promise of a glorious summer. But there are those who bring forth fruit in old age; and not till they have finished all their course does He take them into His arms and reap the shock of corn fully ripe. And we may rest assured that the great harvest of the world will be reaped by the same command, when the hour of its full fruitage shall have struck. He waits patiently. Henceforth He expects. He will see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied.

The harvest of the world may be yet far off, but in our own selves it is always near. And even the former can be hastened. Do not let us read this parable, when it speaks of the blade, the ear, and the full corn, as meaning that the growth of the kingdom is under fixed unalterable laws like those of nature, which we can do nothing to control, or vary, or hasten. Do not let us suppose that the parable is the first page in the literature of evolution. We begin to be afraid of what is called Law. Law threatens to push God from His throne, and the conscious freedom of the human mind from her seat. No; with God's help we have the harvest of the world in our own hands.

And youth and beauty die.
So be it, O my God, Thou God of Truth:
Better than beauty and than youth
Are Saints and Angels, a glad company;
And Thou, O Lord, our Rest and Ease,
Art better far than these.
Why should we shrink from our full harvest? why
Prefer to glean with Ruth?¹

¹ Christina G. Rossetti, *Sweet Death*.

Recent Foreign Theology.

The Fourth Gospel.¹

THIS elaborate work, extending over five hundred large octavo pages, is devoted to an investigation of the Fourth Gospel as a source of the history of Jesus. The conclusion is that the fourth is of great value for the history of Jesus, that in some respects it is

¹ *Das Johannes-Evangelium, als Quelle der Geschichte Jesu.* Von Friedrich Spitta. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht; Glasgow: P. Bauermeister. M.15.

of a higher value than the Synoptic tradition. This conclusion is the outcome of a prolonged, minute, and searching analysis of the phenomena presented by the Fourth Gospel as it stands in the N.T. It is a book of great learning and ingenuity, and is of the highest interest. At the outset, greatly to the convenience of the student, Dr. Spitta gives the concrete result of his analysis. There is a new translation of the whole Gospel. First in large type, and at the top of the page,

there is a translation of the *Grundschrift*, the original document, as Dr. Spitta has found it out of the analysis of the Gospel. A dividing line across the page separates the *Grundschrift* from the additions made by the editor of the Gospel. These additions of the *Bearbeiter* are divided into reflexions of the editor and into additions taken out of other literature within his reach. Each section has references to the detailed discussion in the following pages, so that the student can easily refer from the distinction drawn between *Grundschrift*, reflexions, and other additions to the discussion which seeks to justify the distinction. To prepare the student for the arduous labour of the detailed analysis of the whole Gospel, the author sets forth an analysis of the last chapter, which he regards as an appendix to the whole. He leaves undecided many questions regarding the time, place, and circumstances of the writing of the appendix. But apart from these questions the same features which characterize the whole Gospel appear in the appendix. He is of opinion that this chapter may favourably illustrate the method and results of his analysis, and may justify its principles. He gives twenty pages, then, to the analysis of this chapter, and on this scale the student can more easily form an estimate of the value of the critical method of the author. One general thought occurred to us as we read the interesting discussion, and it is of a general kind. If an editor of an unpublished work wishes to insert sentences or paragraphs into a writing, he will take good care to make the junctions as easily and artistically as possible. He will leave no abruptness to mar the juncture; he will write in the same style, and leave no roughness to call attention to what he inserts. The original writer might well leave inconsistencies, discrepancies, or differences of style in his writing; an editor would be carefully consistent. We are not speaking at present of editorial notes inserted at the bottom of the page, or written on the margin of the MSS. These stand in a different category. But when the author of this volume discriminates between the *Grundschrift* and editorial additions, what is the ground of the distinction? It is simply apparent differences in attitude, point of view, or theological position, just in those very things where a careful editor would take care to leave no difference.

Is the Fourth Gospel a unity? Many have found it to be so. But it is too large a question to

be adequately discussed here. Most students are acquainted with the attempt of Wendt, and some have read the two works of Wellhausen on the Fourth Gospel, published in 1907 and 1908, which, in the drastic manner characteristic of him, reopened the whole discussion. He found that the Fourth Gospel was of no value as a source of the history of Jesus. Spitta, after an analysis much more detailed, has come to a contrary conclusion, which conclusion is set forth in this volume.

All students will carefully consider the contents of the volume with the respect due to the eminence of the writer, and to the importance of the subject. Whether they agree, or whether they differ, they will greatly gain from the study of the book. It is always an advantage to study careful work, and to weigh the arguments of a great scholar. And Dr. Spitta is a great scholar, and is a man thoroughly in earnest in the pursuit of historical truth. As we read through his book, we cannot help thinking that there is something subjective and arbitrary in his ways and actions. For instance, in his analysis of the twenty-first chapter, he lays great stress on the passage, 'This is now the third time, that Jesus was manifested to the disciples, after that he was risen from the dead.' This causes him to inquire as to the other times to which the Evangelist refers. In the twentieth chapter there are three appearances, one to Mary, one to the disciples when Thomas was absent, and one when he was present. He controverts the opinion that the appearance to Mary did not count, and gives an elaborate proof that women were disciples. Having excluded the reference to the appearances in the twentieth chapter, what remains? This—there is the saying in the second chapter, 'This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory,' and the saying in the fourth chapter, 'This is again the second sign that Jesus did, having come out of Judæa into Galilee.' He comes to the conclusion that the reference is to these two. But in order to reach this conclusion he has to eliminate from the text the words, 'After that he was risen from the dead.' It becomes no longer a sign done by the risen Saviour. It is only a part of the earthly ministry. Having eliminated the reference to the resurrection from the text, he finds a suitable place for what he considers relevant in the story, and gives an interesting and ingenious explanation on which we do not dwell. Is it true criticism thus to eliminate from the text a sentence which is quite con-

gruous with the context? Why lay so much stress on the phrase, 'This is now the third time,' and eliminate altogether another part of the same sentence? Does not the whole sentence stand together? and if one part be doubted, on what ground is it to be regarded as doubtful?

Reading slowly through the whole discussion, we find illustrations of the same method of procedure. Sometimes, indeed, there are many happy illustrations of the difference between words attributed to Jesus, and comments by the author on them. It is a well-known feature of the Fourth Gospel that it is difficult to say when the words of Jesus end and the reflexions of the writer begin. This is a feature recognized more or less by all commentators on the Gospel. It is rather a long step to pass from that to the position taken up by Dr. Spitta. The reflexions and the theological statements are sharply distinguished from the supposed statements of the original writer, and they are attributed to the editor. The reasons assigned for the distinction vary. Sometimes a difference of attitude is the ground assigned, sometimes a difference in theological position, and again the difference is one of phraseology. As we read page after page of the skilful exposition, and note the fertility of resource, and the unflinching ingenuity of the analysis, we are almost persuaded. Yet we are constrained to ask, Do editors act after that fashion? Is it reasonable to single out one feature of a narrative, lay stress on it, and make it the dominating and decisive feature of the whole, and compel all other statements to agree with it, and if they differ, to treat them as the work of another hand? This is really what is done in the present volume. Into details we cannot enter, but there is nothing in the volume to make it impossible for us to hold that the parts attributed to the *Bearbeiter* were not written by the hand to which we owe the *Grundschrift*. The very thoroughness of the destructive analysis, and the vigour with which it is carried out, have somehow served to confirm the view of the essential unity of the book.

Having with great patience and with much skill completed the investigation of the text of the Gospel, Dr. Spitta in six sections summarizes the result of the investigation. In the first section he describes generally the *Grundschrift* and the *Bearbeitung*, and the main reasons why he has been driven to the distinction he has drawn between them. It is a most interesting section, partly

because of the literary and other merit of it, but also because it has a certain autobiographical interest. There are references to the processes and methods of historical criticism which are of general interest, and there is a recognition of what is possible regarding an historical document without the necessity of denying the authenticity of it. Among these possibilities he recognizes the awkwardness of the writer, the difference of various points of view from which he may view the facts, the manifoldness of personal and literary influences, also the changes of tendency and of view while the book was being written, and corrections made by the writer himself. All these may be present without interference with the unity of the work, or with its claim to be the work of one author. Of course he contends that these are not present in the Gospel. Rather he thinks that when all allowances are made for such things, enough of difference remains in the Gospel as a whole to justify his procedure and its outcome. In this section he has enabled the reader to judge the matter, and we leave it there.

Of great interest is the section which sets forth the course of the life of Jesus according to the *Grundschrift*. We should have liked to summarize this outline. It is a clear gain to the historical student, and we accept it as such. We should be inclined to make use of it as a fulcrum from which many things might be moved away which have hindered the study of the Fourth Gospel. Of interest also is the section which sets forth the distinction of the course of the life of Jesus as set forth in the *Grundschrift* from that set forth in the *Bearbeitung*, and from that set forth in the Synoptics. The differences are many, and amount, in the view of the author, to clear contradictions. It is impossible to enumerate them. But it comes out in the course of the discussion that the Synoptic traditions are due to dogmatic prepossessions, and are not historical. In all cases of difference the verdict is given in favour of the *Grundschrift*. When it is set free from the additions and reflexions of the editor, the *Grundschrift* is not lacking, we are told, in the intuitive insight, in the freshness of colour, and in the vividness of delineation so frequently denied to the Fourth Gospel and ascribed to the other three. Of quite special interest and importance is the section on the discourses and teaching of the *Grundschrift* in contrast to and in relation to those of the *Bearbeitung* and the

Synoptics. The difference between them relates both to form and to content. Contrary to the usual opinion that Jesus' method of teaching, as shown in the Synoptics, is historical, and that in the Fourth Gospel it is mediated through the expression and mode of view of John, the opinion of our author is rather the reverse. There is much said of a noteworthy kind in this section. But to deal adequately with it would take many pages, and we must content ourselves with calling attention to it and its importance. Finally, there is a discussion regarding the author of the *Grundchrift* and the time of its composition, and also a section on the literary characteristic of the *Grundchrift*.

The work, taken altogether, both negatively and

positively, is of the highest importance in the study of this great book of Scripture. No doubt it raises more questions than it settles. It raises in drastic fashion the question of the unity of authorship, and those who would still maintain that unity must reckon with the arguments of the author. On the other hand, the view that there is in this Gospel the work of an eye-witness has received unexpected corroboration. True, this is confined to the *Grundchrift*; yet that is an advance on the view that the Fourth Gospel contains no source for the history of Jesus. On any view this is a book with which scholars will have to reckon.

JAMES IVERACH.

Aberdeen.

Entre Nous.

Offer of Prizes.

Eight prizes are offered as follows:—

For the best anecdote illustrating any text of Scripture—

1. From Biography.
2. From History.
3. From Personal Experience.

For the best illustration, not an anecdote, of any text of Scripture—

4. From Nature or Science.
5. From Art or Industry.
6. From Human Life.
7. From Literature.
8. For the best illustration in verse of any text of Scripture.

In every case the source of the illustration must be stated fully (author, vol., page) and the quotation must be made exactly.

These eight prizes will be awarded in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for March 1911 for illustrations received by the 10th of January.

Another award will be made of eight prizes in THE EXPOSITORY TIMES for June 1911 for illustrations received before the 10th of April.

The prizes offered are—

Any volume of the *Encyclopædia of Religion and Ethics*, together with the right to purchase the rest of the volumes at a quarter less than the published price, namely, 2 rs. instead of 28s. net.

Or—

Any four volumes of the *Great Texts of the Bible*.

Or—

Either volume of the *Dictionary of Christ and the Gospels*.

Or—

The single-volume *Dictionary of the Bible*.

Or—

Any four volumes of the 'Scholar as Preacher' series.

Or—

Any two volumes of the 'International Theological Library' or of the 'International Critical Commentary.'

Those who send illustrations should say which offer they prefer if successful. Those who send more than one illustration should name more than one volume or set of volumes in case they should be awarded more than one prize.

Initials only, or *nom de plume*, will be given in the report if that is preferred.

Who's Who.

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