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NEGATIVE ELEMENTS IN RECENT LIVES OF CHRIST
AND THEIR RESULTANT PROBLEMS.

A Thesis Submitted in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Sacred Theology

by

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To

LOUIS MATTHEWS SWEET

who has guided me into a more intimate
knowledge of the life of Jesus, the Christ,
this thesis is gratefully dedicated.

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I. INTRODUCTION.

Comparatively speaking the biography of Jesus was rarely attempted prior to the nineteenth century, and even during its first half. There were but few who ventured to fill up the parsimonious yet graphic outline of the life of Jesus as given us by the Evangelists with material derived from contemporary history and literature. The reverence inspired by the life of Jesus as He has been portrayed to us as the Son of God deterred students from treating it like the lives of ordinary human heroes and great men. This was not entirely an advantage for it hindered the Church in obtaining a life-like portrait of her Redeemer and left the Gospels in some directions comparatively unexplored and imperfectly understood compositions. The remarkable activity during the last century in writing lives of Christ has resulted in a very serious scrutiny and microscopic analysis of the four Gospels, and also in a more vivid knowledge of the actual personality of Jesus Christ. No other biography has been subjected to such a test of fire and light, and, one is constrained to believe, no other could have come forth as unscathed as this one has.

But while there has been this great benefit there has been a certain degree of disadvantage connected with this new zeal in rewriting the biography of the Man of Nazareth. The endeavor has too often tempted and intensified the preconceptions of the would-be biographer and inflamed his fancy. His task has been to fill up the canvass upon which the Evangelists have described only the sharp but expressive

outlines of that central Figure upon which Christendom rests and around which human history gathers; and in attempting to accomplish it he has drawn upon his imagination and constructive talent --- doubtless sometimes unwittingly --- full as much as upon his learning and common sense; and one wonders whether the Evangelists, were they permitted to return to the earth for a visit, would recognize their Figure with its modern features and coloring.

These biographies in their approach and interpretation cover almost as wide a range as the vagaries to which humanity is subject; so much so that one feels that surely the limit of the imagination has been reached and that so far as they are concerned "there is no new thing under the sun." They come from the pen of men in many lands, from clergymen and laymen, from men within the Church and without, from believers and from unbelievers. They range from those which are purely devotional --- to the exclusion of the critical--- to those which conclude that the Christian faith is the product of the early Church and Jesus but an imaginary figure created to crystallize and sponsor the core of that faith. Included between these extremes are those which accept literally the Gospel narratives and at the same time recognize in them very definite problems toward which a reasonable approach is sought; those which treat this biography the same as that of any ordinary man; those which treat it from a purely literary standpoint; and also those which in reconstructing it will admit only the purely natural, entirely excluding the supernatural.

It is also to be noticed that much of the modern in-

terpretation of the life of Jesus has been included in works which are, more accurately speaking, introductions to the Gospels and books on New Testament criticism. No attempt has been made to bring them within the scope of this survey; the field is too large.

With regard to the method of this paper it should be said that the plan has been to select from the wealth of biographies at hand a small group which would be representative of the whole, and give these more detailed attention than would be possible with the larger number. While examination has been made of the biographies in their entirety, detailed consideration will be given only to their treatment of those portions of the narratives which deal with the birth and resurrection of Jesus. The justification of this method lies in the fact that in this way it has been possible to make the study with much greater care and that the narratives describing the birth from a virgin and the resurrection from the dead deal with Jesus Christ's entrance upon and departure from His earthly career. That which lies between in extremely important --- for therein is contained whatever service He rendered the race --- but in great measure depends for our interpretation of it upon our attitude toward these two events just mentioned; if the supernatural has a place in them it is not out of harmony with His public ministry; denied in one place, it will seem inappropriate in another. His birth and resurrection are to Jesus' life what the shore towers are to the suspension bridge, from them His career suspends, and in the two fold conviction (a) that an interpretation of them is

an index to a logical and unified interpretation of the whole life of Jesus, and (b) that the treatment of these events by the biographer to whom reference will be made is indicative of their treatment of the entire life of Jesus, attention will not be given here to His ministry and death.

The birth and resurrection of Jesus are crucial events in His career not only because of their relationship to His earthly life but because they relate Jesus historically and spiritually. "It is a distinctive mark of the Christian religion that it blends together inseparably the historical and spiritual."⁽¹⁾ We think of Jesus today not only in relation to His earthly life but as the indwelling life of the individual soul and the Church. "It is evident that the connection between the historical and the spiritual elements in Christianity is established in a series of unprecedented physical events. The mysteries of the Incarnation, the Resurrection, and the Ascension are essentially transitional and connective events, bringing together and uniting the historical and the spiritual elements in the Christian religion. These alleged events bring Christianity under observation by the scientific mind, and dictate in a measure our mode of procedure in vindication of its rationality."⁽²⁾

The central purpose of this study has been to discover and bring to the surface those problems, in connection with the birth and resurrection of Jesus, which are developed and left unsolved by the biographer who departs from the literal record and evident belief of the Evangelists; problems which

(1) Forrest: "THE CHRIST OF HISTORY AND EXPERIENCE" p 3.
 (2) Sweet: "THE VERIFICATION OF CHRISTIANITY" p 104.

come into being because of that very departure and, here again, it may be said that, in the main, these same problems arise in connection with the whole life of Jesus, and not only in association with His advent and exodus which are merely the integral termini of His earthly career. Emphasis must be placed upon the fact that these events are so closely related that the emerging problems are almost identical, dealing chiefly with three basic factors; the origin and acceptance of the Gospel accounts, the person and work of Jesus Himself, and the integrity of the documents.

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This bibliography must necessarily differ from that usually associated with a thesis for it forms the very subject matter of the discussion. It must be longer and given in more detail than ordinarily that one may indicate the range of the field and have a basis for the selection of a

smaller group for minute study. As typically representative of this large field of works on the life of Jesus Christ and yet outstanding among them may be selected the works of Keim, Farrar, Geikie, Edersheim, W. R. Nicoll, Beyschlag, Sanday, Rhes, G. A. Barton, A. F. Irvine, Klausner, J. Middleton Murry, David Smith, Warschauer, and Case.

A word should be said in defense of the selection of these men as representative of the larger group and at the same time qualified to write with some authority on the life of Jesus. Let it be noted first that they represent a cross section of the field of modern Christological literature. In time they range from Keim, whose work one thinks of as epochal in this sphere, to the present; they represent both European and American scholarship; they write from the viewpoint of both the clergyman and the layman; the Christian and the Jew, the believer and the unbeliever, the protagonist and the skeptic; their interpretations cover the field from the liberal to the conservative, and both in the extreme.

To refer to them individually for a moment: Keim studied in Tubingen and Bonn, and was Professor of Theology in the University of Zurich. His work on the life of Jesus attracted unusual attention and in large measure has been responsible for the increased interest in this study. Farrar had been a Fellow in Trinity College, Cambridge, and at the time of his writing was Master of Marlborough College and Chaplain in Ordinary to the Queen. He was also the author of a number of works on the career and character of Jesus. Edersheim was a Jew who had been converted to Christianity and his volumes reflect his unusually intimate knowledge of Jud-

ism, its thought and literature. Previous to the writing of these volumes he had been the Grinfield lecturer on the Septuagint in the University of Oxford. W. R. Nicoll was editor of the "Expositor" and "The Expositor's Bible" and also the author of "The Church's One Foundation," "The Key of the Grave," and various biographical works. Beyschlag writes as Professor of Theology at the University of Halle. At the time of his writing Sanday was Lady Margaret Professor and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, Honorary Fellow of Exeter College, Fellow of the British Academy and Chaplain in Ordinary to the King. Rhees wrote from the chair of New Testament Interpretation in the Newton Theological Institution. G. A. Barton was formerly Professor of Biblical Literature and Semitic Languages in Bryn Mawr College and is now Professor of Semitic Languages in the University of Pennsylvania and Professor of New Testament Literature and Language in the Divinity School of the Protestant Episcopal Church in Philadelphia. Alexander H. Irvine is the author of "My Lady of the Chimney Corner," "Souls of Poor Folk," and other works. Klausner has a well earned reputation as a writer, historian, and leader of thought in Zionist circles, to which cause he is devoting his life. A learned and orthodox Jew, he was born in Russia and from 1904 to 1919 occupied various academic positions in Odessa. Since 1920 he has been in Palestine where he is professor in the new Hebrew University of Jerusalem. The book under consideration here was written primarily for the Jew, not for the Christian. He is also the author of "The Messianic Idea in Israel" in three volumes and "This

History of Israel" in four volumes. J. Middleton Murry is not a professor of divinity and makes no pretense to write as a theologian. The author of a number of works and the editor of "The Atheneum" he writes purely from the view point of the literary critic. David Smith was formerly Professor of Theology in the McCrea-Magee College, Londonderry, and is now Professor of New Testament Criticism and Interpretation in the Presbyterian College, Belfast. In addition to the three books just mentioned above, he has written "The Life and Letters of St. Paul," "The Art of Preaching," "The Unwritten Sayings of our Lord" and "The Feast of the Covenant." Warschauer is also the author of "Jesus: Seven Questions," "The New Evangel," "What is the Bible?" and "Problems of Immanence." Case is a member of the department of New Testament Literature and Interpretation in the University of Chicago and has also written "The Authority of the Spirit in the Religion of Paul," "The Book of Revelation," "The Evolution of Early Christianity," and "The Social Origins of Christianity."

III. THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

A. Various Interpretations. Assuming for a moment the historicity of Jesus of Nazareth and a reasonable degree of trustworthiness in the narratives, to both of which questions some attention will be paid later in this study, one is reminded in any examination of the records of Jesus' life of the question once asked by His disciples, "What manner of man is this?" We have no indication that they ever doubted but that He was a man and this in spite of the fact that there was the recurring conviction that He must be more. Though "the look in His face, the tone in His voice, the work of His hands, constantly startled them, --- made their hearts burn, and called them to reverence and homage,"⁽³⁾ --- yet they felt that He was a man of like passions with them and very strongly recoiled at His own suggestions of His death. Though there was an infinite separateness between them He was near them. Though often His questions would humble them and reveal the depth of their ignorance, and even confound those who were unsympathetic, they felt almost on a level with Him and, doubtless, frequently in their thoughts associated Him with that family in Nazareth with whom He spent His boyhood. It follows, then, that there must have been a time at which and a manner in which Jesus made His advent into the world. And since there never has been any popular tendency to think of Him as having first appeared in life as a full grown man, we think of Him as having been born into this world as an infant. The question which then confronts one is as to the

(3) Nicoll, pp.2-3.

nature of that birth; was it natural and normal, comparable to that of ordinary members of the race, or did it include the supernatural? And if the latter, how and in what respects did the advent of Jesus involve the supernatural? It is not necessary here to do more than call attention to the fact that all during its history a great portion of the Church has accepted very literally the canonical birth narratives; has believed and taught that Jesus "was conceived by the Holy Ghost" and "born of the Virgin Mary." But even a superficial examination of the Christological literature of the last half century reveals the fact that there is no unanimity on this subject. Opinion is as diverse as human nature is varied.

1. Liberal Interpretations. A survey of this field naturally starts from Keim who opened a new era of investigation and interest here. He draws attention to the fact that while little is said in the New Testament about the parents of Jesus yet His Davidic descent --- which, in addition, Jesus claimed for Himself --- is emphasized and established by tracing it through Joseph. At the same time one must admit that Jesus must have come of a good family for no moral taint is ever charged against Him.(4) Undoubtedly the people of His day actually believed Him to be Joseph's son. But an ordinary birth did not appear as sufficient to account for Jesus' unusual personality and so there was developed the story of a supernatural birth, an idea which did not have strong support until the middle of the second century; for the Mat-

(4) Keim, II, 32-38.

thaeon and Lucan accounts must be post-Apostolic and post-Pauline, "the latter, if only for this reason, that Paul and the rest of the New Testament have as yet no inkling of a miraculous birth of Jesus." (5) The Evangelists themselves originally thought of Jesus as Joseph's son; from this conception there developed the idea of His being a product of the Holy Spirit, the creative Energy of God, just as, in the Gospel, John the Baptist and, to Paul, Isaac were the fruits of definite promises God had made. From this the third step was the development of the virgin birth itself. (6) But this virgin birth idea contradicts John's conception of the pre-existence, for it (the virgin birth) involves a new being, not just one in new form and clothes. (7) Furthermore, the idea of the virgin birth is contrary to all reason for the permanent arrangement of the universe includes ordinances which are sacred and divine; and which the virgin birth would disrupt. (8) And still further, this idea would deprive Jesus of His dower of manliness, and, on the other hand, could not secure that which is claimed for it, the desired result of sinlessness, for sin is inherited from the mother as well as from the father. (9) Much that we have in the accounts of the birth is just legend; and, because of its gradual development after Jesus had lived His life, belongs really more to the history of the Church than that of Jesus, as for example the omens which are represented to us as having preceded the birth, legends in which there are contradictions and which are very comparable with those which have not been considered canoni-

(5) Keim, II,45.

(8) II,53.

(6) II,47.

(9) 58.

(7) II,52.

cal.(10) Legends also are the stories which we have of events in connection with and following the actual birth, those which deal with the angels and shepherds, the Magi --- who actually came two years after the birth --- Simeon and Anna, the flight into Egypt and the Slaughter of the Innocents, about which we know absolutely nothing in profane history.(11)

All that we actually know is that in a pious Israelite home there was born a boy who was named Jesus and circumcised the eighth day.(12) "The birth of Jesus in Bethlehem is devoid of all adequate historical evidence" and the story about the census cannot be supported. The Evangelists thought that Jesus to fulfill certain prophecies about the Messiah had to be born in Bethlehem and accordingly so wrote.(13) As to the date of Jesus' birth Keim sets upon 8-6 B.C. with 4 B.C. as a bare possibility. As to the day or month we can know absolutely nothing.(14)

Warschauer's interpretation of the birth stories may be summarized somewhat as follows: Jesus was born into a world psychologically tainted by the idea that all famous men were the children of gods and women; hence it was a priori to be expected that similar legends about the birth of Jesus would spring up. Jesus had to be of Davidic descent and born in Bethlehem to be the Messiah and so the accounts have been shaped accordingly. "The Son of God" was a title originally indicative of adoption, but later made to mean sonship by generation. In this connection one must note that according to Codex Bezae and the Itala the voice at the baptism, using

(10) Keim, II,69.
(13) II,108.

(11) II,77-90.
II,124-128.

(12) II,96.

the words of Psalm 2:7, said "Thou art my son, This day have I begotten thee." Jesus certainly was the son of Joseph and the expression "son of Joseph AS WAS SUPPOSED" in Lk.3:23 is an obvious afterthought. The Gospel narratives are weakened by the fact that the genealogies are hopelessly irreconcilable and so useless. Not only are there mistakes in them but both give the genealogy of Joseph whereas if they had been trying to establish the virgin birth idea Jesus' genealogy should have been traced through Mary. In fact --- and here differing from Keim --- Jesus did not believe in His Davidic descent, which fact is proven by Mk.12:35-37.(15)

Matthew and Luke are very evidently trying to make Jesus a resident of Nazareth and yet born in Bethlehem, and in this connection they not only cannot agree but contradict each other as to Joseph's residence prior to the birth of Jesus. Matthew probably got his idea about Herod wanting to destroy Jesus from similar legends about Oedipus and Cyrus. Luke contradicts Matthew's account of Joseph's taking Jesus into Egypt and in so doing reveals a poor attempt to fulfill a misunderstood prophecy.(16)

The fact of the matter is that Matthew and Luke both really prove that Jesus was Joseph's son; see Lk.2:27,33,41, 43,48; 4:22; Mt.13:55 and also Jn.6:42; 1:45. The passage in Mk.3:20-35 proves the same fact from the lips of Mary, for a mother would not think of her child who was conceived by the Holy Spirit as out of His mind. Lk.2:34-5 and similar passages are later interpolations for the original Lucan nar-

(15) Warschauer, pp.14-16.

(16) pp.16-19.

rative paints a perfectly normal infancy and boyhood for Jesus. These things are just the natural embellishments of the birth of a most remarkable man.(17)

While impressing one as possibly the fairest among his nation in dealing with the life of Jesus, yet Klausner is a Jew not only by birth and religion but in his attitude and interpretation. As one would anticipate, his Jewish leaning results in a naturalistic interpretation. His study of the New Testament, Jewish and other literature of the time leads him to the opinion that Jesus was born from two to four years before the beginning of the Christian era. Like those to whom reference already has been made Klausner believes that Jesus was born in Nazareth and the statements of Matthew and Luke as to Bethlehem are due to their belief that as the Messiah He had to be born there. Joseph was His father just as surely as Mary was His mother. And only after Christians conceived the idea that Jesus was the Son of God did they introduce the conception of a virgin birth. This idea the Jews of Jesus day confirmed to the extent that they did not agree that He had a legitimate father, but in their legends went to the extreme of making Him the product of an illicit union. With this attitude of his race Klausner will not agree; he is convinced that Jesus was the legitimate son of Joseph and Mary.(18)

Both Joseph and Jesus were carpenters and the latter had at least four brothers. Apparently Joseph died while Jesus was yet young. It is interesting to note that Jesus never refers to a mother's affection --- not even in the Parable

(17) Warschauer: pp.23-26.

(18) Klausner: pp.229-231.

of the Prodigal Son --- while He has much to say about a father's love; so, thinks Klausner, it must be that His recollection of Joseph's affection was dearer to Him than that of Mary who so constantly misunderstood Him. Jesus would receive the regular education of the ordinary Jewish boy, and these years show their influence on Him in His later parables and other teachings where profuse and pointed illustrations are taken from nature. (19)

In general agreement with the opinions already expressed, Heitmüller (20) denies the trustworthiness of the infancy narratives and would refute the idea of the virgin birth. Alexander H. Irvine goes so far as to make no mention at all of the birth for in his opinion "the childhood of Jesus is veiled in mystery. Nothing is known of His youth." (21) So too, not only does J. Middleton Murry class the story as legend, which he denies, making Jesus the son of Joseph, but for reasons which are sufficient to himself he makes Jesus the youngest son in the family. Neither was Jesus of the royal line as He Himself knew as proven by His quotation of Psalm 110:1, which of course also shatters the legend of the birth in Bethlehem.

Much the same position is taken by G. A. Barton who classes those sections of the narratives which deal with the angels' song, Simeon and Anna, the Magi, the Flight into Egypt, and the Slaughter of the Innocents all as traditions which, with perfect propriety, we may doubt. Barton would

(19) p 235. (20) "JESUS" by Von W. Heitmüller, D. and Prof. der Theologie in Marburg, J. C. B. Mohr, Tübingen, 1913.
 (21) Irvine: p 21.

date the birth of Jesus at 8 B.C. because he thinks that the census, to which Luke refers, was taken then and because of the conjunction --- discovered centuries later by Kepler --- of Jupiter, Saturn, and Mars in the years 7-6 B.C. which he feels accounts for the "star" in the narrative of the visit of the Magi. He readily grants that Matthew and Luke teach that the Holy Spirit was the father of Jesus, but, at the same time, in rejecting the fact, claims that His divine sonship is not dependent upon His birth from a virgin.

A slightly different view is taken by G. H. Box (22) who holds that our canonical infancy narratives are based upon certain Jewish-Christian poems. They are not mere legends; instead Mt. I-II and Lk. I-II are a poetic idealizing of actual facts. The factual element includes all the important details in the narratives, the journey into Egypt and the like. The census is allowed but Luke has confused Quirinius with Saturninus. Most emphatically, and here opposed to Warschauer (page 27 above) there is no pre-Christian Jewish belief in a virgin birth, a point of testimony which will be of value later in this study.

Like J. H. Chambers Macaulay (23) W. F. Gess (24) allows the incarnation but at the same time takes a very unique and, it would seem, somewhat inconsistent position. He speaks of Jesus as the one only and eternally begotten Son of God, very God, consubstantial, co-eternal, and co-equal with God.

(22) "THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF JESUS" by G. H. Box, M.A., Lecturer in Rabbinical Hebrew, King's College, London; Hon. Canon of St. Albans; The Young Churchman Co. Milwaukee, 1916, pp.43-8.
 (23) "THE REALITY OF JESUS" by J. H. Chambers Macaulay, M.A., Geo. H. Doran Co., New York, 1923. (24) "THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF THE PERSON OF CHRIST" by W. F. Gess, Translated by J. H. Reubelt, D.D., Andover, W.F. Draper, 1870.

The incarnation requires that He was very man, born of a woman, completely human, growing through infancy and boyhood to full manhood; thus being truly God and man, Jesus is nevertheless one Person in two (human and divine) natures. But ordinary orthodoxy, while not denying, virtually ignores the proper humanity of Jesus, or at least underrates it. Orthodoxy has no real incarnation; rather what amounts to the idea of the Logos having united Himself in some mysterious manner with the man Jesus, thus giving us a man AND a God Who is certainly not the Christ of the New Testament. Common orthodoxy does not know what to make of the ὁ Λόγος σὰρξ ἐγένετο; hence Gess writes in the interest of the *Χενωσία* or the reality of the Incarnation.

But granting the incarnation at all, surely he takes entirely too low a view of the *Χενωσία*, a view which is really the outgrowth of German pantheism, according to which the Absolute develops itself in man and nature which, in turn, are reabsorbed into the Absolute. As illustrative of this position may be quoted three statements. The author speaks of "the eternal influx of life from the Father into the life of Jesus as suspended during the earthly life of Jesus." (25) "If while on earth Jesus had actually possessed His divine life as the Logos and had lacked it only as to His human nature this prayer (Jn. 17:5) would have been unintelligible." (26) "The self-divesting act of the Logos, suffering His eternal consciousness to be suspended in order to

(25) Gess: p 338.

(26) p 333.

regain it many months afterward as a human, gradually developing self-consciousness, at the same time laying aside His omniscience and eternal holiness, etc., etc." (27)

2. Conservative Interpretations. On the other hand Mr. T. H. Yardley (28) feels that we lack the manuscript evidence to justify the excision of the nativity narratives and that the fabrication of the two independent birth legends (as some would make them) is highly improbable. He is also convinced that in neither do we have any theological or ascetic coloring. Just because the virgin birth involves the miraculous is no warrant for its rejection, in direct opposition to the position taken by Keim, page 26 above. "Miraclesare but temporary manifestations in the limited life of man of the greater enfolding supernatural life.....however unchangeable nature may seem, man himself is free.....If this be true, how much truer must it be of God.....Detailed accounts of miracles are so inextricably woven into the very stuff of the Gospels, that we cannot get them out without rending the fabric of the message." (29) Neither can one argue from the much emphasized silence of Paul (as Keim above) on this subject for his chief interest lies in the Godhead as manifested by the Cross and Resurrection, being silent as to most of Jesus' life.

The same position as to the Apostle Paul is taken by Bishop Cooke (30) who points out that not only Paul but all the Apostles, as far as we have the record, dealt in their

(27) p 348. (28) "WAS CHRIST REALLY BORN OF A VIRGIN?" by T. H. Yardley, M.A., Milwaukee, Morehouse Publishing Co. (29) Chapter III. (30) "DID PAUL KNOW OF THE VIRGIN BIRTH?" by Bishop Richard J. Cooke, D.D., LL.D., Macmillan, N.Y.

preaching with the death and resurrection of Jesus, and not to any appreciable extent with His life. Furthermore, in the case of Paul since his ministry was to the Gentiles considerations of prudence would greatly restrain him. Referring to the whole conception of a virgin birth Bishop Cooke emphasizes how hard it was of comprehension when he speaks of Mary "not being able even to grasp the idea of soon becoming a mother"(31)

Passing to those still more decided in their acceptance of the virgin birth, one notes that F. Peirce Ramsay (32) declares in no uncertain terms that the Scripture beyond any doubt teaches the virgin birth. In the Old Testament, for example, Isaiah 7:14 surely means "a virgin of marriageable age" and Lk. 1:35 will not allow that the incarnation might have taken place without a virgin mother. One must not forget that, according to Jn. 5:18, it was Jesus' speaking of God as His "own Father" which aroused the Jewish hatred to flame. To Doctor Ramsay Galatians 4:4 means either one of two things: either that the man Christ is declared to have God for His father and a woman for His mother, or else the Eternal Son is represented as equipped for His soteriological work by the assumption of a woman's flesh and blood.

Attention has been paid to those who fail to see in Paul's writings any reference to the virgin birth and who would provide a reasonable explanation for this fact, favorable or unfavorable to the idea of a miraculous conception. Dr. James Orr (33) is sure that in Paul there are indications

(31) p 32. (32) "THE VIRGIN BIRTH" by F. Peirce Ramsay, Ph.D., Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1926.

(33) "THE VIRGIN BIRTH OF CHRIST" by James Orr, M.A., D.D., Prof. of Apologetics and Systematic Theology in the United Free Church College of Glasgow, Scotland, Scribners, N.Y. 1907.

of a knowledge of the virgin birth. His doctrine of the Second Adam would naturally involve a miracle of some kind in His birth and that such a miracle was actually accepted by Paul seems evident from the peculiarities of expression in his allusions to "Christ's entrance into our humanity." "It is first to be observed that, even were Paul's silence as great as is alleged, it would not justify the conclusion which the objectors draw from it. It is to be remembered that Paul is not in the habit of alluding to, or recalling, the incidents in Christ's life --- incidents which must have been perfectly familiar to him from the common preaching. His whole interest in the Epistles centers in the great facts of Christ's death and resurrection."(34) Turning to John's alleged silence for a moment, one cannot deny that John must have known about the accounts of Matthew and Luke before he wrote His Gospel, and his silence, therefore, amounts to corroboration, with which idea Keim, page 26 above, is not in accord.

So too, Clarence E. Macartney (35) is convinced that by the Gospel writers the historical evidence for the manner of Jesus' birth is set forth and accepted as adequate. In fact it must be accepted to enable one to understand the New Testament witness to Jesus' person. W. Robertson Nicoll is assured that Jesus was conceived by the Holy Spirit, saying: "This miraculous conception must form the beginning of any true estimate of the life of Christ."(36) It signifies that

(34) p 114. (35) "TWELVE GREAT QUESTIONS ABOUT CHRIST" by Clarence Edward Macartney, D.D., Fleming H. Revell, New York, 1923.

(36) Nicoll: p 14.

He was more than a man. To free the race from the heritage of evil Jesus Himself had to be free from evil and the virgin birth made possible this sinlessness on His part (which Keim denies, page 26 above). Again taking issue with Keim, page 26 above, who took the position that the virgin birth excluded John's teaching of the pre-existence, Nicoll declares that the miraculous conception does not include the idea that at the moment of conception Jesus came into being; in fact He had existed from all eternity and this was merely the mode of His manifestation.(37) Nicoll also accepts as historical the records dealing with the angels and the shepherds;(38) the visit of the Magi from the East, men who were looking for a deliverer, and who were favored with divine guidance, being led by a star;(39) and also the visit to Egypt which is another example of the guidance of God.(40)

Farrar accepts the whole account as recorded in the Gospels and feels that most likely Jesus was born in 4 B.C. but we cannot know anything definite as to either the month or day. "In the political condition of the Roman Empire, of which Judea then formed a part, a single whisper of the Emperor was sufficient to secure the execution of his mandates in the remotest corners of the civilized world. Great as are the historical difficulties in which this census is involved, there seem to be good independent grounds for believing that it may have been originally ordered by Sentius Saturninus, that it was begun by Publius Sulpicius Quirinus, when he was

(37) Nicoll: p 15.
 (39) p 17.

(38) p 16.
 (40) p 21.

for the first time legate of Syria, and that it was completed during his second term of office. In deference to Jewish prejudices, any infringement of which was the certain signal for violent tumults and insurrection, it was not carried out in the ordinary Roman manner, at each person's place of residence, but according to Jewish custom, at the town to which their family originally belonged."

The Gospels are always truthful and bear on each page that simplicity which is the stamp of honest narrative.

"There is no more decisive criterion of their absolute credibility as simple histories than the marked and violent contrast which they offer to all the spurious gospels of the early centuries, and all the imaginative legends which have clustered about them." Speaking of Mary's reticence to tell that which she alone knew about these matters Farrar says:

"The very depth and sacredness of that reticence is the natural and probable explanation of the fact that some of the details of the Saviour's infancy are fully recorded by St. Luke alone."(41)

In giving a reason for his acceptance and support of the Gospel account of the birth, Geikie feels sure that in an empire as large as the Roman a census could not possibly have been taken simultaneously everywhere, it must necessarily have been the work of years in successive provinces, which will allow us a margin in harmonizing the date of the birth of Jesus with that of the taking of the imperial census.(42) Herod would want to keep peace with his Jewish subjects so

(41) Farrar: I, 1-16.

(42) Geikie: I, 115.

undoubtedly the census was taken in the Hebrew way, hence it is reasonable to think of Jesus as having been born in Bethlehem. As nearly as we can determine this census was taken either in the close of 749 or the opening of 750 A.U.C.

There is no telling how long Joseph and Mary may have been in Bethlehem before the birth which took place somewhere between December 749 and February 750 A.U.C.(43) Luke's narrative by its very simplicity strikes one as the truth and Geikie therefore accepts as historical the accounts dealing with the shepherds and angels, magi and star, calling attention to the fact that while we usually think in terms of three magi yet we really do not know how many there were.(44)

David Smith not only accepts the virgin birth but also the previous revelation of it to both Mary and Joseph. He goes further, and points out that while out of the ordinary yet a virgin birth is really no more mysterious than any birth; and agrees with Nicoll (page 36 above), and so disagreeing with Keim (page 26 above), in the position that the virgin birth was necessary to purify the stream of heredity, for to effect its salvation the race must have a new Head, a second Adam. He makes the point that in Mt.1:20 the preposition ek is the distinct preposition of motherhood, therefore indicating that Jesus was the creation, not merely generation, of the Holy Spirit, the creative Energy of God, a fresh creation from the Divine Hand, and hence born sinless.

Our Gospels emphasize the statement that Mary "kept these things and pondered them in her heart" which would explain the fact that they are not more frequently referred to

(43) Geikie: I, 116-121.

(44) I, 123-124, 137-155.

in the New Testament. Doctor Smith feels that it may be entirely possible that Paul, for example, did not learn of the virgin birth until after the fall of Jerusalem in the year 70 A.D. He would explain the difference in the Matthaean and Lucan accounts by saying that Luke writes that which he had learned, directly or indirectly, from Mary while Matthew writes from the point of view of Joseph. Like Orr (page 35 above) and opposed to Keim (page 26 above) Smith argues that in view of John's writing later than Matthew and Luke and his evident purpose not to rehearse material already presented but rather to supplement the earlier Gospels, only mentioning what they do to elucidate or correct; his failure to deal in detail with the virgin birth must be construed as tacit approval of the accounts of Matthew and Luke. What impressed the writer as a very strong point is made when attention is called to the fact that Irenaeus, two centuries earlier than our earliest manuscript now extant, makes Jn. 1:12-13 read "them that believe in the name of Him Who was begotten not of bloods (mingled blood of human parents) nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of a man (husband) but of God"(45)

In dealing with this subject Rhees calls attention to the fact that there was much written about the early years of Jesus which shows an absolute misunderstanding of Him, as illustrated by the Gospel of Thomas, Pseudo-Matthew, and the like. How foreign this all is to the two chapters each of Matthew and Luke dealing with the birth! "The Apostles found no difficulty in recognizing the divinity and sinlessness of

(45) David Smith: "OUR LORD'S EARTHLY LIFE" pp.10-16.

their Lord without inquiring how He came into the world or how He spent His early years, it was what He showed Himself to be, not how He came to be, that formed their conception of Him," and hence the early chapters of Matthew and Luke cannot be classed with later legends. "Notwithstanding the attempts of Keim (page 27 above) to associate the narratives of the infancy in the canonical and apocryphal gospels, a great gulf separates them; on the one side there is a reverence and beautiful reserve, on the other indelicate, unlovely and trivial audacity."(46)

These two canonical accounts agree as to Bethlehem as the place of birth, Mary being the mother and Joseph the foster father, and Nazareth the later residence. Aside from this there are many differences. Some Bible students have been disturbed by the silence on the part of other New Testament writers but one must remember that to the Jew any familiar reference to Jesus would be a challenge to the honor of His home. "Moreover, as the knowledge of these wonders did not keep Mary from misunderstanding her son (Lk.2:19, 51) the publication of them could hardly have greatly helped the belief of others." Indeed the fact that Mary was so perplexed by Jesus looks as though until late in life she "kept these things and pondered them in her heart."

The teaching of the miraculous birth must not be construed as an attempt to exalt the virginity of Mary as in the apocryphal gospels for this is entirely foreign to Jewish sentiment and teaching, and furthermore the evidence of the

(46) Rhees: p 58.

New Testament is that Mary had other children born after Jesus. The big contribution of the Gospel narratives is that they show that Jesus began His earthly life in the absolute helplessness of infancy and grew through boyhood to manhood in such a normal way that His neighbors, dull in the things of the spirit, could not credit His exalted claims. Lk.2:40 and 52 show that Jesus had a normal boyhood as the later accounts show that His whole life was free from sin (Heb.4:15).

To refer to but two more writers on the birth of Jesus, Sanday admits with Keim (page 25 above) that Jesus passed for the son of Joseph and Mary, two peasants of Nazareth. He was referred to as such by the inhabitants of Capernaum (Jn.6:4, cf. 8:45) and Nazareth (Mk.6:3, Mt.13:55, Lk.4:23) and during His boyhood Jesus is so described by both His mother and the Evangelists (Lk.2:27,33,41,43,48). In Sanday's opinion both genealogies are traced through Joseph (so Warschauer, page 28 above). "Yet on the other hand, the same two Gospels, though differing widely in the details of the narrative, assert unequivocally that Joseph had no share in the parentage of Jesus, and that the place of a human father was taken by the direct action of the Spirit of God." Differences show that the two accounts are independent of each other, yet both converge at this point; that Christ was virgin born and the fact supernaturally announced beforehand, in one case to Joseph, in the other to Mary. "And when we turn to St. John we cannot but remember that the Gospel which records so frankly the Jews' question 'Is not this Je-

sus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?' if it nowhere refers directly to the virgin birth, yet goes further than any other Gospel in asserting the pre-existence of the Son as God with God."(47)

The sources from which this knowledge of the virgin birth was derived were undoubtedly private. We know more about that of Luke and "can rely upon it as a historical authority with greater confidence. We shall see that it is ultimately traceable to the Virgin herself, in all probability through the little circle of women who were for some time in her company." Sir William M. Ramsay is of the same opinion: "Luke gives, from knowledge gained within the family, an account of facts known only to the family, and in part to the Mother alone."(48) Mary very naturally would be slow, and then only in the confidence of intimate discourse, to tell these facts. And too, thinks Sanday, as opposed to Keim, page 26 above, we know that it, (the virgin birth) was accepted in the headquarters of Christianity by the middle of the century. Earlier than that it probably was not generally known for it was no part of the teaching of Jesus Himself, and the Gospels show their innate truthfulness in reflecting the general attitude of the public that Jesus was the son of Joseph. Possibly even some of the Apostles themselves were long ignorant of the fact of the miraculous birth. And when the information did come it probably was through women confidants of Mary, if not from Mary herself, for to quote Ramsay again: "If we are right in this

(47) Sanday: pp. 191-193.
IN BETHLEHEM?" p 79.

(48) Ramsay: "WAS CHRIST BORN

view as to Luke's authority, and as to the way in which that authority reached him, viz. by oral communication, it appears that either the Virgin was still living when Luke was in Palestine during the years 57 and 58....or Luke had conversed with someone very intimate with her, who knew her heart and could give him what was almost as good as first hand information. Beyond that we cannot safely go; but yet one may venture to state the impression --- though it may be generally considered fanciful --- that the intermediary, if one existed, is more likely to have been a woman than a man. There is a womanly spirit in the whole narrative, which seems inconsistent with the transmission from man to man, and which, moreover, is an indication of Luke's character; he had a marked sympathy with women."(49)

Sanday thinks that Luke probably received his knowledge through "one of the women mentioned in Lk.8:3 and 24:10; and as Joanna is the least known of the group, and therefore the most likely to drop out for any one not personally acquainted with her, perhaps we may say, by preference, through her." Jn.19:25 shows that the Virgin was thrown into contact with this group in which a sympathetic ear may have been found.(50) On the other hand, in Matthew "the curious gravitation of statement toward Joseph has a reason, but beyond this there is not much that we can say." We do not know the exact source of Matthew's narrative.

Turning his attention to the statement of Luke that Jesus was born in Bethlehem on the occasion of the census or

(49) Op. cit. p 88.

(50) Sanday: pp. 193-197.

enrolment of Quirinius and before the death of Herod and that because of their Davidic lineage Joseph and Mary had gone to Bethlehem, Sanday recognizes and answers the criticisms which are hurled against this part of the narrative. In the main they are: (a) We have no other evidence that Augustus ever ordered a general census. (b) Even if he did it is doubtful whether it would be carried out in a kingdom which possessed the degree of independence which Judea did. (c) If conducted in the Roman manner it would not have been necessary for Joseph to go to Bethlehem. (d) It is doubtful whether Quirinius was governor as early as the death of Herod. (e) We know of a census which Quirinius conducted in Judea in the year 6 A.D. so it appears that Luke is confused in his chronology. In answer Sanday reminds his reader that Luke speaks of the "FIRST" enrolment under Quirinius so he may also have had in mind that of 6 A.D. and yet not be confusing one with another. Following Ramsay, Sanday believes: (a) It is very probable that Augustus made periodic enrolments. We know that in Egypt these came every fourteen years. (b) It also seems likely that this would be a general policy, not confined to Egypt but applied to the whole empire, including Syria. (c) Though Herod in Judea enjoyed a great measure of independence, yet he was under the authority of Augustus and his position was so uncertain and threatened that he would likely make such an enrolment to please Augustus. (d) Though he would do this, he would temper the mechanics of it to Jewish tastes as much as possible, such as numbering the people by their tribes and families; this in contrast with the later census of 6 A.D.

taken the Roman way which caused armed resistance. (e) Quirinius may have held a temporary and extraordinary co-command in Syria while another was the regularly appointed governor.(51)

B. UNSOLVED PROBLEMS.

If the review of the modern lives of Christ which has here been made is at all a representative one it means that there is a prevailing tendency among modern writers --- and one presumes they but reflect the attitude of the still larger body of modern thinkers --- on the life of Jesus to rule out, in what appears to the writer an a priori and subjective way, all that includes the supernatural, and, consequently, to retain only the purely natural. If this tendency is in the ascendent then the great value of any such comparative study as has been here attempted lies in determining what problems this naturalistic interpretation of the birth of Jesus of Nazareth raises and leaves unsolved, especially those for which the Evangelists found solutions in their records of the birth. Some of them may be indicated.

1. The Idea of the Virgin Birth.

a. THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA. We have before us the fact that a great body of people in the last nineteen centuries have believed in the idea that Jesus was miraculously born of a virgin. Never before in the history of the world, so far as we know, was this believed or said about any human being. It is true that men once believed in beings who were the product of lustful sexual relations between male gods and women but nothing similar or comparable to the virgin

(51) Sanday: pp. 202-206.

birth idea has ever been held. The early Christians, whether of Jewish or Gentile extraction, would not naturally choose to give pictorial form to their belief in the deity of Jesus by the story of the virgin birth. The heathen myths dealing with the sons of the gods must have been in all their associations revolting to Christian feeling, and, while the Jew believed that the divine influence had participated in the birth of men like Isaac, Samson, and Samuel, the whole tendency of later Judaism was hostile to any such idea as the actual incarnation. Further, "there is no evidence to show that among the Hebrews of Jesus' time any general expectation existed that the Messiah was to be virgin born." The great prophetic text dealing with the virgin birth is Isaiah 7:14. "There is no evidence outside Matthew's Gospel that the passage from Isaiah had created such an impression. The interpretation must have been as original as the doctrine. The mere shock of surprise involved in a theory so alien to ordinary Hebrew thought as the virgin birth must have been a dash upon the white heat of enthusiasm hard to resist. It is very difficult to understand how any group of Jewish Christians could have been prevailed upon by the influence of a single text to formulate so novel, and, according to their ways of thinking, so forbidding, a doctrine as the virgin birth.....It is impossible, in the light of the facts fairly interpreted, to maintain that any one of them (the prophecies as to the birth of Jesus and referred to by the Gospel narrators) created the incident with which it is connected.....The correspondence between the life of Jesus and

the Old Testament was an afterthought, a part of his (the Evangelist's) interpretation; but the primary fact, the original dynamic of his discipleship, was simply Jesus Himself. He did not come to Jesus through the prophecies; he came to the prophecies through Jesus."(52) If the New Testament narratives are not to be credited one must show what ideas cherished in the Apostolic Church could have led to their invention. Paul and John have little if anything to say about a miraculous birth and yet very definitely teach the deity of Jesus which would seem to indicate that the birth narratives are no necessary outgrowth of one's belief in the deity of Jesus. In fact "it is easier to accept the evidence offered for the miracle than to account for the origin of the stories as legends. The idea of a miraculous birth is very foreign to modern thought; it becomes credible only as the transcendent nature of Jesus is recognized on other grounds. It may not be said that the incarnation required a miraculous conception yet it may be acknowledged that a miraculous conception is a most suitable method for a divine incarnation." (53) If such a birth was a fact that will account for the origin of the idea, but if not where did the idea have its origin? *Ex nihilo nihil fit*. The naturalistic interpreter has yet to satisfactorily answer this question.

b. THE EARLY ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA. While some difference of opinion exists as to just when this idea of the virgin birth of Jesus was accepted and taught by the Church yet it undoubtedly goes back to within a generation of the

(52) "THE BIRTH AND INFANCY OF JESUS CHRIST" by Louis Matthews Sweet, S.T.D., Ph.D., Westminster Press, Phila. 1906. pp.30-34
 (53) Rhees: op. cit. pp. 60-61.

death of Jesus, to a time when most likely there were some still living who had known Him in the flesh and therefore could contradict any mistaken ideas, if not to within a quarter century of His crucifixion. If this is true, the burden of proof would seem to rest upon the naturalist and require Him to explain how such a false idea could have gained general acceptance so close to the time when it is supposed to have taken place, and when there would still be living those who could from personal knowledge refute the false impression. One can easily understand how the imagination and legend can add to the halo of a heroic figure after the passing of a century or two, providing time for gradual accretion. The time limit will not allow this explanation in the birth of Jesus, where as yet the problem is unsolved.

c. THE WIDE SPREAD ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA. Furthermore, there is not only the fact of the early acceptance of the idea of the virgin birth of Jesus but also its very wide and almost universal acceptance among those who have been His followers. We believe that it can be established that the more active, missionary, propagating --- and therefore more vital --- element in the Church all during its history has both believed and taught that Jesus was miraculously born. This is not a matter of a few years but now of almost a score of centuries during which Christianity has enjoyed phenomenal growth in both numbers and geographical area embraced. One is loath to believe that this great superstructure has been erected upon a false conception. If it has been there is yet to be offered a satisfactory explanation of this unique phenomenon.

2. Jesus Himself.

a. HIS UNIQUE PERSONALITY. Attention has been directed earlier to Keim's explanation of the origin and acceptance of the idea of the virgin birth, that men saw in Jesus such a unique personality that they did not feel that an ordinary birth would explain His origin, and, so to rise above the natural, invented the idea of the conception by the Holy Spirit. One is delighted to find in one so severely hostile to the supernatural as Keim this tribute to the unique personality of Jesus; and while not admitting the suggestion that the virgin birth was an invention out of the whole cloth to explain the personality of Jesus, yet denying the virgin birth one is compelled to ask how Jesus, on the basis of a normal origin, is to be explained. "Now the same persons who have given us this incomparable delineation of the unique Christ have also given us the story of a life, the achievements and incidents of which harmonize perfectly with the character which they have portrayed. The life thus narrated is consonant in every particular with the recognized uniqueness of His character, work, and influence. They describe one who is shown to be by His experiences and His deeds such a One as is also indicated by the place He occupies and the influence He wields.....Into the structural framework of the life of Jesus the virgin birth perfectly fits. If it is an invention, it is a marvelously felicitous one."(54)

b. HIS SINLESSNESS. Practically unanimous is the opinion that Jesus lived a life free from sin, which, if a fact must have some adequate explanation. While there are

(54) Sweet: op. cit. pp.247-248.

some, like Keim, who feel that as long as Jesus had any blood connection with the race the virgin birth idea will not explain His freedom from hereditary sin, yet there are others who feel that the birth from a virgin was necessary for this very reason; that His appearance upon the earth --- the Incarnation --- was in its very nature exceptional and had to be so, for while He was to live and love among men and was to be made like unto them, there had to be the exception that, unlike them, He was to be without sin. Sinless nature is essentially outside the continuity of the species and "the element of unlikeness --- to the race --- must come from that to which it has itself affinity." If this new stream, this infusion, did not enter the person of Jesus at His birth when and where did it? One must not conclude that the miraculous birth idea is one drawn as a conclusion from the acceptance of the sinlessness of Jesus if we are to accept the testimony of Paul and John who very definitely teach the latter and make little, if any, reference to the former. While it is true that to some the virgin birth does not account for Jesus' ability to be and remain sinless yet for a large group it does; and it would seem incumbent upon the man who denies this unusual birth to reveal the secret of the integrity of our Lord's character.

c. HIS SAVIOURHOOD. Again, we believe it should be remembered when one denies the virgin birth that unless somewhere later in Jesus' life the supernatural is introduced and substituted --- and is this any easier of acceptance for the naturalist than the miraculous conception --- this life is a

purely natural one and Jesus is a mere man. This, in turn, limits man's salvation to that obtainable through culture and development alone, for the historic Jesus has been robbed of His unique eligibility to become man's Saviour and federal representative. Does this not involve the repudiation of sin in the historic use of the term as well as any hope of a vicarious atonement? In addition, there is the logical necessity of denying the resurrection, the second advent and the present priestly work of Jesus, as taught by the Church. It would seem then that the man who rejects the virgin birth of Jesus is placed in the dilemma of either limiting himself to whatever salvation for his soul he, by his own efforts, may achieve, or making possible and vivid by some other plan and in some other way the saviourhood of Jesus.

3. The Integrity of the New Testament Scripture.

Already it has been indicated that there can be no doubt but that the New Testament, as we now have it, includes very definite statements as to the virgin birth of Jesus. It has been possible for a great many men all during the history of the Church to accept without any mental reservation or equivocation the integrity and historicity of the New Testament narratives. It would therefore seem pertinent to suggest that before the idea of the virgin birth is definitely rejected that it should be realized that that rejection involves the destruction of any whole hearted confidence in the Apostolic writings. Not only would it be impossible to understand the witness of the New Testament to the person of Jesus without the miraculous conception --- for otherwise

how is He to be explained --- but the attitude of the Christian toward his Bible becomes wholly a subjective one, of acceptance or rejection, in which there is bound to be as much variation as there is divergence in human nature. If one cannot accept the testimony of the New Testament writers to the birth of Jesus how shall we establish a universally, or even widely, accepted norm by which we shall know what part of their writings to accept and what to reject; to determine that to which the faith of a sin-sick soul may cling for guidance and light?

IV. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

I. Various Interpretations. When one attempts a review and criticism of those sections dealing with the resurrection in modern lives of Christ it is found to be in a sense a much more limited task and for that very reason a more difficult one. A study of the discussion of the virgin birth reveals that modern biographers of Jesus have departed far from the original statements and understanding of the Gospel narratives and really give one a revamped Christianity. In this drifting away from the ancient moorings the outstanding characteristic is the repudiation of the supernatural. Postulating this, as many authors do, one finds in quite a number of the lives of Christ either no reference at all made to the resurrection or it is, with a sentence or two, arbitrarily ruled out as impossible because involving the supernatural. Purged thus of miracle and mystery the life of Jesus ends with His unfortunate death, His body lies mouldering in Palestinian soil, and for His immediate Apostles, as for us of nineteen centuries later, His only resurrection was in the fulfillment, in a very spiritual way, of His words "Lo, I am with you always."

1. Liberal Interpretations. There are those, however, who, although they relegate the Gospel narratives to the realm of unhistorical tradition, yet give detailed study to the belief in the resurrection of Jesus. Deserving of first place, from the standpoint of both the keenness of his study and the uniqueness of his interpretation, is Keim who is convinced that Joseph of Ramataim showed his love for Jesus by going to Pilate and securing permission --- probably

through a bribe --- to bury the body. Mark and Luke say nothing at all definite about the place where Jesus was buried. Even Matthew and John cannot agree for the former makes it in Joseph's sepulchre while the latter speaks of a garden. Most likely Matthew is right. In these accounts Nicodemus is entirely a fictitious figure. The body of Jesus was wrapped in linen but not embalmed; and it is entirely improbable that Pilate sealed the sepulchre; in fact there is much in the story which we must give up.(55)

A resurrection appears superfluous to Jesus, and yet the question as to it is as enigmatical as it is momentous. "The resurrection of Jesus is one of the best attested incidents in the New Testament; the details, however, swarm with contradiction and myth, and are the worst attested of any --- the stories of Jesus' childhood not excepted --- in all the sources." In fact ten specific contradictions are to be found in the New Testament accounts.(56) Matthew, especially if we can eliminate the later editing, is our best Gospel authority. Paul, in his Epistles, is a much saner authority than the Gospels. In First Corinthians, written before Easter 58 and referring back to the year 39, he very definitely affirms the resurrection as he had earlier in Galatians, A.D. 54, and later did in Romans, A.D. 59. He does not, however, emphasize the empty grave but the post-mortem appearances and, according to him, these took place in Galilee and not in Jerusalem. The whole narrative of the journey into Galilee at the bidding of the angel is

(55) Keim: VI,260-274.

(56) VI,277.

an untenable myth. The best attested appearances probably all took place the same day. Special attention must be paid to the fact that in all his statements Paul excludes any representation of a restoring of the previous corporeity of Jesus, no sitting, walking, speaking, eating, handling, and the like. It is the later Gospel narrations which try to clothe these appearances with flesh and blood, and so run into contradiction and myth. Naturally then, they cannot be trusted as to details about either the death or resurrection. We have no proof as to the empty grave for the disciples were in Galilee and, thinking they saw Jesus, would not bother to go to Jerusalem to see whether the grave was empty or not. The idea of Jesus' resurrection on the "third day" is based more on dogmatic than historical grounds. One cannot read Keim's discussion of the subject without feeling that the accounts in the Gospels are at times rather scornfully treated, and arbitrarily cast aside, as for instance: "Wonderful to relate, on the shore burns a fire of coals, there is a fish upon it, and bread, as if Jesus had prepared Himself a breakfast. It would have been very natural to cook some of the freshly caught fish, and to nourish themselves with the fruit of their own labor which had been blessed by the Lord. But since it would not be fitting to roast the converts (whom Keim makes the one hundred and fifty three fish represent), and because a little miracle of feeding is appropriate to the Risen Lord, the one hundred and fifty three fishes are only looked at, and the one little fish is eaten by and is sufficient for the seven." This

is "an unhistorical myth." The only fact we really have is that the disciples looked upon their Lord again after His death, or were thoroughly convinced that they did so. (57)

Keim gives much detail to the explanation of the resurrection faith, pointing out that it has been explained on the basis of the theft of the corpse, as by Reimarus who held that the disciples stole the body, hid it, and then after fifty days, when decomposition was complete, made public announcement of the resurrection. Keim feels that, although this theory is false, it has been given wider acceptance by the fact that the New Testament condemns it. Then, there is the theory that the death was only apparent, it being held that Jesus swooned on the cross, appearing dead, and then revived in the grave; and in support of it there is the fact that the only certain evidence of death is putrefaction which is not present here. Another suggestion has been that the belief was due to an illusion on the part of the disciples, that they were deluded by a phantasm, vision, or reflection. As for example, Spinoza who declared that the disciples from the statement "He must live" came to the faith "He lives, and He has appeared." In one form or another the "vision" theory has been held by Renan, Strauss, and others; a theory which is supported by the fact that Jesus always appears suddenly, without speech, momentarily, intermittently, and always to believers, never to unbelievers and heathen. But, thinks Keim, the objection that the Risen One had only manifested Himself to friends, not before enemies, is as old as Celsus. It ignores the fact that,

throughout, the revelation of Jesus does not supercede, but imply faith; that there is no such thing in Christianity as forcing conviction, instead of eliciting faith; and that the purpose of the manifestations of the risen Christ was to confirm, comfort, and to teach His disciples. As for His enemies the Lord had expressly declared that they would not see Him again until the Judgment. To all of the above theories, after subjecting them to a searching examination and with some irony showing their absurdity, Keim offers the criticism that it is entirely incompatible with the certainty of conviction on the part of the disciples and the later action of the Church, the outcome of the belief in the resurrection, to suppose that so fundamental a belief as that of the resurrection could have had its origin in any delusion much less conscious deception. Also why is it that after the various members of the band of Jesus' followers had had these visions, the results of their reflections, eight or nine of them in the course of six weeks, that they so suddenly stop and permanently cease? Would not the natural thing be for them to enlarge the circumference of their circle, if they were just the imaginations of excited enthusiasts? The fact of the matter is, according to Keim, that Paul describes these visions of Jesus in the same terms as he does his later visions of the third heaven, etc. The same statement also applies to the visions, in the Book of the Acts, of Peter, Cornelius, Philip, and Stephen.

It is hard to conceive of a corporeal resurrection.

"In the first place we cannot understand what this supplement

to the terrestrial intercourse of Jesus with His disciples is really intended to signify." Jesus had never stimulated His disciples with the hope of a resurrection on His part, on the other hand He spoke of His reunion with them at the time of His return in the distant future. "Christians must renounce the terrestrial resurrection of the body if the continued life and development of the disembodied spirits are not to suffer an endless suspension." We cannot make Jesus an exception to the general rule. Where, would one say, was His spirit while His body was in the grave?

Opponents of these vision theories claim that it would be impossible for the disciples to fabricate any such idea without there being an actual fact on which to base their belief. Contrary to this, Keim claims that it would be entirely possible for a man like Peter, who was so bound up in Jesus, thinking about Him all the time, to come to think that he had seen Him alive again, and so pass the idea on from one to another. This makes Christianity rest, however, on self-deception and also, to a certain extent, its claim to the supernatural character of its origin, but this latter is balanced by an increase of conviction as to the genuinely human character of the whole life of our Lord. One must remember that to do away with the resurrection does not destroy the guarantee of higher eternal life for mankind, for this rests not upon the resurrection of Jesus --- as Paul himself taught --- but upon Jesus' teachings and personal conviction.

Having shown that other explanations are impossible

Keim virtually admits that he cannot offer any adequate explanation of the "mysterious exit" of the life of Jesus. He states that all that we actually and historically know is that the Apostles believed in the resurrection of Jesus and in that belief Christianized the world. Science cannot solve the riddle of the resurrection but Christian faith can believe that Jesus' soul went to God, whether He rose or not, and that He gave to believers visions of Himself; with which statement Spinoza, Weisse, Seydel, and Fichte agree. Probably these visions of the risen Christ were granted directly by God Himself and by the glorified Christ. "Nay even the bodily appearance itself may be conceded to those who without it fear to lose all." These visions were both possible and necessary. Jesus' "work was finished, and yet not finished, He had nothing to add, nothing to complete, nothing to improve; therefore He only showed Himself, showed that He lived, and disappeared again without giving any fresh teaching, any addition to His teaching or to His commissions" (the commission as to baptism and preaching Keim places before the crucifixion). These visions were necessary to overcome the stumbling block and offense of the cross. It is not likely, for instance, that Paul ever would have been won and Christianity so greatly benefitted by his ministry if he had had no vision. "The evidence that Jesus was alive, the telegram from heaven, was necessary after an earthly downfall which was unexampled and which in the childhood of the human race would be convincing; the evidence that He was alive was therefore given by His own impulsion and by

the will of God." To this evidence Christianity owes both its Lord and its existence.(58) One cannot leave Keim without the feeling that after all there is not such a broad leap from his position --- for his Heavenly vision, his "telegram," involves the immediate act of God in the natural world, and hence somewhat of the miraculous --- to the teaching of the disciples and the later Church. One feels further that he, one of the greatest of negative critics, has, by the admission of his inability to explain the resurrection in a natural manner, given rather strong confirmation to one of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

In a number of respects Warschauer agrees with and follows Keim, as for instance when he holds that the disciples did not remain in Jerusalem after the death of Jesus but immediately went up to Galilee where the first appearances must have taken place, and not in Jerusalem as Luke and John say, page 54 above.(59) This is also true when he says that the whole post death accounts of the Evangelists are examples of bewildering confusion, disjointed, and mutually contradictory (page 54 above). The disciples were too nervous during these days to be accurate and much tradition crept in before the Gospels were written a generation later.(60) Joseph did not bury the body of Jesus because he was a friend of the Lord but as a representative of the Sanhedrin which had brought about the execution, and the body was not anointed, so Keim, page 54 above.(61) The story that the

(58) Keim: VI, 275-365.
 (60) p 342.

(59) Warschauer: p 341.
 (61) p 343.

Jewish leaders had a guard appointed to watch the burial place is purely apocryphal for they were not anticipating any resurrection (so Keim, again, page 54 above).(62) The account of the rolling away of the stone is utterly incredible, another example of the irreconcilable contradictions in the narrations.(63) The Emmaus, two Upper Room, and Lakeside appearances "are palpably secondary traditions" which are found in later Gospels, placed there to convince later disciples who doubted these appearances; this explains why the later accounts are stronger.(64)

Like Keim again (page 57 above), Warschauer will not agree that the disciples stole the body, a belief which stigmatizes these devoted followers; neither will he grant the resuscitation theory which lacks all historical support and makes Jesus Himself a party to the imposture.(65) It is hard to believe that the whole account is unhistorical and almost as difficult to assume that Joseph of Arimathea moved the body unknown to the disciples. Following Kirsopp Lake, Warschauer is convinced that the interment was made at dusk and that the women who followed were highly wrought up emotionally. When they came back again Sunday morning they mistakenly went to the wrong tomb. There met them a young man who, knowing their errand, said to them: "You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth. He is not here; you are looking in the wrong place; (indicating the correct place) behold where they laid Him." They misunderstood, ran away, and jumped to the conclusion that Jesus had risen. The ending

(62) Warschauer: p 344.
(64) p 348.

(63) pp. 346-347.
(65) pp. 353-354.

of Mark at 16:8 is incomplete, later additions (by someone else) were made of other appearances. In contrast John is over-complete. Unquestionably Jesus predicted His resurrection which His disciples did not understand. He did not predict exactly three days and did not look forward to a few appearances to a few disciples but to a manifestation in the glory of the Father with the holy angels which was to inaugurate the Kingdom of God (so Keim).

The fact of the matter is that scared and discouraged the disciples went back to Galilee. There in memory and remorse Jesus was always in their thoughts and conversation, a "Besetting Presence." They felt that this Presence projected itself outwardly and thought they saw visions. Becoming convinced that Jesus was not dead but risen, their lives were flooded with vitality and new faith. Then they heard the story from the women which strengthened their own belief. We do not know, and never can tell, whether these visions were objective or subjective. Warschauer does not doubt the possibility of objective self-manifestation by a discarnate spirit, but on the other hand a subjective vision may be directly caused by Divine Inspiration (and yet he would rule out the miraculous). The great resurrection fact is "Lo, I am with you always" --- the Immanuel, for Jesus does transcend history; but even this is just as He gave man an inspiring revelation of life and love.(66) "And this is indeed the truth, verified all through the centuries by humble and adoring spirits, who have found in Jesus Christ, not a

(66) Warschauer: p 358.

figure of a by-gone age, but 'Immanuel, God with us.' We shall not seek the living among the dead, or imagine that He in Whom we behold Love made manifest could end on a cross; rather were that Life and Love set free on Calvary, to become the source and inspiration of more and more abounding life, even the power of God unto salvation. In Him was life, and that life was and is the light of men; and as many as receive Him, to them gives He the right to become children of God. He is with His own always; and because He lives, we, who have our deepest life in Him, shall live also. For whether there be prophecies, they shall be done away; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall be done away; but Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, yea, and forever. He was the Christ, yet could not let the world into His secret because the world would not understand such Christhood, sacrificial and redemptive through self-giving. 'If Thou art the Christ, tell us. But He said unto them, If I tell you, ye will not believe,' He knew that He must die in order that the Kingdom might come, and all history shows that His self-offering has been the most potent instrument for bringing that Kingdom nearer. He knew that He must go away in order to come again, and it has proved even so; His going away was in dishonor, His coming again has been in glory. 'Whom say ye that I am?' is His challenge to every age; and every age returns anew the answer, laden with an ever deeper significance as generation follows after generation, 'Thou art the Christ of God! Thanks be to God for His unspeakable Gift."

In approaching a discussion of the resurrection story Klausner is convinced that Jesus' tragedy had to have an epilogue, otherwise Christianity would never have been possible. When, after the Sabbath, the women come to the tomb to anoint the body of Jesus they find an angel who says: "Jesus is risen: He is not here.....go, tell His disciples and Peter. He goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see Him as He said unto you" (Warschauer, page 61 above). This is Mark's simple account and, like the birth, he has no wonders to relate in connection with the resurrection. The other Evangelists have more. Matthew's account dealing with the precaution against any possible stealing of the corpse is unhistorical (in general agreeing with Keim, page 56 above, and Warschauer, page 61 above,) for Jews would not steal the body as they had no regard for a crucified messiah, "a curse of God that was hanged." Neither would the disciples steal the body in the first few days for they were overcome with grief. The theory that the body was actually stolen and that from this fact the resurrection faith developed is untenable for "deliberate imposture is not the substance out of which the religion of millions of mankind is created." The fact of the matter probably is that Joseph of Arimathea did not want the body to permanently lie in his ancestral tomb and so secretly moved it at the close of the Sabbath and, since he was a disciple, said nothing about it to anyone. The fact that the women went to anoint the body (denied by Keim, page 54 above, and Warschauer page 60 above) is sufficient proof that neither they nor the other disciples expected a resurrection. It is entirely probable that Thomas was very slow to believe the resurrection

story. The Gospels relate various appearances in Judea and Galilee and "here again it is impossible to suppose that there was any conscious deception; the nineteen hundred years' faith of millions is not founded on deception. There can be no question but that some of the ardent Galileans saw their Lord and Messiah in a vision." That such a vision was spiritual, and not material, is shown by the language Paul uses (so Keim, page 57 above) and the comparison he makes with those seen by Peter and James, a "Heavenly vision in which God had revealed in me His Son," a vision "born of light." This vision was spiritual and no more. It "became the basis of Christianity; it was treated as a faithful proof of the resurrection of Jesus, of His Messiahship, and of the near approach of the Kingdom of Heaven. But for this vision the memory of Jesus might have been wholly forgotten or preserved only in a collection of lofty ethical precepts and miracle stories. Could the bulk of the Jewish nation (here Klausner would defend and excuse his race) found itself on such a corner stone?"(68) It seems, however, that in denying the resurrection Klausner fails to adequately account for the conviction which was the great possession of the Apostles and others that Jesus had risen from the dead, and so he fails to account for Christianity.

In the opinion of J. Middleton Murry, Jesus did not expect a bodily resurrection after three days, but to be miraculously saved from death at the last minute and into a new existence; in fact Jesus did not believe in the bodily resur-

(68) Klausner: pp.356-359.

rection but in another order of existence, something like that of angels. To Jesus the resurrection was "not a resurrection of the body as it cannot be for any true religious thinker;" rather it was an "ineffable condition in which all bodily limitation was transcended, it was a condition of being perpetually in the presence of God." The reasonable way in which to account for the resurrection belief is to assume that the body had been moved from its original tomb (so also Klausner, page 64 above) and that what the young man said was: "He is not here, this is the place where He was laid," which was misunderstood by the followers of Jesus (Warschauer, page 61, and Klausner, page 64 above). Undoubtedly Peter and Paul believed in the continued existence of Jesus but not in a bodily resurrection for "flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God" and they had had objective experiences of the continued presence of Jesus.(69)

Alexander H. Irvine explains the post-mortem conduct of the disciples by saying that it was Jesus' presence in the spirit with His fear-stricken followers which inspired them with new life and gave them a super-power. "The Master did not walk out of the tomb on Easter morning. He never was in it. Nor can we literally say that He 'returned' for He had never been away." He had been hidden from His disciples by their own fear and cowardice. "The record of the physical experiences or spiritual visitations is scant, and what He said seems little different from what He had said already while with them in Capernaum. Yet the effect was different.....different and immeasurably greater. Under the

(69) Op. cit. "Epilogue."

spell of the new impulse this handful of unlettered men went out to conquer the Roman Empire for the Kingdom of God. The fervor and heat of the new Evangel became irresistible. It broke the shell of its Judaistic origin, and pressed out and beyond the frontiers of the Fathers into the remote corners of the earth. With hearts aflame and tongues tipped with ineffable tenderness, these working class ambassadors of light preached and exemplified the religion of the pure heart and open hand."(70)

P. Gardiner Smith (71) admits that the Church of the New Testament period believed that Jesus, on the third day after He was crucified and buried, rose out of the tomb in the same body in which He suffered, although doubtless that body had undergone a change. But these first followers had no evidence of a real historical character that the tomb of Jesus was found empty on the third day or that He actually rose in the body in which He had suffered. We cannot accept the testimony of Matthew, Luke and John; and Mark's record has been lost. When the women could not find Jesus' tomb they became excited and nervous; and never said anything for a considerable length of time. (But would women brave enough to go to the tomb become excited so easily?) From this mistake about the empty tomb the legend of the resurrection grew up. The description in the Gospel accounts shows that these narratives cannot be accurate. Indeed, the only factual basis for the Christian faith is the survival of Jesus'

(70) pp. 258-259. (71) "THE NARRATIVES OF THE RESURRECTION ---A CRITICAL STUDY" by P. Gardiner Smith, M.A., Dean and Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, Methuen & Co., London.

personality.

Bruce Barton (72) with what impresses one as irreverent lightness in treating the Gospel narratives says "He was born different from us, did not belong among us at all, but came down from heaven on a brief visit, spent a few years in reproving men for their mistakes, died and went back to heaven again. A hollow bit of stage play." In similar vein, Heitmüller (73) ignores the resurrection story as not worth refuting. He says that the preaching that Jesus rose very soon after His death "belongs no longer to the history of the 'historical Jesus' but to that of the primitive Christian community." So also Charles Foster Kent (74) insists that the resurrection must be interpreted not physically or naturalistically but spiritually.

Clinging to the purely natural, G. A. Barton denies the resurrection narratives and takes the position that Dan. 12:2-4 is the only Old Testament passage teaching the resurrection or even immortal life. A similar attitude is taken by Shirley Jackson Case (75) when he holds that Jesus is not a risen Saviour for we can have no immediate contact with Him now. So also Julius Wellhausen (76) is sure that Jesus never anticipated as the Messiah or "Son of Man" either His death or resurrection. Rationalizing all miracles "An Unknown Dis-

(72) "THE MAN NOBODY KNOWS" by Bruce Barton, Author of "What Shall It Profit A Man" etc. Bobbs-Merrill Co. Indianapolis, 1925. (73) Op. cit. p 104. (74) "THE LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF JESUS ACCORDING TO THE EARLIEST RECORDS" by Charles Foster Kent, Ph.D., Litt.D., Woolsey Professor of Biblical Literature in Yale University, Scribners, New York, 1913. (75) "THE HISTORICITY OF JESUS" by Shirley Jackson Case, Professor of New Testament Literature and Interpretation, University of Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1912. (76) "EINLEITUNG IN DIE DREI ERSTEN EVANGELIEN" by Julius Wellhausen, 1905.

ciple" (77) naturally rules out the resurrection. It is, of course, also ruled out by those who advocate in one form or another the "Christus Myth" theory like Bruno Bauer, J. M. Robertson, Arthur Drews, W. B. Smith, Albert Kalthoff, and George Brandes. While not going quite so far as this, Otto Pfleiderer (78) holds that the early Christian belief in the resurrection was a development from and found its origin in the Eastern pagan cults.

2. Conservative Interpretations. Passing to those who are less destructive in their criticism of the resurrection narratives one is rather surprised to read in as keen a critic as Heinrich Ewald (79) these words "Nothing stands more historically certain than that Jesus rose again from the dead and appeared again to His followers, or than that their seeing Him thus, again, was the beginning of a higher faith, and of all their Christian work in the world." E. H. Archer-Shepherd (80) is an aggressive champion of higher criticism and attaches no importance to miracles, and yet he offers a very complete presentation and defense of the nature and proof of the literal physical resurrection, making both the resurrection and ascension objective physical events. One believes that he must feel that the evidence for the resurrection is strong, for he would not naturally lean that way.

A rather lonely position is taken by Albert Pleasant

- (77) "BY AN UNKNOWN DISCIPLE" Geo.H.Doran Co., New York, 1919.
 (78) "UNCHRISTENTUM" 1887 and "DIE ENTSTEHUNG DES CHRISTENTUMS" 1905. (79) "GESCHICHTE" Gottingen, 1864, VI, p 75.
 (80) "THE NATURE AND EVIDENCE OF THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST" by E. H. Archer-Shepherd, M.A., Vicar of Avenbury, Herefordshire, Author of "The Three Bulwarks of the Faith," "Burning Questions in the Light of Today," "The Ritual of the Tabernacle," Rivingtons, London, 1910.

Robinson (81) when, in accepting the resurrection stories, he writes: "the hearts and minds of His disciples were fully prepared" for the resurrection because of the predictions Jesus had made; Keim and Warschauer deny that Jesus ever made any prediction, and most writers are assured that the disciples never understood Jesus in this respect. Presenting a strong argument for the bodily resurrection of Jesus, William Cleaver Wilkinson (82) examines the theories devised by disbelievers and rather convincingly shows that they reveal their own insufficiencies. While ruling out the possibility of any personal return of Jesus, J. H. Chambers Macaulay (83) allows the resurrection as recorded in the Gospels.

In sharp contrast with A. P. Robinson (see above) Geikie holds that Jesus' prophecies to His disciples about His resurrection had made absolutely no impression on their minds; that after His death they were confounded and paralyzed.(84) He accepts the various resurrection appearances of Jesus and at the same time admits that, due to the differing accounts which the Evangelists give of these various appearances, it is difficult to build an accurate and detailed narrative of the successive appearances of which there must have been many. Jesus appears as an incarnate spirit, using His material body only to identify Himself.(85) Thinking of Jesus as already in Paradise,

(81) "THE WONDERFUL CHRIST" by Albert Pleasant Robinson, Glad Tidings Publishing Co., 1921. (82) "CONCERNING JESUS CHRIST THE SON OF GOD" by William Cleaver Wilkinson, Griffith & Rowland Press, 1916. (83) "THE REALITY OF JESUS" by J. H. Chambers Macaulay, M.A., Geo. H. Doran Co., New York, 1923. (84) Geikie: II,582. (85) II,587.

the disciples had not anticipated the resurrection. That their lost hope was hard to rekindle is shown by the attitude of the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, saying that the tomb had been found empty but Jesus they had not seen (Lk.24:24).(86) Because Jesus had put on immortality He could not stay with them as before, hence they had only occasional glimpses of Him, and knew nothing about His stay, journeys, and the like.(87)

Agreeing with Geikie, Dean Farrar says "At the moment when Christ dies, nothing could have seemed more abjectly weak, more pitifully hopeless, more absolutely doomed to scorn, and extinction, and despair, than the Church which He had founded.....What was it that thus caused strength to be made perfect out of abject weakness? There is one and one only POSSIBLE answer --- the resurrection from the dead." There could be no doubt about the death of Jesus for when Joseph of Arimathea asked for the body of Jesus Pilate made absolutely sure that He was dead (Mk.15:44). The enemies of Jesus remembered (as opposed to Klausner, page 64 above) Jesus' prophecy about Himself and, pretending that they were afraid Jesus' disciples would steal the body, they successfully pleaded with Pilate to have the tomb guarded.

Farrar accepts nine bodily appearances of Jesus between the resurrection and ascension, and says: "That on that morning the grave of Christ was untenanted --- that His body had not been removed by His enemies --- that its absence caused to His disciples the profoundest amazement, not unmingled in the

(86) Geikie: II,589-590. (87) II,600.

breasts of some of them, with sorrow and alarm (which the Evangelists admit in spite of forewarnings) --- that they subsequently became convinced, by repeated proofs, that He had risen from the dead --- that for the truth of this belief they were ready at all times to die --- that the belief effected a profound and total change in their character, making the timid courageous, and the weak irresistible --- that they were incapable of a conscious falsehood, and that, even if it had not been so, a conscious falsehood could never have had power to convince the disbelief and regenerate the morality of the world --- that on this belief of the resurrection were built the still-universal observance of the first day of the week, and the entire foundation of the Christian Church --- these, at any rate, are facts which even skepticism itself, if it desires to be candid, can hardly fail, however reluctantly and slowly, to admit."(88) "Within six weeks of the resurrection, that great event was the unshaken faith of every Christian; within a few years of the event the palpable historic proofs of it and the numerous testimonies of its reality --- strengthened by a memorable vision vouchsafed to himself --- had won assent from the acute and noble intellect of a young Pharisaic zealot and persecutor whose name was Saul."(89)

In his treatment of the entire life of Jesus, Alfred Edersheim, the converted Jew, takes the original and unaltered material as given in the oldest manuscripts, as cited by the earliest Fathers and as received by catholic Christendom and

(88) Farrar: II,433-434.

(89) II,437.

from the total unmutilated text writes a totally unmutilated biography. While showing that Jesus was a Jew he also shows that He was the incarnate Son of God and the Saviour of the world; and into this portrait enter both the natural and the supernatural, the human and the divine. As one would expect, the resurrection narratives are accepted and the point made that the life of Jesus according to the Gospels both opens and closes with a miracle and one is dependent upon the other. "If the story of His birth be true, we can believe that of the resurrection; if that of His resurrection be true, we can believe that of His birth."(90) In the very nature of things the birth is incapable of strict historical proof but His resurrection demanded and was capable of the fullest historical evidence. If the latter can be established historically the former is almost a necessary postulate. Much of our difficulty is due to the great compression in the various narratives --- probably only one of the writers was an eye witness --- and the fact that to the different narrators the central point of interest lay on different aspects of the circumstances connected with the resurrection. One must remember that the Evangelists and Paul are not trying to furnish a history of the post-resurrection events but simply to prove the fact.(91)

The disciples believed Jesus to be dead and did not expect Him to rise again (so Keim, page 58, Klausner, page 64, and Geikie, page 70 above, opposed to A. P. Robinson, page 70 above) as evidenced by the preparation to embalm the body (so too, Klausner, page 64 above), the sorrow of the women at the

(90) Edersheim: II, 621.

(91) II, 621-622.

empty tomb, and their perplexity and doubts in the presence of the resurrection announcements (Jn.20:9). What they expected, if anything at all, was Christ's second coming from Heaven in glory (see Keim, page 57 above). At the most, all they could have expected was the continuous life of the soul and the final resurrection of the body. This was the Jewish idea; as for example Elijah is never represented as eating or offering his body to be touched; and Herod Antipas, when hearing that John the Baptist had arisen did not search the tomb to find out. Hence if the disciples had tried to fabricate the resurrection narratives there was no need for such details as the empty tomb; and in so writing the Evangelists could not have been trying to show the fulfillment of either prophecy or expectation.(92)

There can be no doubt but that the disciples, contrary to their earlier expectations, believed in the absolute certainty of the resurrection as a historical fact and that this was the core of their later preaching (so Farrar, page 72 above). "If Christ hath not been raised, then is our preaching vain, your faith also is vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God.....ye are yet in your sins."(93)

Edersheim dismisses without discussion the rejection of the resurrection on the ground that it involves the miraculous as unwarranted treatment of the miraculous in this rejecting it in a wholesale and arbitrary way. He also dismisses the hypothesis of gross fraud on the part of the disciples in stealing the body of Jesus, agreeing with Strauss,

(92) Edersheim: II, 623-624.

(93) I Cor. XV:14-17.

Keim (page 57 above), Warschauer (page 61 above), and Klausner (page 64 above) that such a falsehood is wholly incompatible with the disciples' after life, heroism, and martyrdom. Equally absurd, he thinks is the theory that Jesus was not dead and in the coolness of the tomb revived, for this shifts the deception back on Jesus Himself (so also Keim, page 57, and Warschauer, page 61 above). Turning to the various forms of the vision hypothesis, that which makes the vision the outcome of an excited imagination is disproved by the fact that it must presuppose a previous expectation of the event, and such mental visions would not naturally lead to greater conviction, vigor, and achievement; but rather to depression. The former of these objections also holds against the idea that the disciples in their thinking came to the conclusion that Jesus could not be dead, that He must live, and, finally, that He was alive; and hence wrought themselves into visions of the Risen One (cf. Warschauer, page 62 above); and in addition, how can we explain this occurring to more than five hundred at once? Edersheim agrees with Keim in the further criticisms of the theory: (a) that so fundamental a belief as that of the resurrection could not have had its origin in a delusive vision; this is incompatible with the calm clearness of conviction and strong purpose of action which resulted from the resurrection; and (b) it is inexplicable that these visions suddenly ceased with the ascension. We have a number of appearances in the first six weeks and then they suddenly stop and forever cease. If just visions on the part of excited enthusiasts they would continue and grow larger. (94)

The hypothesis that the visions were sent from God Himself to attest the fact that Jesus lived (as Keim, page 59 above) fails because it will not account for such facts as the showing of His wounds, His eating with His disciples, the empty tomb, the fright of the disciples at the appearance of Jesus, and that when they thought it was a spirit He invited them to touch Him to see that He was flesh and bone, which, of course, Keim writes out of the narrative to make his explanation consistent. Further, who removed the body? Six weeks after the crucifixion Peter preached in Jerusalem the resurrection. If Jesus' enemies had removed His body they would have silenced Peter very quickly. If the disciples, this puts the fraud back on them again.(95)

Edersheim feels, since one is not warranted in rejecting the miraculous per se and every substitutionary explanation of the resurrection is shown to be impossible, that one is compelled to accept the Gospel narratives, which if it had been pure fabrication would have been careful to have had all details in perfect agreement.(96)

David Smith feels that at Caesarea Philippi Jesus foresaw His resurrection with the same clarity He displayed in speaking about His approaching sacrifice.(97) To him the resurrection was literal and the appearances are accepted, in fact very probably there were many more about which we have no record. Jesus had a glorified body, no longer flesh and blood, not an animal body needing nourishment, but a spiritual body.(98)

(95) Edersheim: II, 627-628.

(96) II, 628.

(97) Smith: p 212.

(98) p 448. See also "THE DAYS OF HIS FLESH" (A.C. Armstrong & Son, New York, 1905) p 508ff.

Sanday in considering the evidence attesting the resurrection notes that such a stupendous event very properly requires strong attestation and this, he feels, the resurrection of Jesus has. Not all is of equal value, as for instance the concluding verses of Mark which probably were not a part of the original Gospel. These he attributes, after Conybeare, to Ariston or Aristion and, since they summarize the testimony of Luke and John, they show that a prominent Church official and teacher accepted Luke and John in this respect. Luke's account of the walk to Emmaus with the mention of the name of Cleopas (or Cleopatros) looks as though he might be of the Herodian circle, and so Luke may have gotten this incident from "Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward." The whole account has a perfectly reasonable and historical atmosphere about it. "'We hoped that it was He Who should redeem Israel" points back to the time before the dreams of national triumph had been purified of the grosser elements in them." I Cor. 15:5 confirms Lk.23:34. Lk.24:36ff corresponds to that of Jn.20:19 and both are confirmed by I Cor. 15:5. Something like Mt.28:19 seems to be absolutely necessary. Our strongest witness to the resurrection is Paul who mentions five most important appearances: (a) Peter; (b) The Twelve; (c) an assembly of more than five hundred; (d) James; and (e) to all the Apostles. The mention of these does not by any means exclude other appearances, as for instance that to Mary Magdalene or to the two on the road to Emmaus, or Paul may not even have known of the latter. Lk.23:34 confirms the first appearance above; Lk.24:33 and Jn.20:19-24 the second; and the Gospel according

to the Hebrews the fourth. Paul refers to what he had earlier told the Corinthians at the beginning of his ministry which must take him back from 57 to 53, if not from 55 to 51 A.D. Thus the matter is brought back to the date of the earliest extant New Testament writing, First Thessalonians which confirms the fact of the resurrection in 1:10 and 4:14. The whole tone shows that Paul is writing from the strongest personal conviction and that he expected to have his readers agree with him, and indeed that it was the unquestioned and universal belief of Christians at that time. All the testimony we have is to the same effect --- the Apostles felt that their chief function was to bear witness to the resurrection and the only doubt as to the resurrection which the early Christians had was not as to the resurrection of Christ but to that of themselves. "And it is no less noticeable that even the most rationalistic of the Christian sects, those (e.g.) which denied the virgin birth, nevertheless shared the belief in the resurrection."(99)

While this paper does not enter into the question of the sequence of the post-resurrection events, yet it is interesting to note that Sanday says in this connection: "It is not an exaggeration to say that the conviction among Christians that Christ was really raised, dates from the very morrow of the resurrection itself. It was not a growth spread over a long period and receiving gradual accretions of strength, but it sprang suddenly into existence, and it swept irresistibly over the whole body of disciples. Of the force

(99) Sanday: pp. 170-176.

and universality of the belief there can be no doubt, but when we come to details it would seem that from the first there was a certain amount of confusion, which was never wholly cleared up." Paul's account in I Corinthians 15 is a selection made for the purpose of preaching. Compared with it the account of the "walk to Emmaus is such as might have come out of private memoirs."(100)

Where did the appearances take place? St. Paul and the Gospel according to the Hebrews mention no place. Matthew, Mark and John 21 stress Galilee. John 20 and Luke 24 emphasize Jerusalem and its neighborhood. The Critical School claims that these two versions must be alternatives and they usually side with the Galilean idea, Keim page 54 and Warschauer page 60 above. Loofs argued in favor of Lk.Jn.20. Many try to combine both but here one strikes the difficulty of the shortness of time into which all the events must be compressed. But "no difficulty of weaving the separate incidents into an orderly well-compacted narrative can impugn the unanimous belief of the Church which lies behind them, that the Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead on the third day and appeared to the disciples."(101)

In dealing with the attempted explanations Sanday covers much the same ground as other authors already reviewed here. "This universal belief is the root which has to be accounted for. It would be the natural product of a real event such as the Epistles assume and the Gospels describe. But what if the event were not real? In that case the widely

(100) Sanday: pp.176-177.

(101) pp. 177-180.

held and deeply planted belief in it must needs constitute a very serious problem." Many attempts have been made to account for the belief in the resurrection without accepting it as a fact. Many of the hypotheses in this effort are now practically obsolete and abandoned. No one now believes that the (supposed) death of Jesus was only a swoon and that the body, laid in the tomb, afterward revived and was seen more than once by the disciples (cf. Strauss, "Leben Jesu" 1863, p 298). So too, inadmissible is the charge of fraud, that the body was taken away by Joseph of Arimathea (as Klausner, page 64 above) or Nicodemus, and the rumor that Jesus had risen allowed to grow. More persistent is the theory of "visions." Renan thinks Mary Magdalene in her nervous tension started the whole idea. Strauss and Pfleiderer start with Paul who places his vision on a level with that of the older Apostles, Paul who was subject to epileptic seizure. But if the origin lies in visions, the results of affectionate dwelling upon the memory of the personality of Jesus and reflection upon certain Old Testament passages, as Strauss holds, how are we to account for the "third day" element? This would have to be a long drawn out process. If the whole matter were entirely that of visions why was it not so contagious as that the whole Church would have these visions and continue to do so, agreeing with Keim, page 57 above, and Edersheim, page 75 above. After the five hundred brethren come James and Paul and then a sudden and final termination. The fact of the matter is that the "third day" factor is just as firmly rooted and established as the fact of the resurrec-

tion itself; as shown by the teachings of Peter, Paul, and the Apostles' Creed. It holds an important place in Christian thinking and so must have been original, for otherwise it is a useless detail. It is hard to reconcile this and the definite area of appearances with the theory of purely subjective visions. So "an honest inquirer like Keim felt the difficulty so strongly that, while regarding the appearances as essentially of the nature of visions, he held them to be not merely subjective, but divinely caused for the express purpose of creating the belief in which they issued." A belief that had such incalculably momentous results must have had an adequate cause. No apparition or hallucination ever yet moved the world. Even Keim's theory is not adequate. All such are a part of the trimming down of the apparently supernatural in the Gospel so as to bring all within the sphere of everyday experience. But that process has failed. "The facts are too obstinate, the evidence for them is too strong; and the measures which we apply are too narrow and bounded. It is better to keep substantially the form which a sound tradition has handed down to us, even though its contents in some degree pass our comprehension."(102)

The resurrection of Jesus is significant and necessary because it is the pledge and earnest of the physical resurrection for man and life beyond the grave; and as a complement of the crucifixion to prove that the sacrifice of the cross was accepted. "If the death on the cross was a dying for human sin, the rising again from the tomb was the seal

of forgiveness and justification, Rom.4:25 and 6:7."(103)

Finally, attention is directed to the comments of Rush Rhees on the resurrection narratives. The resurrection idea is important because Christianity as a historic religious movement starts from the resurrection of Jesus. This fact is very evident in the preaching of both Peter and Paul. "In fact the buoyancy of hope and confidence of faith which gave to the despised followers of the Nazarene their strength resulted directly from the experiences of the days which followed the deep gloom that settled over the disciples when Jesus died." It seems strange, after Jesus had told His disciples as He had of His death and resurrection, that they were thrown into such despair. Surely the women who had prepared spices for embalming and the disciples who would not believe the resurrection until they had seen Jesus had heard His predictions. This does not mean --- as formerly held by many --- that Jesus did not tell them for if He told them about His death He must also have told them about the resurrection, for the one without the other means a defeated Messiah, an idea Jesus never had. "The inability of the disciples to adjust their Messianic ideas to the death of their Master was not removed by the rebuke Jesus administered to Peter at Caesarea Philippi; their objections were only silenced. It would seem that even when they saw His death to be inevitable, they were simply dumb with hope that in some way He would come off victor; the cross and the tomb crushed out that hope --- at least from most of them."(104)

(103) Sanday: p 185.

(104) Rhees: pp. 202-203.

Their gloom vanished suddenly and there was no time for a gradual readjustment of ideas "and the springing of hope from a faith which would not die." The uniform early record is that Jesus showed Himself alive to His disciples about thirty six hours after His death. This is the testimony of Paul and our Evangelists, it is also confirmed by the very early observance of "the first day of the week" as "the Lord's Day" and the substitution of "third day" for "after three days" in the Gospels which make use of our Mark. Paul is our earliest writer, giving a simple catalog of the appearances of Jesus, and referring to them as familiar and accepted facts --- mentioning six; Cephas, The Twelve, above five hundred, James, all the Apostles, and himself. The Gospels contain fuller records but differ from each other more than they do from Paul. Mark is incomplete, the last twelve verses having been added by Aristion in the second century (see also Sanday, page 77 above). They are only of value as they tell us what was believed at that time. All that Mark really tells is that the women found the tomb empty. Matthew and Luke tell of additional appearances but differ much. Matthew writes nothing as to the ascension but Luke clearly implies it. John gives his record but is clearly independent of all three. Rhees also, like Sanday (page 79 above) calls attention to the effort of critical scholars to find two separated and mutually exclusive lines of tradition in the Gospel narratives.. In reply he says "This theory falls, however, before the uniform tradition of appearances on the third day, which must have been in Jerusalem, and the

very early testimony of Paul to an appearance to above five hundred brethren at once, which could not have been in Judea. It need not surprise us that there should have been two cycles of tradition, not however mutually exclusive, if Jesus did appear in both Jerusalem and Galilee." Rhees then constructs a harmonized account of the appearances. (105)

"The simple facts as set forth in the New Testament serve abundantly to account for the faith of the early Church, but they not only involve a large recognition of the miraculous, they also contain perplexities for those who do not stumble at the supernatural; hence there have been many attempts to find other solutions to the problem." With a word may be dismissed those explanations which renew the old charge that the disciples stole the body of Jesus and then declared that He had risen, and those which assume that the death was apparent only, that Jesus merely fainted on the cross, and that the chill of the night air and sepulchre revived Him, and that in the morning He left the tomb and appeared to His disciples as one risen from the dead (see Keim, page 57; Warschauer, page 61; Edersheim, page 74; and Sanday, page 80 above). "This apparent-death theory involves Jesus in an ugly deception, while the theory that the disciples or any group of them removed the body of Jesus and then gave currency to the notion that He had risen builds the greatest ethical and religious movement known to history on a lie." Rhees also refers to the suggestions of Renan and Reville as to Mary Magdalene starting the whole resurrection thought from her over-

(105) Rhees: pp. 203-209.

wrought nervous system; and Strauss' explanation of the lost tomb and the disciples in Galilee; and Keim's criticism of these theories, feeling that it is all the more searching because his (Keim's) own theory is so akin to them. It will be remembered that Keim makes the point that the "third day" is entirely too short a time for such a faith to develop, and the growth of such ecstatic feeling, such as must precede such visions. Then too, why did they suddenly stop (so also Keim page 57, Edersheim page 75, and Sanday page 80 above)? The disciples never showed a more healthy and normal life than they did at this period.(106)

Rhees points out that Keim, as we have learned from a direct study of his work, while seeking to avoid the difficulties brought to light in his own criticisms of the vision theories and rejecting the Gospel narratives, yet frankly acknowledges that the faith of the Apostles in the resurrection must have been based on a miracle. This faith was so strong that the Apostles MUST have seen their Lord. "This seeing, however, was not with the eyes of sense, but with the spiritual vision, which properly perceived what pertains to the spirit world into which the glorified Lord had withdrawn when He died." These visions were divinely caused and essentially objective. "This theory is not in itself offensive to faith. It concedes that the belief of the disciples rested on actual disclosures of Himself to them by the glorified Lord. The difficulty with the theory is that it relegates the empty tomb to the limbo of legend, though it is a feature of the tradition which is found in all the Gospels and clear-

ly implied in Paul (I Cor. 15:4, compare Rom. 6:4); it also fails to show how this glorified Christ came to be thought of by the disciples as RISEN rather than simply glorified in spirit." This last criticism brings one to the necessity of recognizing a resurrection which in some real sense is corporeal, difficult as that is. "The Gospels assert this with great simplicity and delicate reserve." If in accepting this and the fact that Jesus offered His body for handling and ate with the disciples one stumbles one must remember that we do not know enough about the condition of the fully perfected life to dogmatize. We do have before us as established data: (a) the empty tomb; (b) the objective presence of the risen Jesus; (c) the renewed faith of the disciples; and (d) their new power. While not strictly a part of this study it is interesting to note that Rhees feels that the ascension was a necessary complement to the resurrection, since death no longer had dominion over Jesus. (107)

B. Unsolved Problems.

A study such as has been made above of the treatment accorded the resurrection narratives by those who, clinging to their insistence upon naturalistic interpretations, explain along these lines both the origin of the narratives themselves and the faith and Church which were the outgrowth of that belief in the actual physical resurrection of Jesus, together with a comparison with those who accept the resurrection story reveals the fact that these writers leave unsolved a number of problems which logically arise from their interpretations and

for which solution must be found before unreserved acceptance can be made of these naturalistic interpretations, and this in spite of the fact that the normal trend of the modern mind seems to favor that which keeps itself within the horizon of the natural. Some of these problems may be here outlined.

1. The Idea of the Resurrection.

a. THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH. The almost, if not entirely, unanimous verdict of writers of both schools (those hostile and those friendly to the New Testament narratives) is that the Christian Church both in its origin and in its subsequent history has been founded on a belief in the literal and physical resurrection of Jesus on the third day, and His appearance to His disciples. One needs but mention men as different in their view points as Strauss, Keim, Klausner, Sanday, and Rhee, all of whom would subscribe, we believe, to the admission of Keim that it was the belief in the resurrection which Christianized the world. This unanimous belief has been the root of the Church and must be accounted for. They are agreed further in the conviction that it is impossible to imagine that the unique phenomenon of the Church in the last nineteen centuries has had deceit or falsehood for its foundation, with which we heartily agree. A belief, such as that of the Church, that has had such incalculably momentous results must have had an adequate cause. A pyramid may be balanced on its apex for a moment, but this balancing act will not continue during the test of passing centuries. Naturalistic interpreters allow that there must

have been some foundation for the immovable belief of the early disciples in the resurrection of Jesus, but, since He did not rise in bodily form, their experience of His continued life must have been visionary and spiritual. It would seem that this is but begging, and removing just a little further, the question. It eliminates the idea that either Jesus or His disciples were guilty of conscious deception, but still builds the Church upon a faith resting upon a misconception, an unconscious deception, but a deception nevertheless. It was not the mere continued existence or even presence of Jesus but His physical resurrection which the disciples believed and preached. Granting that Jesus' body after His death remained in some grave, that His soul entered paradise, and that the only experiences His disciples had with Him after His death were visions, the fact remains, supported by the unanimous testimony of the New Testament, that the disciples both believed and taught that Jesus appeared to them in the same body He inhabited before His passion, a body recognized by its pre-death characteristics; and in preaching that fact enlarged the Church in an unprecedented manner, far surpassing in their ability to win followers the success of Jesus Himself during His ministry. If they were wrong in their personal belief and teaching, even if ignorantly, the fact remains that the Church has rested all these years on a falsehood. The teaching of history and the experience of the race is that falsity cannot endure, that time gradually brings it to light; hence the Church, if founded on falsehood, should by this time be a waning shadow and tottering structure. Instead

it is that portion of its membership which re-echoes the preaching of the Apostles which is spreading its influence to the far corners of the earth. To quote from Godet: "If Strauss admits that the Church would have never arisen if the Apostles had not had unshaken faith in the reality of Christ's resurrection, we may add, that this faith of the Apostles would have never arisen unless the resurrection had been a true historical fact."

b. THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA. In our consideration of the narratives of the virgin birth of Jesus it has been pointed out that where an idea has not previously existed the fact is the most natural explanation of the idea, and that, excluding the fact, it is incumbent upon one to explain the origin of the idea. We believe the same criticism may be offered here. Certainly the Old Testament taught the immortality of the soul and while there are vague intimations of the resurrection of the body yet there can be reasonable doubt as to how literally this was accepted by the Jew of Jesus' day and certainly he associated it with the end of the world. True, too, that his Old Testament told him of prophets who raised the dead, but this was only temporarily. Where did the idea of a voluntary and self-effected resurrection come from? There was no tradition as to the way in which the Messiah would rise from the dead, indeed it is doubtful whether anyone had imagined Him as dying. The disciples questioned "among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean." In contrast with it there was the Jewish belief in the disembodied spirit of Samuel (I Sam. 28) and in all likelihood he was familiar with similar be-

liefs on the part of his Persian, Egyptian, and Grecian neighbors. In the case of the Apostle Paul, an ardent advocate of the resurrection, for instance, it would have been much easier for him in his teaching in I. Cor. 15 to have written in terms of the spirit alone. His conviction as to the bodily resurrection of Jesus was so great that he painstakingly labors to describe the spiritual body to his readers, and it seems fair to attribute this to his confidence that on the road to Damascus Jesus had appeared to him in bodily form --- not a disembodied spirit --- as He had earlier to the other disciples.

c. THE EARLY AND GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE IDEA. Following again our study of the virgin birth question, we meet here also the very early and general acceptance of the idea that Jesus bodily rose from the dead. As indicated there, legendary and romantic ideas may form themselves around a heroic figure if given sufficient time. We find it difficult to believe, for instance, the popular story of William Tell's demonstration of his marksmanship, wide as has been the spread of that story. One remembers, however, in this connection that this idea first appeared in ballad form and that some two centuries after William Tell is supposed to have lived. In contrast with this, we find the Apostles convinced of the truth of the resurrection in less than a week --- here we have uniform testimony --- and within six weeks publicly proclaiming it in the ears of those hostile, who try to intimidate but never to refute. The testimony of history is that at the time of Constantine from one tenth to

one fifth of the population of the Roman Empire was Christian; we know that by the year 350 A.D. there were in the catacombs--- purely Christian burial places --- somewhere between two and four million graves, which would indicate that by this time from one third to one half the population of Rome was Christian, and Gibbon says the same proportion applied to the whole Empire; this growth reached all classes of people --- Harnack says "we are able today, on the basis of fully authenticated records, to declare with satisfactory certainty that even in the time of the Apostles the palace of the Emperor was one of the chief seats of the growing Christian Church in Rome" --- and before the passing of two centuries Christianity was changing the thought of the world.(108) In this connection we must realize two factors: (a) This belief of the disciples in the resurrection was not anticipated but entirely a post-mortem faith forced upon them and for which something subsequent to the death of Jesus must have been responsible. Before His passion they had questioned "among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean" and we have no evidence that they ever came to any clear conception, and after His decease they imply that they had lost their earlier hope that Jesus "was He that should redeem Israel." (b) Those to whom the disciples preached their Gospel were naturally prejudiced against it. "What troubled the first missionaries of the new religion was not the reluctance of their hearts to believe that God

(108) See "NEGLECTED FACTORS IN THE STUDY OF THE PROGRESS OF EARLY CHRISTIANITY" by James Orr, D.D., A. C. Armstrong & Son, New York, 1899.

had become a man, but their hesitation about believing that a man, especially an obscure Jew who had been ignominiously put to death, was really the Son of God."(109) And yet in spite of this they preached, and with acceptance for the Church grew by leaps and bounds. All this finds its foundation in the belief that Jesus rose again from the dead. If He did not it seems reasonable to ask that some adequate explanation be offered for this early and general acceptance of so false and also unexpected an idea; it is not a matter of gradual accretion, but preached in toto from the first.

d. THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE VISION THEORY. "Would such visions have produced the effect attributed to them? It is assumed that they would --- and did. But can we be quite sure that the assumption is justified? Certainty seems to be impossible because there is no exactly parallel case anywhere. But personally I am inclined to think that those who make the assumption with confidence have not had much experience of human nature when it has been stirred to its depths by stern and tragic happenings. War teaches some lessons which are not found in books. It takes a great deal to re-inspire men who have once become convinced that their cause has been irretrievably lost. It would, in fact, be hard to point to any other instance in which this has ever been done successfully. Would a series of fleeting visions, however vivid, have been enough? If visions can be made so much, does not the Incarnation itself --- be it said with

(109) "THE HISTORICITY OF JESUS" by Shirley Jackson Case, Professor of New Testament Literature and Interpretation in the University of Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1912, p 128.

all possible reverence --- begin to appear superfluous?"(110)

e. THE ULTIMATE DESTINY OF MATTER. "If our Lord's human body saw corruption, as it must have done if He did not raise it from the grave, what is our view as to the ultimate destiny of matter? We believe that matter, no less than spirit, is the creation of God; and that therefore it lies within the scope of redemption. Here we differ entirely from the Oriental philosophy, older than Christianity, which holds that matter is inherently, eternally, irredeemably evil. But if matter be capable of redemption our hope for it must lie in its association with spirit. No matter has ever been permeated and dominated by spirit so completely as was the human body of Jesus. Therefore we might naturally expect that body not to be entirely subject to the laws which appear at present to rule us. If the spirit of Jesus could not attain a complete and unique mastery over His body, sufficient to exempt it from the ordinary law of corruption which otherwise must be counted universal, we seem to have no right to hope that any redemption of matter can ever be possible. In this case when St. Paul spoke of 'the redemption of our body' (I Cor. 15:26) he was either using a phrase which has no real meaning at all, or else he was thinking merely of victory over sin in this life. But the context of the passage makes it difficult to believe that he meant no more than this."(111)

(110) "PROBLEMS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT TODAY" by R. H. Malden, M.A., Vicar of Headingley, Oxford University Press, 1923. p. 241.

(111) Malden: op. cit. p 244.

2. Jesus Himself.

a. THE CAREER OF JESUS WITHOUT THE RESURRECTION. A supernatural resurrection impresses one as a fitting climax to the extraordinary life of Jesus as related in the Gospels. If then one denies the resurrection it is only fair to ask how the career and personality of Jesus are to be explained and fittingly brought to a close without this resurrection experience. The task of the sincere historical student is not to make Jesus fit our whims but to discover Him as He is. To do otherwise is to relinquish the search for objective truth. If one fashions Jesus in accordance with preconceived ideas such a Jesus can give us only what we already have. If Jesus is a historical character the honest course is not to adapt Him to modern ideas but to adapt the modern mind to Him. In addition, to the great body of the Church Jesus is not merely a historical figure, He has transcended history and there is an inescapable consciousness that He lives today and influences the lives of men. While not reaching the same answer to his question, one may say with Heitmüller (112): "The pious zeal of the dominant ecclesiastical party and the prudent calculation of the magistracy had won in the unequal conflict with the bold Galilean prophet. In the gibbet at Golgotha they had prepared an abrupt ending of the history of the Messiah Jesus. Yet at and with Golgotha this history really began; the history of Jesus in His community which has not reached its end even today. And this history leaves

(112) Op. cit. pp. 105-106.

no doubt of the answer which is to be given to the historian's question, where the original and creative element, the effective force of the manifestation of Jesus is to be sought, in what its world historical significance is grounded.....It needs only a glance into the beginnings of the Christian community to perceive the truth. The disciples had in their enthusiasm hoped that Jesus would redeem Israel. Their hope was shattered by Golgotha. Like sheep who have lost their shepherd they were scattered without guides, without hope. But in a little while we find them again in Jerusalem, at first behind closed doors, then, however, in the streets. At first they whispered it in the ear --- then, however, they proclaimed it from the house tops, --- that Jesus is nevertheless the Messiah. Rapidly the little band of simple Galilean men and women became a company which was feared and persecuted, and yet only increased. What turned these fishermen and peasants into missionaries, these faint hearted and stupidly fleeing disciples into heroes, the little community into the mustard seed whose branches would soon shade the whole earth?" Surely this historical answer is the life of Jesus crowned by the resurrection. And all through the centuries "Jesus, the historical form of Jesus of Nazareth, has been the immediate way to God for man.....Jesus belongs in any event to the present."

Even a critic like Klausner (113) has this to say of Jesus: "The contradictory traits in His character, its positive and negative aspects, His harshness and gentleness, His

(113) Op. cit. p 411.

clear vision combined with His cloudy visionariness, all these united to make Him a force and in influence for which history has never yet afforded a parallel." In view of the testimony to the character and career of Jesus --- from such divergent sources --- how is this well authenticated career, if its recorded close is either fabrication or ignorant falsehood, to commensurately end? We do not feel that His personality can stop dead. Is not the resurrection needed to fill out and satisfy this career? One must not for a moment side step the question by suggesting that the Jesus we know today is not historical but the creation of Paul. He was not for "when men make themselves a god they always fashion him in their own likeness --- St. Paul was a Pharisee, and, had he been the creator of the Evangelistic Jesus, he would have made Him in the likeness of a Pharisee. It is unthinkable and contrary to all our knowledge of him, that he should have risen so far above himself as to conceive that transcendent ideal.....To conceive an ideal he must have been himself so less than divine, and it remains that we should transfer to him the adoration which we have paid to Jesus."(114)

b. THE DENIAL OF THE MIRACULOUS. The stumbling block to most critics who deny the Gospel accounts of the resurrection is, of course, the necessity of accepting the miraculous element involved. From a study of their writings one receives the impression that in a rather arbitrary and entirely

(114) Smith: "THE HISTORICAL JESUS" pp.87-88. See also "THE ORIGIN OF PAUL'S RELIGION" by J. G. Machen, D.D., The Macmillan Company, New York, 1923.

a priori fashion the supernatural is ruled out just because it is supernatural. God is supernatural but He may only act in a perfectly natural way. The question may be asked by what right God is thus limited, and whether or not in making such a limitation one is not denuding God of those attributes which are essential to deity. "The question of miracles is a comprehensive one, starting with the philosophical problem of the existence of a personal God and His relations to the universe; passing next to the religious problem of the attitude of God toward man and the function of miracles in His self-revelation; and ending with the historical problem of the sufficiency of evidence that certain miracles were actually performed. If the student of the Gospels is fully convinced that there is no personal God, or that the universe is independent of His will, or that sufficient knowledge of God is given in natural ways, then the miraculous is ruled out, and any report of it is absurd. In other words the atheist or the deist is justified in affirming that miracles do not happen. But the agnostic, and still less the theist, has little right to make that affirmation until he has carefully examined the historical evidence that miracles have taken place."(115)

"Miracles are as great a stumbling block to modern thought as they were a help to the contemporaries of Jesus. The study of the life of Jesus cannot ignore this fact, nor make little of it. It is fair to insist, however, that the

(115) "INTRODUCTION TO THE LIFE OF CHRIST" by William Bancroft Hill, Professor of Biblical Literature in Vassar College, Scribners, New York, pp. 174-5. See also "IN HIS IMAGE" by William Jennings Bryan, Revell, New York, 1922, p 20ff.

question is one of evidence, not of metaphysical possibility" and men should be slow to try to limit the possible. (116) Illingworth (117) feels sure that if the Incarnation was a fact, and Jesus Christ was what He claimed to be, the miraculous in His life far from being improbable is the most natural thing in the world. If Jesus was a Being at home in two worlds, as He claims, we cannot separate His perfect life or matchless teaching from the miraculous. "They involve and interpenetrate and presuppose each other, and form in their insoluble combination one harmonious picture."

"Eliminate miracles from the career of Jesus and the belief of Christians, from the first moment that we have undoubted contemporary evidence of it (say about 50 A.D.) becomes an insoluble enigma." (118) It would seem that Jesus Himself realized that all in connection with the miraculous in His life would never be understood and so warned: "Blessed is he that shall find no scandal --- or stumbling block --- in me." (119)

If the above statements are true then, to be consistent in naturalizing the resurrection narratives, the critic must confine himself to the position of the atheist, deist, or agnostic and carry out this same program in connection with every phase of the career of Jesus.

c. HIS SAVIOURHOOD. The historic witness of the Church has been that Jesus on Calvary made vicarious atonement for the sin of the world and that His bodily resurrec-

(116) Rhees: op. cit. p 96. (117) "DIVINE IMMANENCE"
pp. 88-89. (118) Sanday: Op. cit. pp. 113-115.
(119) Matthew 11:6.

tion was (a) the needed proof that His death-offering was accepted; and (b) an earnest of the future bodily resurrection of believers. Denying Jesus' resurrection eliminates our assurance of these two facts so dear to the soul. Does this not then mean that Jesus' death was only that of an unfortunate martyr and meaningless for us all? If He did not rise from the dead in what respect was His experience in death any different from that of any man and in what sense can he be said to have triumphed over death, to have accomplished anything for us? One grants that death did not annihilate Him, but neither, we feel, did it those myriads who preceded Him in death. If His experience was the same as His predecessors in what respect has the power of death over man been broken? In spite of the ambition and conviction of the Apostle Paul (I Cor. 15:26) death still reigns and would seem to be the one thing outside the sovereignty of God and beyond the range of His power. Would it not seem then that man needs some better way of salvation than that in the defense of which martyrdom has poured out its blood?

3. The Integrity of the New Testament Scripture.

The position has already been taken that the virgin birth narratives are an integral part of our canonical Scripture and that to eliminate the one mutilates the other, and makes impossible our unquestioned confidence in its authority and veracity. The argument need not be presented in detail here. Suffice it to make three statements: (a) The superiority of our canonical Scriptures is patent, as illustrated in a comparison between the New Testament and apoc-

ryphal gospels. The writers of these latter were no mean artists. They possessed fine imaginations but for the task they undertook imagination alone would not suffice. "It was not for lack of art that the writer failed, but rather for this --- that he attempted the impossible task of dealing imaginatively with the supernatural. How then did it come to pass that when others with every recourse of genius and art disastrously failed our Evangelists have so conspicuously succeeded? The reason is simply this --- that they were not creators but historians; they were not dealing imaginatively with the supernatural but reporting an actual manifestation" and the evidence of their experience must not be overlooked or undervalued. "Here lies the supreme and incontrovertible evidence of the historicity of the Gospels. The final decision rests not with the critics, but with the saints; and their verdict is unanimous and unflinching. They know the Divine Original and they attest the faithfulness of the portrait." (120) Jesus had written nothing so the Evangelists did not write until approaching the time when eye-witnesses were dying off and then they wrote for future generations. As a result they give us vivid pictures of Jesus, not simply informative but convincing as to His claims. (b) Modern critics have torn the Gospels to pieces at will and one cannot but wonder at the criteria used. Editor after editor plays his unhappy part, treating the material freely, and it would almost seem that one should be grateful that when their work

(120) Smith: "THE HISTORICAL JESUS" pp. 34-35, 117.

is done there remains a remnant of material which may be regarded as trustworthy; even though the criteria by which the original text is distinguished from the editorial additions or interpretations are not always of a scientific or satisfactory nature. One grants that real difficulties are recognized, but others are gratuitously created. And the result is that we cannot trust the record; we are thrown back upon conjecture, a field in which every critic holds himself free to pursue his own way; and we have no authoritative and integral text which we may accept as the Holy Bible. (c) The resurrection story is just as securely embedded in the sacred narratives as any other incident; and one wonders how, if it is to be cast aside or so changed as to contradict the original, our faith in the trustworthiness of the Scripture is to be maintained and preserved from suspicion.

V. CONCLUSION.

One important fact which this study reveals is that the virgin birth and resurrection of Jesus would seem to be closely associated. In both the same factors, in the main, are involved and the two ideas are to a great extent interdependent. Denying either, the other becomes extremely unlikely; admitting either, the other is a natural assumption and a most becoming complement. Together they form a most appropriate introduction to and close of a unique life and career. To a surprising degree the same problems arise and demand solution when the Gospel accounts of both are rejected. In both cases not only must the origin of the ideas be accounted for but also the early and wide spread acceptances of the ideas. In each instance there is the fact that the main body of the Christian Church during the nineteen centuries of its history has accepted and taught the idea, and in that position prospered remarkably well; and this in spite of the fact that there is no antecedent inclination in support of the attitude. Neither is without its important bearing on the meaning for man of the person and work of Jesus. Involved here are the explanations of His personality, character, mission, and accomplishments; indeed, to a great degree, whatever relation He maintains to the race today. Historico-critical research has justified the claim of these narratives to a place in the early canonical documents of the Church with the result that one's explanation and attitude toward the integrity of Christianity's Source Books hinges upon his disposition of these particular

narratives.

While not conclusive proofs of the trustworthiness of these narratives, two facts should not be overlooked and are somewhat cumulative in the evidence they offer: (a) the respect which has been accorded them and emphasis which has been placed upon them by the great body of the Church throughout its history, and (b) the fact that it is easier to accept the evidence for these two ideas than to account for them in any other way. One feels, further, that the critics of these narratives to expect popular and universal acceptance of their interpretative rejections must come to much greater harmony and general agreement in their explanations. Truth is not self-contradictory; and blessed with both an appreciation of the problem and the best available tools of research it would seem that their approach to the truth would be indicated by increasing unanimity. So often the acid used to remove the divine portrait blurs the human character and little is left after all excisions are made; so much so that great sympathy is felt for the man who, once he has departed upon a naturalistic interpretation, finds himself lost in the "Quest of the Historical Jesus" and the "Christus myth" his only harbor.

"Earth, thou grain of sand on the shore of the Universe of God; thou Bethlehem amongst the princely cities of the heavens; thou art, and remainest, the Loved One among ten thousand suns and worlds, the Chosen of God! Thee will He again visit, and then thou wilt prepare a throne for Him, as thou gavest Him a manger cradle; in His radiant glory wilt

thou rejoice, as thou didst once drink His blood and His tears and mourn His death! On thee has the Lord a great work to complete." (121) And unto Him Who is able to guard us from stumbling, and to set us before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy, may there be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, before all time, and now, and for evermore.

(121) "DAS LEBEN JESU" Pressel, Reutlingen, 1857, p 553.