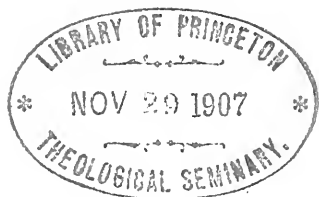


The Teaching of Jesus



CONCERNING
HIS OWN
PERSON





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concerning the ...

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THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS
Edited by JOHN H. KERR, D.D.

THE TEACHING OF JESUS
CONCERNING
HIS OWN PERSON

WAYLAND HOYT, D.D., LL.D.

THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS

CONCERNING

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AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY

THE TEACHING OF JESUS

CONCERNING

HIS OWN PERSON

By

Wayland Hoyt, D.D., LL.D.

AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY

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NEW YORK

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TO MY CLASSES
IN THE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY OF TEMPLE COLLEGE
PHILADELPHIA
MANLY, EARNEST MEN, WHOM
IT IS A RARE DELIGHT TO TEACH

“Christianity is non-existent apart from Christ ; it centres in Christ ; it radiates, now as at the first, from Christ. It is not a mere doctrine bequeathed by Him to a world with which He has ceased to have dealings ; it perishes outright when men attempt to abstract it from the Living Person of its Founder.”

Bampton Lectures, Canon Liddon.

FOREWORD

THE thoughtful young person I have had in mind in what I have written—the young person buffeted by the questions of many sorts, in these questioning days—I have sought to show the One to hold to, even our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Here is at once rest and safety in personal allegiance to the Personal Christ. If the young soul will but keep unrelaxing grip on Him who is at once our Lord and our great Brother, all will be well. This is the essential thing for any one. I have tried to show that it is also the most reasonable thing.

I have freely used both quotation and reference, indicating their sources as I went along, because to myself books of such sort have always been the most interesting and helpful.

If, as the result of this book, but one soul shall be fastened in a more determined and devoted loyalty to Jesus, I shall not have wrought in vain.

WAYLAND HOYT.

PHILADELPHIA, PA., Nov. 1st, 1907.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. THE FACT OF JESUS	I
1. WHAT EVEN DOUBTERS CONFESS	3
2. THE UNIVERSALITY OF JESUS	10
3. THE TEACHINGS OF JESUS	31
4. THE ASTOUNDING CLAIMS OF JESUS	45
5. THE SINLESSNESS OF JESUS	59
6. THE DYNAMIC AND PERPETUATING POWER OF JESUS	73
7. THE PERSONAL APPEARANCE OF JESUS	77
II. THE QUESTION: WHO THEN IS THIS?	81
III. THE ANSWER OF JESUS	85
1. THE SON OF MAN	87
2. THE TEACHING OF THIS SELF-DES- IGNATION	96

	PAGE
3. THE SON OF GOD	122
4. THE MESSIAH	131
5. MASTER, LORD, GOD	132
6. WHAT MUST BE GATHERED FROM THESE SELF-DESIGNATIONS? . . .	135
7. THE PROBLEM OF THE PERSON OF JESUS, AND A HINT AS TO ITS POSSIBLE SOLUTION	150
IV. SOME CONCLUSIONS	171
1. AS TO THE SUPERNATURAL BIRTH .	171
2. AS TO THE MIRACLES OF JESUS .	179
3. AS TO THE RESURRECTION OF JE- SUS AND THE OTHER LIFE	180
4. AS TO THE RATIONAL PERSONAL ATTITUDE TOWARD JESUS	189
INDEXES	193

CHAPTER I

The Fact of Jesus

I WAS sitting, one summer afternoon, on the veranda of the hotel in Tacoma, in the State of Washington. There was scarcely a trace of mist in all the sky. There was wide prospect before me—a portion of the City of Tacoma, hills, plains, various verdure, the clear waters of the Tacoma Bay, merging into the deep waters of the Puget Sound, and these reaching onward and outward into the Pacific Sea.

But there was one object in that prospect which irresistibly drew my vision.

Much as I might seek to look elsewhere, I could not keep my sight from distracting itself from all else and fixing itself, fascinated, on that masterfulness. That swayed sceptre over everything. That dwarfed city, plain, hills, fair waters flashing back the sunlight. That sovereign object was Mount Ranier, or Mount Tacoma, as it is variously called. It towered there against the blue of heaven fourteen thousand four hundred and forty-four feet. It was a perfect cone. And all its altitude was dazzling with the sheen of the eternal snows.

Thus, capturing the world's vision, there rises on its sight a lonely, unique, vivid, coercing, supreme Personality. Even Renan calls Him "the incomparable man."

That Personality is a fact of history. Whatever men may say about Him, they must confess that, in some shape at least, He actually was. Theories of mere myth concerning Him, of poetic and filmy

imaginings, of daring and fine invention such as the novelists use in manufacturing their characters—theories of such sort shatter themselves against His historic reality as the waves do against the rocks. In some guise He veritably was, as actual as Cæsar, as substantial as Marcus Aurelius, as existent as Napoleon.

I. What even Doubters Confess

Let these, some of them hesitant and grudging about His claims, bear their witness, notwithstanding, to the certainty of the footmarks this Jesus has made in history.

Said Rousseau, “ Shall we suppose the evangelical history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears no marks of fiction. On the contrary, the history of Socrates, which no one presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it.

It is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality, contained in the Gospel. The marks of its truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero."

Mr. Emerson speaks of "the unique impressions of Jesus upon mankind, whose name is not so much written as ploughed into the history of this world."

Said Theodore Parker, "Shall we be told, such a man never lived; the whole story is a lie? Suppose that Plato and Newton never lived; that their story is a lie. But who did their works, and thought their thoughts? It takes a Newton to forge a Newton. What man could have fabricated a Jesus? None but a Jesus."

Said David Friedrich Strauss, "And

this Christ, as far as He is inseparable from the highest style of religion, is historical, not mythical; is an individual, no mere symbol. To the historical person of Christ belongs all in His life that exhibits His religious perfection, His discourses, His moral action, and His passion. He remains the highest model of religion within the reach of our thought, and no perfect piety is possible without His presence in the heart."

Said the great German, Goethe, in his *Conversations with Eckermann*, "I look upon all the Four Gospels as thoroughly genuine; for there is in them the reflection of a greatness which emanated from the person of Jesus, and which was as divine a kind as ever was seen upon earth. If I am asked whether it is in my nature to pay Him devout reverence, I say, Certainly. I bow before Him as the divine manifestation of the highest principle of morality."

Says Mr. William E. H. Lecky, in his

History of European Morals, "It was reserved for Christianity to present to the world an ideal character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries, has inspired the hearts of men with an impassioned love, has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions; has been not only the highest pattern of virtue, but the strongest incentive to its practice; and has exercised so deep an influence, that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers and all the exhortations of moralists. This has, indeed, been the well-spring of whatever is best and purest in the Christian life. Amid all the sins and failings, amid all the priestcraft and persecution and fanaticism, that have defaced the Church, it has preserved, in the character and example of its Founder, an enduring principle of regeneration."

Said Frances P. Cobbe, "One thing, however, we may hold with approximate certainty ; and that is, that all the highest doctrines, the purest moral precepts, the most profound spiritual revelations recorded in the Gospels, were actually those of Christ Himself. The originator of the Christian movement must have been the greatest soul of His time, as of all time. If He did not speak those words of wisdom, who could have recorded them for Him ? 'It would have taken a Jesus to forge a Jesus.'"

Said George A. Chadwick, "No unreal personage wields a power like the power of Jesus. The myths of India cover, like a veil, the sleeping and impassive face of Asia ; but when the voice of Europe penetrates their slumber, her first uneasy movement begins to shake them off. But Jesus leads the West in her wakeful quest for truth, fires her energies, develops her originality, inspires her exploits, peoples the oceans with her ships, and

the wilds with her colonies. He is, as Paul described Him, not only a living soul, but a life-giving Spirit.

“ Here the story of Jesus parts company with every creation of human genius. The noblest figures painted by the grandest literary artists hang idly on the walls of the great picture-galleries of culture. Achilles is no longer desired in battle. The wandering Ulysses is sighed for in Ithaca no more. What’s Hecuba to us? The murder of Duncan, the wrongs of the Prince of Denmark, the broken heart of Lear—what politics do these affect? The party of Jesus—that is the holy Church throughout all the world.

“ In the Palestine of the year one, what is there to explain Christ? Did this eagle, with sun-sustaining eyes, emerge from the slime of the age of Tiberius, the basest age in history? Natural causes—the struggle to exist, the race which is to the swift, and the battle which is to the strong—did this teach a Jew, whose in-

terested intellect and His law both said, 'Thou shalt hate thine enemies,' to pray upon His cross for those who nailed Him there?''

Said John Stuart Mill, "It is no use to say that Christ, as exhibited in the Gospels, is not historical, and that we know not how much of what is admirable has been superadded by the tradition of His followers. The tradition of His followers suffices to have inserted any number of miracles, and *may* have inserted all the miracles He is reputed to have wrought. But who among His disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the Gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee, certainly not St. Paul, and still less the early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good which was in them was all derived, as they all professed that it was, from a higher source."

Study, a little, some of the traits and qualities of this historic Jesus.

II. The Universality of Jesus

What force, after all, is more piercing and fashioning than Heredity? Take that proverb of heredity, which so summarizes and expresses it, "he is a chip of the old block." Yes, the child is, to a great degree, the reproduction of the parent. Race-type, national-type, family-type—nothing is more structural and evident than are the presence and persistence of these types.

I was passing once through the corridor of the British Houses of Parliament—that which connects the House of Lords on the one hand and the House of Commons on the other. Just as I entered, Mr. Disraeli was walking through. I had a chance for a good close look at him. I seized the chance. I can never forget what a thorough Jew he seemed. The marks of his Jewish ancestry were

as plain and distinguishing as was the masterful man himself.

Take the Jews, for example. What an instance they are of the empire of heredity! They have been ravaged—as when at the destruction of their sacred city under the Roman Titus, three factions within the city began to murder one another, and the unburied dead produced a pestilence, and starvation drove to cannibalism, and not less than one million one hundred thousand perished in the six months of the dreadful siege. They have been hated—as when Constantine declared them the most hateful of nations, and the centuries since have deluged them with scorn. They have been persecuted—as when the edict went forth that the land which had given Mohammed birth should be defiled no longer with Hebrew feet; as when, at the coronation of Richard First of England, they were hunted out that they might be butchered; as when, in 1287, all the Jews in that

realm of England were to be seized in a single day, their goods confiscated to the king, and sixteen thousand six hundred and sixty were banished from the country, and if one remained after a fixed day he was to be hanged without mercy ; as when, in Spain under Ferdinand and Isabella, eight hundred thousand of them were forced to leave their homes, their synagogues, their schools, their tombs ; as when, through so many generations, they have been plundered when rich, and taxed when poor, and have been almost everywhere despised and spit upon. And yet, though the Jews have been so long and so variously battered, the distinctive, hereditary Jewish type is as plainly present as it was in Abraham himself.

Nor have more genial surroundings and influences had the least tendency to wipe out this enduring Jewish type. In the Fairmount Park in Philadelphia there is a grateful and splendid monument reared by Jews, and dedicated to the people of

the United States—the only nation in history that has never lifted persecuting hand against them. Yet, amid this American civil summer and chance for them, the ancestral Jewish type steadily persists.

There can be no more outstanding instance than the Jew of the thorough-going separating, sectionalizing despotism of Heredity.

Bear reverently but steadily in mind the fact that this Jesus was Jew!

Behold, in addition, the also mightily moulding and isolating power of Environment. How largely dependent we are for the shape of what we are upon environment. You are, to sculpturing degree, what you are, because you were born where you were; because of the companionship amid which you have been set; because of the quality and method of the schooling which wrought upon your youth; because of the sort

of toil, either of brawn or brain, which has compelled your manhood.

And what was the environment of this Jesus?

Think of the environment of the National Atmosphere of Jesus. Let Dr. Edersheim here be our authority. He is well qualified to speak. He was Jew before he became Christian, was possessed of a Rabbi's learning in the curious and various lore of his ancestral people. He says, "And what of Judaism itself at that period? It was miserably divided, even though no outward separation had taken place. The Pharisees and Sadducees held opposite principles, and hated each other; the Essenes looked down upon them both. Within Pharisaism the schools of Hillel and Shammai contradicted each other on almost every matter. But both insisted in their unbounded contempt of what they designated as 'the country people'—those who had no traditional learning, and hence were either unable

or unwilling to share the discussions, and to bear the burdens of legal ordinances, which constituted the chief matter of traditionalism. There was only one feeling common to all—high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlettered; it was that of intense hatred of the foreigner. The rude Galileans were as ‘national’ as the most punctilious Pharisees; indeed, in the war against Rome they furnished the most and the bravest soldiers. . . . Three days before a heathen festival,”—as demanded by the prevalent Pharisaism—“all transactions with Gentiles were forbidden, so as to afford them neither direct nor indirect help toward their rites; and this prohibition extended even to private festivities, such as a birth-day, the day of return from a journey, etc. On heathen festive occasions a pious Jew should avoid, if possible, passing through a heathen city; certainly all dealings in shops which were festively decorated. It was unlawful for Jewish workmen to assist

in anything which might be subservient either to heathen worship or heathen rule, including in the latter the erection of court-houses and similar buildings. . . . So terrible was the intolerance, that a Jewess was actually forbidden to give help to her heathen neighbor, when about to become a mother. . . . Milk drawn from a cow by heathen hands, bread and oil prepared by them, might indeed be sold to strangers, but not used by Israelites. No pious Jew would of course have sat down at the table of a Gentile. If a heathen were invited to a Jewish house, he might not be left alone in the room, else every article of food or drink on the table was henceforth to be regarded as unclean. If cooking utensils were bought of them, they had to be purified by fire or by water, knives to be ground anew, spits to be made red hot before use, etc. It was not lawful to let either house or field, or to sell cattle, to a heathen; any article,

however distantly connected with heathenism, was to be destroyed. Thus, if a weaving-shuttle had been made of wood grown in a grove devoted to idols, every web of cloth made by it was to be destroyed; nay, if such pieces had been mixed with others, to the manufacture of which no possible objection could have been taken, these all became unclean, and had to be destroyed.”*

And the Gentiles, and as conquering peoples they were numerous in Palestine, paid the Jew back heartily in his own coin. Jewish worship of an invisible Jehovah, Jewish insistence on the Sabbath holiness and rest, Jewish scrupulousness about special and unclean meats, the Jewish badge of circumcision—Jewish laws and customs such as these were the constant causes of antagonisms, gibes, jests on the part of Gentiles toward the Jews. Though a few wider-minded Gentiles

* *Sketches of Jewish Social Life in the Days of Christ*, by Rev. Dr. Edersheim, pp. 25-28.

were more tolerant, and though some of them, tired of their heathenism and attracted by the revelation of Jehovah in the Jewish Scriptures, even became proselytes, yet, speaking generally, the bearing of Gentile to Jew was as hard and bitter as was that of Jew to Gentile. Probably there never was sharper and wider religious hatred than that which severed and seared the peoples of Palestine when Jesus lived and wrought in it.

Such environment of isolating and irritating national and social atmosphere wrapped, like a blighting and blinding fog, the country of the birth and the toil of this Jesus.

Think of the environment of the Town of Jesus. Provincialism was the distinguishing mark of it. It was in no meaning metropolitan—with celebrated schools, famed temples, cultivated society, compelling and identifying modes of thought.

To be sure, the three great roads—the

great trade road carrying from Damascus the products of the East to Europe; the old war road pushing from Assyria to Egypt; the "frankincense" road to Arabia, intersected each other in Galilee and at no far distance from Nazareth, and so, perhaps, brought frequently to Nazareth a various influx of peoples, merchants, soldiers. But still, Nazareth can, in no meaning, be thought of as a town even of the metropolitan sort and influence of Capernaum, which lay apart from it, some nine hours' journey, on the Lake of Galilee.

The preponderance of testimony seems to be that the number of the inhabitants of Nazareth hardly numbered two thousand. It had but one fountain, one Synagogue, one public square. It was, and is to-day held in a fold of the great hill on which it stretches. There is wide and wonderful prospect from the summit of the hill on the sheltering breast of which the town lies. But the town itself does

not at all command the prospect. You must make a difficult climb upward from the town before you can get vision of the entrancing view. Nazareth was and is a somewhat separated, hidden, on some sides, shut away village. It was no place for the eddying of world currents. These would flow by it, not tarry in it. The proverb about it was, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" (John i. 46). Such was the secluding environment of the town of Jesus.

Think of the environment of the Home of Jesus. On a spring day, not long since, I rode into the modern town of Nazareth in Galilee. Of course there is various change in the modern village from the ancient place in which stood the home of Jesus; but in that Orient changes are laggard, and the lens of the to-day is not so clouded by difference that, looking through it, you cannot quite plainly descry what must have been the

long-ago shape and look of things. I tarried by the fountain whence the inhabitants of the present Nazareth get their water supply. Though the buildings surrounding it are modern, it is the same large and lavish spring which furnished water in the time of Jesus. It was an old-time scene I saw in the new time. While the shadows were lengthening toward the evening, there the throng of women were, crowding about the fountain, at the, in the East, changeless woman's duty of getting water for the household. Here and there I saw a small boy following his mother. The mother of Jesus used to dip her great earthen jar into that fountain; with the wonderful strong movement with which I saw those women doing it, the mother of Jesus used to swing the huge jar, heavy with water, to her head, and march off with it skilfully balanced there. And the boy Jesus would follow her, just as those boys I saw followed their mothers,

down the steep hill and along the rough and stony street.

I went into the peasants' houses of to-day in Nazareth. This was the sort of them—just a cube of stone or of sun-dried bricks; one room, often windowless, with only open door for window; no tables, the floor serving for table, some rugs, some beds—pallets rolled up each morning and put away until, when night comes, they are spread upon the floor of the one room—living, working, eating, and also sleeping room—unless, in pleasant weather, the sleeping place be the flat house-top. No knives, spoons, forks—fingers and pieces of thin bread doubled together do the duty of these; a chest; an outside earthen oven, common to several families, in which upon heated stones baking is done in a rude way. Not unlike such home as this must have been the home of Jesus.

But high teaching, and about the loftiest matters, must have gone on in that

home of Jesus. In the truest of meanings it must have been a religious home. The one text-book of its teaching was the Scriptures of the Old Testament. Much of this was learned by heart, and it was the steady staple of the household devotion. There was the Synagogue School too in Nazareth in which Jesus must have been pupil. Besides there were the Synagogue services every Sabbath. Then, when Jesus had reached the age of twelve, there were the yearly and vision-giving journeys to Jerusalem where the splendid temple shone, and the sacrifices smoked, and the venerable and stately ritual held its daily course, and the great Day of Atonement taught its national lessons of Hebrew bondage and wonderful Divine release; and where, thicker and more clustering than ivy matted upon ancient walls, hung multitudinous and various and precious Hebrew associations.

Nor was Jesus the only child in that

home in Nazareth. I utterly believe that, while Jesus had infinitely higher paternal parentage than Joseph, after the birth of Jesus from His virgin mother, children were born into that home in Nazareth of whom Joseph and Mary were the parents. And so the teaching which results from multiplying household life went on in that home in Nazareth.

Nor should we forget that Jesus must have been exquisitely sensitive to the natural scenery environing His home. His whole teaching is evidence of this. While His was a usual peasant home nestling within the secluding clasp of the hill enfolding Nazareth, a climb to the hill's top would make Him centre of a wide and rare horizon. Jesus must have often made that climb, and swept that horizon, spectacular with mountain, plain, and far-gleaming sea, with eager eye. And lowlier beauties must have arrested and entranced Him—the anemones—the lilies of the field—gorgeous with gold and pur-

ple Solomon could not rival or even reach the flashing plumage and sweet songs, and happy, trustful, care-free business of the birds of heaven.

Yet, surely, anyone must see that the home-environment of Jesus could not have been of any world-touching kind; could not, in itself, have much suggested truths and ways of thinking which would reach forth to and intertwist with the manifold mankind; must have been an environment tending to specialness, to separateness of thought and life from peoples who had not shared in the peculiar Hebrew, Scriptural ancestral culture.

Think of the environment of the Toil of Jesus. Do not in your imagination put perpetual halo round the head of Jesus, as the artists, called the great masters, do so constantly. Let a picture like Holman Hunt's "Shadow of the Cross" teach you more truly. To me that is the most moving of pictures. I have stood

in just such a narrow Oriental workshop as the picture depicts—indeed, it is the one living room of the lowly family, among other uses put to the use of workshop. I have seen and handled just such rude tools as the artist shows lying about and hung upon the walls. Get the vision of that great true picture. The beams of the setting sun glorify the mean room. Here, one end upon a carpenter's horse the other end upon the floor, lies a great timber which must be fashioned. Jesus, wielding adze and stooping, has been thus fashioning it. The floor is littered with the chips and shavings about His feet. Jesus will rest Himself a little, as the day's toil is ending. So He unclasps the adze, and, straightening Himself, stretches out His arms, as would anyone who had been for long bending and working, that such change of posture may relieve weariness. And lo, the rays of the setting sun, upon the wall behind Him, make, of His outstretched arms, the shadow of a

cross. The shadow His mother Mary sees, though Jesus does not; the time for the cross for Him has not yet come.

But, for long years, in that town of Nazareth, and at such toil, this Jesus wrought. His handicraft clung to Him. "Is not this the carpenter?" they asked when He became the public teacher. The environment of hard-handed and tasking toil was that of Jesus for far the larger portion of His life. The environment of the carpenter's shop in a poor town is not now, even with all our multiplicities of books, daily press, swift easy intercourse—certainly was not then, eminently favorable to the maturing of a way of thought and speech which should at once enlighten and embrace the world.

Yet, notwithstanding such heredity and such environment Jesus stands forth the One Universal Man. In Him, and in Him only, these great facts and laws of heredity and environment find no sectionalizing and specializing illustration.

He is the unique, transcendent exception to these laws. To Him all flock "as the birds do to the summer." His is the "touch of nature which makes the whole world kin."

The most diverse intellects find meeting-place in Him. Shakespeare and Sir Isaac Newton adore Him; and the poor, witless fellow, of whom I read, who knew no more than

"I'm a poor sinner, and nothing at all,
But Jesus Christ is my all and in all"

—is brother to these colossal intellects in Jesus.

The most differing nationalities find refuge in Him—Anglo-Saxon William Ewart Gladstone, and the twenty thousand Chinese Christians who, the other year, sealed their devotion to Jesus with their blood.

The dwellers in the most varying zones and climates find answer in Jesus. It is in New Herrnhut in Greenland. The

Moravian John Beck is copying in fair clear hand the translation of the Gospels into the mean tongue which rules there. A company of natives, passing by, wait to be told what is in the book. The narrative of the agony of Jesus is read and explained to them. One of the savages, Kaiarnak, starts up and eagerly exclaims, "How was that? Tell me that once more, for I too would fain be saved." It is close to the equator. At last William Carey's labors have won converts. A poor Pariah woman, Joymuni, is telling her experience. She has found Jesus her "Assroy"—that is, the house of refuge for those who have forsaken all. So is this Jesus binding bridge between the dwellers where the cold freezes and where the sun pours torrid heats.

The most opposite temperaments find home in Jesus—impetuous Peter, meditative and mystic John, doubting Thomas, fervid and sagacious Paul.

Besides, "have we ever thought of the

peculiar position occupied by Jesus with respect to the ideals of the sexes? No man has ever dared to call Jesus, in any opprobrious sense, sexless; yet in character He stands above, and, if one may use the term, midway between the sexes—His comprehensive humanity is a veritable storehouse of the ideals we associate with both the sexes. No woman has ever had any more difficulty than men have had in finding in Him the fulfillment of the ideal.” As Bishop Westcott says, “Whatever there is in men, of strength, justice, and wisdom ; whatever there is in woman, of sensibility, purity and insight, is in Christ without the conditions which hinder among us the development of contrasted virtues in one person.”*

In the Museum in Haarlem in Holland, I waited long before a picture by a great Dutch artist, of Christ Blessing the Children. And the face of the Christ

* *The Universality of Jesus*, by Rev. G. A. Johnston Ross, M. A. p. 15.

had a Dutch look, and His robes were of the Dutch fashion, and they were plainly Dutch mothers who were bringing little Dutch children to a Christ whose features were not foreign to them. The Italian Raphael gives the Jesus he paints the look of Italy, and it is beneath those sunny skies he places Him. The Russian Vereshtchagin cannot keep out Russian characteristics as he paints the Christ. Nor need he. For the one Christ is open-hearted for and inclusive of Dutch, Italian, Russian, Anglo-Saxon, old hemisphere, new hemisphere, old time, new time. Jesus is the one universal man in deep close kinship with all the men of all the times and all the climes. As another has so finely and truly said, "He stretched His arms out upon the cross that He might embrace the world."

III. The Teachings of Jesus

At the close of the hidden years in Nazareth, this Jesus "suddenly emerges

into fame as the most daring religious thinker of His time. He speaks out of the fulness of a mind profound, original and devout. He commands horizons of thought and aspiration undreamed of by the Jew. The greatest religious thinkers of His day pale before His new-risen splendors.”*

And not only is this Jesus the greatest teacher of His own time, but of all the times preceding His, and of all the times succeeding. That His teachings are the loftiest the world has known is the wide and various confession. And so peculiar are the teachings of this Jesus, in their vital and vitalizing freshness, that they are as applicable and commanding in this twentieth century as they were when, in the long ago, He first enunciated them. Well does one exclaim, “In the culture of the past, Thou, Christ, art the only modern!”

But while so lofty, they are too ideal

* *The Life of Christ*, by William J. Dawson, p. 31.

and impracticable—is the not unusual criticism of the teachings of Jesus by the busy and pushing man of the street.

Is that a just criticism? Does the acknowledged loftiness of the teachings of Jesus really resolve them into an aerial mist of impracticability? “Yes,” many say. “That teaching of Jesus about the smitten cheek, for example, is a teaching so lofty that it is impracticable.”

But, interpret the teaching of Jesus by the example of Jesus.

There, before the gray of the morning, Jesus stands undergoing illegal preliminary examination by Annas, the ex-high priest. Annas is set on the destruction of Jesus. He will trap Jesus into some unwary admission, if he can. Annas begins illegally questioning Jesus about His teachings. Jesus will maintain His right to *legal* investigation. He will demand definite charge, substantiated by witnesses. He replies—in temple, in synagogue, in the open, He has taught publicly. “Ask

them that heard me ; behold, they know what I said," is His calm answer. Then an utmost indignity is visited upon Jesus. An attendant of the ex-high priest, and altogether illegally, smites Jesus with the palm of his hand. Did Jesus turn the other cheek for further smiting? Rather, with serene self-control, He simply said "If I have spoken evil, bear witness of the evil; but if well, why smitest thou me?" Really, that command about the smitten cheek is a command, condensed into a proverb, against vengeful retaliation. That is not impracticable. Nothing is nobler than a steady self-control amid irritations and injuries. And that is both practicable and possible.

But, the usual man of the street says, "That command of Jesus about love to one's enemies—'But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despise-

fully use you and persecute you '—surely, that command is impracticable."

But, interpret this teaching of Jesus by the further word of Jesus. Jesus goes on—"That ye may be the children of your Father which is in Heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." The Father in Heaven does not love the unjust in the same way in which He loves the just. He could not be the Father in Heaven if He did. He loves the just with the love of complacency. He cannot love the unjust thus. But He can and does love them with the love of benevolence. He sends benevolently His sun and rain even on the unjust. Thus we are to love our enemies—if we have them. You are not asked to be complacent toward the evil to which their enmity to you has prompted your enemies. But it is demanded of you that you be benevolently gracious with

kindness even to your enemies; that even upon your enemies you be willing to lavish service. That is not impracticable.

But, many say, "That clause in the prayer which Jesus taught about forgiving our debtors is certainly impracticable." And it is never to be forgotten that Jesus singles that clause out for special and explanatory commentary, as He does no other—"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."

But, how does our Father in Heaven forgive? Upon repentance. Give heed now to these other and interpreting words of Jesus. "Take heed to yourselves; if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven

times in a day turn again to thee, saying I repent, thou shalt forgive him." No, you are not just indiscriminately and carelessly to forgive. But you are to be in such constant mood toward the one injuring you, that you shall be instant and complete in forgiveness, no matter how many times you may have been wronged, the moment he repentingly turns toward you. That is not impracticable.*

No. The teachings of Jesus are not impracticable. They are exceptional in these two regards—they are both the loftiest teachings, and the most singularly and nobly practicable. Were the teachings of Jesus but practised, as they should be, in homes, on street, in mart, in church, the millennium had come. In just the proportion in which they are

* See this whole matter of the practicability of the teachings of Jesus admirably discussed by Dr. John A. Broadus in his lectures "Jesus of Nazareth," delivered before the Johns Hopkins University.

getting practised is the old world swinging into the better sunlight.

Some years since Sir Edwin Arnold, the distinguished poet, and author of *The Light of Asia*, and Dr. William Ashmore of China, the heroic and renowned American Missionary, met each other on a Pacific steamship. "I have been criticised," said Sir Edwin Arnold to Dr. Ashmore, "for an implied comparison between Buddhism and Christianity in regard to the doctrines derived from them and the principles contained in them respectively. No such object was in my mind. For me, Christianity, rightly viewed, is the crowned queen of religions, and immensely superior to every other; and though I am so great an admirer of much that is great in Hindu philosophy and religion, I would not give one verse of the Sermon on the Mount away for twenty Epic poems like the Mahabharata, nor exchange the Golden Rule for twenty new Upanishads."

Give attention to the Tremorless Certainty of the teachings of this Jesus. His teachings throw their circle round the most awful and transcendent matters—the deepest facts of human destiny, the unseen and by every living man unvisited and unknown other world, the being and character of God and His relation to this world. Yet, in all the teachings of this Jesus there is the unwavering calmness of the most certain knowledge. In His teachings there are no guesses, no difficult and labored reasonings, no surmisings, no doubtful balancings of probabilities. This Jesus speaks, as the sun shines, with the positiveness and authority of self-announcing light.

Here is Socrates, on trial for his life, saying to the Athenians, “ Or perhaps do I differ from most other men in this, and if I am wiser at all than any one, am I wiser in this, that while not possessing any exact knowledge of the state of matters in Hades, I do not imagine that I pos-

sess such knowledge.” Here is Socrates again, under sentence of death, talking to his friends just before he drank the hemlock—“Well, friends, we have been discoursing for this last hour on the immortality of the soul, and there are many points about that matter on which he were a bold man who should readily dogmatize.” At best, this is the language of half-knowledge, of cautious reasoning, finding stepping-stones with difficulty, of hint and misty hope. The difference between a rush-light flickering in the midnight and the June sun at noon, is the difference between such vague conjectures of this greatest of merely human teachers, and the tranquil, effulgent affirmation of this Jesus—“Let not your heart be troubled; in my Father’s house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you”; or that announcement, amid the death-shadows, to the penitent thief upon the cross—“To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.”

So this Jesus speaks to men in all directions with this unwavering certainty. He does not, voyaging after it, discover truth for men; He discloses truth to men as from the fulness of a perfect self-possession of the truth. Sin, forgiveness, providence, prayer, immortality—of these, and of other tremendous themes as vast as these, He utters Himself with no wearying and disturbing doubtfulness.

I stood once on Mount Washington and beheld the rising of the sun. At first nothing could be seen; then, in the earliest gray of the morning, whelming billows of rolling mists; then, as the sun advanced, his beams cleared mists and darkness utterly away, and every mountain stood forth revealed, and each nestling valley was made evident. In such questionless and victorious radiance do truths stand out, concerning which men for ages had sought vision vainly, when this Jesus speaks.

Think further, of how the Predictive Element in the teachings of this Jesus has been verified. Take but a single instance. The temple of Jesus' time, Herod's rebuilt temple, probably outshone even Solomon's first temple. For nearly fifty years they lavished toil and treasure on it. Says Josephus of this temple—and he saw it in its rare radiance, “The temple appeared to strangers, when they were coming to it at a distance, like a mountain covered with snow; for as to those parts of it which were not gilt, they were exceeding white. With respect to its outward face the temple wanted nothing in its front that was likely to surprise either men's minds or their eyes; for it was covered all over with plates of gold of great weight, and, at the first rising of the sun, reflected back a fiery splendor.”

Said the disciples, and surely with an unblameworthy Jewish pride, “Master, see what manner of stones and what buildings are here!” “And Jesus an-

swering said, Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down" (Mark xiii. 1-2). And at another time, with more particularizing prophecy, Jesus said of that Jerusalem and of that shining and vast temple which was its chief glory, "For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation" (Luke xix. 43, 44).

Precisely, and within forty brief years, what Jesus predictively said should be the destiny of that Jerusalem and of that huge temple rising proudly amidst its temple-area, was its destiny. The most awful event in human history—the cataclysmic and enormous significance of

which does not begin to bulk enough in our modern thought of it—did take place under the Roman Titus. As Dean Milman tells of it, “Of all the stately city—the populous streets, the places of the Jewish kings, the fortresses of her warriors, the Temple of her God—not a ruin remained, except the tall towers of Phasælis, Mariamne, and Hippicus, and part of the western wall, which was left as a defense for the Roman camp.” And, through the centuries since, though other Jerusalems have risen upon the ruins of that ancient one, though the Jerusalem Jesus saw is buried from thirty to a hundred feet below the Jerusalem one to-day looks at, that temple-area, the only portion not so buried, has remained as cleanly swept of any Jewish temple, or even synagogue, as it was cleanly swept by the fire and the slaughter of that Roman destruction.

As I sat, not so long ago, upon the Mount of Olives, and looked upon that

temple-area, lying there beneath me, and thought of the predictive words of Jesus about that resplendent temple which once stood so firmly and so grandly amid that area—as I saw, with my own eyes, how every least predictive word of Jesus about it all had come to such exact fulfillment, the granitic certainty of the words of Jesus rose before me as the mountains rise. I said to myself—and how could I help saying it?—as, in this immense instance, the predictive words of Jesus have turned out to be so precisely true, so in all other directions shall the predictive words of Jesus, whether toward the dark or toward the bright, exactly culminate. Here is certainty.

IV. The Astounding Claims of Jesus

Preëxistence.—This Jesus claimed His descent from a nobler and higher place and sort of being into this lowlier. He asserts that He came down from Heaven

—“For I am come down from Heaven” (John vi. 38). He affirms Himself specially sent of God—“Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me; for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of myself, but He sent me” (John viii. 42). He dares to avouch an existence personal and actual before the presence of Abraham on the earth, though only the bloom of a young manhood mantles His cheek and brow. “Verily, verily, I say unto you, before Abraham was born, I am” (John viii. 58). The solemnities of the farewell to the disciples are shadowing; the awful cross is looming; the sanctities of the last High-Priestly prayer for the disciples are casting holy spell—surely, if there ever were place and time for searching sincerity they are these—yet, unfalteringly, His prayer insists on an antecedent glory. “And now, Father, glorify Thou me with Thine Own Self, with the glory which I had with

Thee before the world was" (John xvii. 5).

The Fulfilment in Himself of all previous and long-timed Prophecy and Ritual—this Jesus claimed. Recall that scene in the Synagogue at Nazareth. Jesus is asked to read the appointed prophetic portion for the day. The roll of the prophecy of Isaiah is handed Him. It is thus He reads :

“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,
Because He anointed me to preach good tidings
to the poor;
He hath sent me to proclaim release to the captives,
And recovering of sight to the blind,
To set at liberty them that are bruised,
To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord.”

The reading done, this is His announcement—“To-day hath this Scripture been fulfilled in your ears” (Luke iv. 18–21). Mark that other word, equally challenging and positive, from the Sermon on the

Mount—"Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets—I came not to destroy, but to fulfill" (Matt. v. 17). Hear also these almost closing words of the earthly life of this Jesus—"All things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the psalms, concerning me" (Luke xxiv. 44).

"Consider, now, how great this Person was, at least in His own consciousness, who felt that He was the end aimed at in the very existence of the true religion in the world. It was for me, He virtually said, that God called Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; for me that He led Israel out of Egypt and gave them laws by Moses, and read the lessons of history and adumbrated the future by the prophets; it is for me that the whole course of God's providence and redemption has been working through the ages; all these laws, prophecies, institutions, catastrophes, deliverances, revelations, are justi-

fied—they are shown to have a Divine right to exist—because they end in me. Consider how great a claim is involved here, and how unique.”*

The Right and Power to Forgive Sins—this Jesus claims. Take but one instance. See him there, poor fellow. Paralysis has smitten him—the implication seems to be he has brought it on himself by dissipation. He must be carried on his bed—perhaps a padded quilt, perhaps a *grabbatus* (a slight low frame, corded), on which is a mattress on which the sick man is lying. Four friends, each tugging at a corner of that on which he lies, are bringing the paralytic; Jesus discerns faith, both in the smitten man and in the four assisting friends. To their faith Jesus thus replies, “Son, thy sins be forgiven thee.” No wonder those about thought blasphemy had been spoken,

* *Studies in Theology*, by Dr. James Denney, lectures delivered in Chicago Theological Seminary, pp. 27, 28.

and reasoned in their hearts—"Who can forgive sins but God only?" But not one whit does Jesus lessen His claim. And, though at this point in our argument we may not speak of miracles, it is to be noted that it is the record that Jesus instantly does a mighty work of physical healing on the smitten man to substantiate both His right to and His ability for the immense prerogative of the forgiveness of sins (Mark ii. 1-12).

Utmost, Questionless, Supreme Allegiance to Himself—also this Jesus claims. And, among others, in these three particulars.

In the particular of making Himself the summation and illustration of His teaching and demanding that He always is to be reckoned such. Contrast the method of Jesus here with that of other teachers whom the world calls great. They point from themselves to their doctrine. Jesus makes Himself the

centre of His doctrine, as the sun makes itself the centre of the day. The great Gautama, the founder of Buddhism, is speaking with his disciple Ananda. Thus he speaks—"The Perfect," that is, the Buddha, "thinks not that it is he who should lead the brotherhood, or that the order is dependent upon him. Why then should he leave instructions in any matter concerning the order? . . . Therefore, O Ananda, be ye lamps unto yourselves. Be ye a refuge to yourselves. Betake yourself to no external refuge. . . . And whosoever, Ananda, either now or after I am dead, shall be a lamp unto themselves, and a refuge unto themselves, shall betake themselves to no external refuge, but holding fast to the truth as their lamp, shall look not for refuge to any one besides themselves . . . it is they, Ananda, who shall reach the topmost height."*

But what does Jesus

* Quoted in *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, by Charles Gore, M. A., pp. 8, 9.

say? “Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John vi. 37). “Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. xi. 28). “I am the resurrection and the life” (John xi. 25). “I am the way and the truth and the life” (John xiv. 6). “He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?” “Follow thou Me” (John xiv. 9; xxi. 22). How majestic, and wreathed with isolating claim is this imperial ME of Jesus.

In the particular of an allegiance to Himself so superlative that all treasure of mind, heart, will, shall be but dust of the balance when weighed with it, this Jesus makes claim. That tragic story of Perpetua—scarcely beyond twenty, with her babe at her breast, with white-haired father and youthful husband mingling their implorations that she forswear her allegiance to this Jesus; her sublime and

calm refusal; then her fair limbs gashed and torn by the lions in the arena; and her babe motherless; and her husband wifeless, and her aged father childless! But the young martyr, Perpetua, only recognized and submitted to the inexorable claim of this Jesus who said—"He that loveth father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after Me is not worthy of Me" (Matt. x. 37, 38).

In the particular that, in the conception of this Jesus, His own claims of a supreme allegiance to Himself do not at all clash with the overshadowing claims of Jehovah. Again and again this Jesus asserts that the unvarying heart and pith of the commandments of the awful Jehovah are an unrelaxing and overtopping devotion to Jehovah. To one asking Him, "Master, which is the great com-

mandment in the law?" this Jesus replies, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment" (Matt. xxii. 37, 38). Yet, the singular and noteworthy thing about the insistence by this Jesus upon such rightful overruling devotion to Jehovah is, that it is not at all interfered with by His own claim of an equally including and over-mastering devotion to Himself. "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me" (Ex. xx. 3), is the stern and separating command at Sinai. But, in the thought of this Jesus, to claim for Himself the whole wealth of a human soul is not to divert that soul from obedience to the command of Sinai, is not to summon that soul into the commission of idolatry. Was ever claim more colossal?

Concerning the whole matter of this claim of Jesus to a limitless personal allegiance, Didon, the French theologian,

has finely and truly said, "The believer no longer belongs to himself; he renounces his own thoughts, his own interests, his own initiative; everything, in short, and belongs without reserve to Him in whom he believes. He dies to himself in order to live morally in another; he exchanges his own life for the life of another. *No one but God has the right to demand absolute faith*; for every man has his errors, his faults, his imperfections, and in abdicating before a man, one would become the slave of this man's weaknesses. Jesus claimed this complete faith,—a sign that He claimed the prerogative of God."*

And the relation to practical life of submission to such claim of this Jesus, one has well sung :

Three little words, but full of tenderest meaning;
Three little words the heart can scarcely hold;
Three little words, but on their import dwelling,
What wealth of love their syllables unfold!

* Quoted in *Studies in Theology*, by Dr. James Denney, p. 30.

“For my sake” cheer the suffering, help the needy;
On earth this was my work; I give it thee.

If thou wouldst follow in thy Master’s footsteps,
Take up my cross and come and learn of me.

“For my sake” let the harsh word die unuttered
That trembles on the swift, impetuous tongue;

“For my sake” check the quick, rebellious feeling
That rises when thy brother does thee wrong.

“For my sake” press with steadfast patience
onward,

Although the race be hard, the battle long.

Within my Father’s house are many mansions;

There thou shalt rest and join the victor’s song.

And if in coming days the world revile thee,

If “for my sake” thou suffer pain and loss,

Bear on, faint heart; thy Master went before thee;

They only wear His crown who share His cross.

Nor is the vast and culminating future
beyond the scope of the claim of this
Jesus. That “far off, divine event to-
ward which the whole creation moves”
He is not only to have a hand in, but He
is Himself to be both its cause and centre.

At the world's final judgment He is to be absolute adjudicator. This Galilean Peasant dares declare—and the unwonted thing about it is that the expectant world has not esteemed the declaration an insanity—"When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then shall He sit on the throne of His glory: and before Him shall be gathered all the nations: and He shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me in; naked, and ye clothed Me: I was sick, and ye visited Me: I was in prison, and ye came unto Me. Then

shall the righteous answer Him, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, and fed Thee? or athirst, and gave Thee drink? And when saw we Thee a stranger, and took Thee in? or naked, and clothed Thee? And when saw we Thee sick, or in prison, and came unto Thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of these My brethren, *even* these least, ye did it unto Me. Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire which is prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave Me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave Me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took Me not in; naked, and ye clothed Me not; sick, and in prison, and ye visited Me not. Then shall they also answer, saying, Lord, when saw we Thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister

unto Thee? Then shall He answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not unto one of these least, ye did it not unto Me. And these shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life.” (Matt. xxv. 31-46).

V. The Sinlessness of Jesus

Writing autobiographically and forcing his memory back into his earliest days, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes says—“The first unequivocal act of wrong that has left its trace in my memory was this; refusing a small favor asked of me—nothing more than telling what had happened at school one morning. No matter who asked it; but there were circumstances which saddened and awed me. I had no heart to speak; I faltered some miserable, perhaps petulant excuse, stole away, and the first battle of life was lost. What remorse followed I need not tell. Then and there, to the best of my

knowledge, I first consciously took sin by the hand and turned my back on duty. Time has led me to look upon my offence more leniently. Yet if I had but won that first battle !”

How widely self-revealing is this confession ! Who, of all the world's millions must not make confession somewhat similar ? Conscious sinning darkens over every one. The confession of the prophet is the confession of the race, “all we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way.” This consciousness of sin is not a mere unhappiness. It wears deeper shades. It is a feeling, in a certain sense, of criminality. I have not done what I ought, and I am therefore wrong, is the universal self-certainty. And this consciousness of guilt because of sin is wholly involuntary. Man cannot help it. It follows from thoughtful sight of the sins which one has done, as inevitably as the flash follows the touch of match to

gunpowder. Man does not want to feel criminal; but, seeing his sin, he cannot help it. It is the organic reaction of his conscience against himself.

“Not e’en the dearest heart, and next our own,
Knows half the reasons why we smile or sigh.”

And on the side of our sin we should not want the reasons of our sighing known. “Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all.” Instinctively we hide ourselves—the purest of us. When a man truly thinks of himself, the difference between what conscience tells him he ought to be, and what he knows he is, is so tremendous that no man could stand the gleam of a full human vision even, into his soul’s depths. “For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things” (1 John iii. 20). Man is more than unhappy because of sin; he is consciously criminal because of it.

Nor, can a man reason the conscious-

ness of being criminal away. When the Merrimac fought the Monitor, the balls of the Merrimac struck the Monitor fair and square, yet they fell harmlessly from her sides, and the Monitor scarcely shivered. And even though one send a Merrimac of reasoning like this to fight for him—though he say to himself, “Yes, I know I have sinned ; but I was born with a sinful nature, and this sin of mine is but the appropriate result and fruitage of my nature, therefore, I am not blameworthy”—though a man take this huge ball, there on the Merrimac of his reasoning, and fire it square and straight at this Monitor of his feeling of criminality for sin, he cannot make this Monitor even shiver, much less strike its flag. Still the consciousness stays—“nevertheless I am sinner ; nevertheless I am criminal ; nevertheless I have, by my own will, changed this inherited evil tendency into actual sin, and so I am criminal.”

Nor, can a man excuse away this criminal consciousness, even though his sin were wrought, in a manner, unwittingly. How sad a life was that of the great Coleridge ; how tormented with remorse because of an overmastering sin. Yet how, almost innocently, did he come under its slavery. In his childhood he fell asleep, one day, upon the margin of a stream. He slept on into the darkness. The night was stormy. He was found chilled through and through. That night's sleep caused chronic rheumatism. In his early manhood he was anguished with it. Opium was prescribed for him. It gave him temporary relief. He kept on taking it. Soon it manacled him. Then it began its awful destruction in him. Then it wrecked him. But, notwithstanding the way of his entrance into the thralldom of opium, he could not excuse away his feeling of dark and real criminality because of it. He says—"I have learned what a sin is against an im-

perishable being such as is the soul of man. I have had more than a glimpse of what is meant by death, and outer darkness, and the worm that dieth not. Before God I cannot lift up my eyelids."

So does this consciousness of being criminal, because of sin, remain. It will not out. And so this consciousness fills man with moral fear toward God ; makes life shrouded ; death terrible ; sends a man, as it sent Adam, into the shade of any sheltering tree when God comes walking in His garden. Even though men may deny the fact of sin and the guilt of sin, they confess it by their actions. I have read somewhere that though Voltaire denied the existence of the devil, he always acted as if he greatly feared him,—that is, as if he felt his guilt and was afraid of retribution.

Now the effulgent fact about this Jesus is, that He is never shadowed by this world-wide consciousness of sin, nor has

He ever any remorse, or even regret, because of it.

Behold, what searching tests the sinlessness of this Jesus stands. For example, it stands the test of intimacy. That intimacy is the disclosure of sinfulness is too sadly evident in our usual human nature. Men are like mountains. On the edge of the horizon you do not see them as they are. There are the kindly ministrations of the mists, the tender and hindering veils of blue, the rounded smoothings of the gentle hand of distance. But as you approach, the mists and the distance may no more interpose their shadowy help; the truth of jagged brow, of precipice, of rent and chasm is discovered. Thus it is with a man. The proverb is but too truthful—"No man is a hero to his own valet." When you are far from a man, especially if all his wrongs and roughness are softened and smoothed by the subduing mists of some mighty service, he is glorified to

you. But when intimacy has brought you near, the rents and crags of character too evidently appear. But how easily the character of Jesus endures this test of the closest intimacy. They are His disciples who have sketched His portrait—and St. John, he who knew Jesus best, who leaned upon His bosom, to whom Jesus opened His own heart the widest and the oftenest, is the one who is the most insistent upon the flawlessness of his Master.

The sinlessness of Jesus stands also the test of enmity. Consider what prompted elders, chief priests, scribes, to arrest and arraign Jesus; love of power—since if the teachings of Jesus should gain sway, the pillars of their supremacy must fall; peculiar vengefulness—since in Jesus they saw an incarnate and righteous hostility to their pretences. Besides, the life of Jesus was a most public one. He preached openly in field, synagogue, temple; He had no secret methods. As

dogs hunt prey, so up and down this life of Jesus did scribe and Pharisee pass with quick-scented scrutiny. They were keen-eyed, but upon the burnished brightness of that life they could detect no particle of even the dust of sinfulness. It was by *false* witness only they could bring Him to His death.

There is this further signal fact. Judas has received his price, betrayed his Master, and now the Master is condemned to death. Then horrors seize the soul of Judas; the scorpions of conscience sting him into agony; the money is flung back to those who paid it. How, in such case, does the heart variously turn itself that it may find some excuse or, at least, palliation for its crime. How does it clutch, as drowning men at straws, at any smallest plea which may float it above the whelming sea of its remorse. What balm to Judas then, the memory of any slight fault, marring the character of Jesus, that

thus there might be furnished him some even flimsy excuse for his perfidy. But the wail of Judas was, as his unappeasing torture drove him to the wild death of the suicide, "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the *innocent* blood."

Also, most wonderful of all, the sinlessness of Jesus stands the test of His own assumption of sinlessness. "Which of you convicteth Me of sin?" (John viii. 46)—is the unquivering challenge of this Jesus. What infinite danger in such challenge! What divine daring! How easy to see spots upon the sun! But the sinless life of Jesus easily and triumphantly carries this heaviest and most dangerous of assumptions. Repentance does not cloud this life. Nor does even so much as a backward looking regret once shadow it. Without one tear of penitence, one sigh of contrition, one even faintest cry for forgiveness, the stainless life moves on unflinchingly until,

confronting its earthly end, Jesus dare declare, "I have glorified Thee on earth: I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do" (John xvii. 4).

Did you ever notice how the prayers of Jesus also assert His sinlessness? It is a fact, not sufficiently taken account of hitherto, that Jesus, in the matter of praying, steadily held Himself in a marked aloofness. Jesus prayed much, in lonely vigil, before every turn and crisis of His life, for His disciples, sometimes in their presence, but never with them. The prayers of Jesus were always prayers apart. I do not think an instance can be found in which Jesus is represented as sharing His prayers with others. "And it came to pass, that, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. And He said unto them, When ye pray, say"—(Luke xi. 1-5), and

thus the familiar Lord's prayer is taught, beginning with the cry to our Father in Heaven, and going on with various petitions, particularly including the petition for the forgiveness of sins. But mark well that "when *ye* pray." This prayer is for the disciples; it is not for Jesus. This Jesus has no sins for which to crave forgiveness. How significant of the sinlessness of Jesus—this apartness of the prayers of Jesus.

Here then is this phenomenon of the sinlessness of Jesus. It is alone. It is the single island in the boundless ocean of human sinning. Where the race has failed, this Jesus triumphs.

Let Dr. Horace Bushnell speak a moment, in his wonderfully graphic way—"This one perfect character has come into our world, and lived in it, filling all the molds of action, all the terms of duty and love, with His own divine man-

ners, works, and charities. . . . The world itself is changed, and is no more the same that it was; it has never been the same since Jesus left it. The air is charged with heavenly odors, and a kind of celestial consciousness, a sense of other worlds, is wafted on us in its breath. Let the dark ages come, let society roll backward, and churches perish in whole regions in the earth, . . . still there is a something here that was not, and a something that has immortality in it. . . . It were easier to untwist all the beams of light in the sky, separating and expunging one of the colors, than to get the character of Jesus, which is the real gospel, out of the world. Look ye hither, meantime, all ye blinded and fallen of mankind; a better nature is among you, a pure heart, out of some pure world, is come into your prison, and walks it with you. Do you require us to show who He is, and definitely to expound His person? We may not be able.

Enough to know that He is not of us—some strange Being out of nature and above it, whose name is *Wonderful*. Enough that sin has never touched His hallowed nature, and that He is a friend. In Him dawns a hope—purity has not come into our world except to purify. Behold the Lamb of God! Light breaks in; peace settles on the air; lo! the prison walls are giving way; rise, let us go!”

And did you ever think of this? Whatever may be the surprises of the future; however different that other life to which we hasten may be from this, the ideal for that life can be no other than the ideal for this, namely—likeness in character to Jesus. If the place of Heaven be in far-off shining Sirius, or in the flaming sun—wherever it may be, the pattern for life in it can be no other than the pattern for the noblest life on earth—identity of character with Jesus. “Be-

loved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be ; but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him ; for we shall see Him as He is” (I John iii. 2). The character of Jesus is, to use the fine phrase of another, “negotiable in both worlds.”

*VI. The Dynamic and Perpetuating Power
of Jesus*

Of this Jesus it is impossible that you say “He was,” as you must say it of Augustus, Charlemagne, Luther, Washington, Abraham Lincoln. Of this Jesus you must say “He is,” in some vital and vitalizing way making our own day, though so distant from His own, electric with His presence and presiding. This Jesus is not a memory ; He is, even more efficiently than when He trod the paths of Palestine, a working, triumphing force.

How exquisitely and truthfully Whittier sings this dynamic efficacy of Jesus :—

Immortal Love, forever full,
Forever flowing free,
Forever shared, forever whole,
A never-ebbing sea !

No fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years ;

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He ;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of His seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain ;
We touch Him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

Our Friend, our Brother and our Lord,
What may Thy service be ?
Nor name, nor form, nor ritual word,
But simply following Thee.

Thy litanies, sweet offices
Of love and gratitude ;
Thy sacramental liturgies,
The joy of doing good.

Or, take that marvellous confession of the great Napoleon, which Canon Liddon quotes in his *Lectures on the Divinity of our Lord*, and for the genuineness of which he adduces authorities. Said Napoleon the Great, prisoner there in St. Helena—"Alexander, Cæsar, Charlemagne, and I, myself, have founded great empires ; but upon what did these creations of our genius depend? Upon force. Jesus alone founded His empire upon love, and to this very day millions would die for Him. . . . I think I understand something of human nature ; and I tell you, all these were men, and I am a man ; none else is like Him ; Jesus Christ was more than man. . . . I have inspired multitudes with such an enthusiastic devotion that they would

have died for me, . . . but to do this it was necessary that I should be *visibly* present with the electric influence of my looks, of my words, of my voice. When I saw men and spoke to them, I lighted up the flame of self-devotion in their hearts. . . . Christ alone has succeeded in so raising the mind of man towards the Unseen, that it becomes insensible to the barriers of time and space. Across a chasm of eighteen hundred years, Jesus Christ makes a demand which is, beyond all others, difficult to satisfy ; He asks for that which a philosopher may often seek in vain at the hands of his friends, or a father of his children, or a bride of her spouse, or a man of his brother. He asks for the human heart ; He will have it entirely to Himself. He demands it unconditionally ; and forthwith His demand is granted. Wonderful ! In defiance of time and space, the soul of man, with all its powers and faculties, becomes an annexation to the em-

pire of Christ. All who sincerely believe in Him, experience that remarkable supernatural love towards Him. This phenomenon is unaccountable; it is altogether beyond the scope of man's creative powers. Time, the great destroyer, is powerless to extinguish this sacred flame; time can neither exhaust its strength nor put a limit to its range. This it is which strikes me most; I have often thought of it. This it is which proves to me quite convincingly the Divinity of Jesus Christ."

VII. The Personal Appearance of Jesus

Of course we cannot help being curious about it, but we cannot know. A most thoughtful student of the life of Jesus says, "There is little doubt that Jesus wore the simple raiments of a Galilean peasant. This included the ordinary turban of pure white, wound about the head, with folds which fell upon the neck and shoulders as a protec-

tion from the sun. On His feet were sandals. His inner garment was close-fitting, 'without seam, woven from the top throughout,' the work of some Galilean loom. Over this was worn an outer garment of plain blue, or of white striped with brown or dark blue—with fringes of white thread at the four corners. The phylacteries, small rolls of parchment bound in ostentation on the arm or forehead of the Pharisees, we may be sure He did not wear. Even these simple garments were worn and faded with much travel and exposure. But kingship over man dwells not in royal robes, but in royalty of person; and there were none who did not feel the simple dignity of Jesus."*

The traditional face of Jesus is wholly traditional and unauthentic.

But there was certainly a singular winningness about this Jesus. Little children trooped to Him. And He

* *The Life of Christ*, by William J. Dawson, pp. 336-337.

would take them up in His arms, put His hands on them and bless them. His use of His hands was so constant and various that His habit in this regard flashes often forth from what record we have of Him. He put forth His hand and touched the leper. He came and touched the bier on which lay the body of the son of the widow of Nain. He took the sick mother of Peter's wife by the hand and lifted her up. He took the inanimate daughter of the ruler of the synagogue by the hand as He said to her, "My little child, I say unto thee, arise." Constantly this Jesus is putting Himself into hand-touch. He is no distant helper, no far-off and simply lecturing teacher. Albeit His eye would flash with righteous indignation, and His presence would sometimes be so awe-inspiring that men would flee and fall before it—a gracious, longing, welcoming accessibility was His usual mien.

Such then, indeed at the best but

poorly and dimly outlined—in His universality, teachings, astounding claims, sinlessness, strangely dynamic power, probable dress and beautiful accessibility and winningness—is the Fact of Jesus.

CHAPTER II

The Question: Who Then is This?

HOW vividly it came to me. I was sailing on the sea of Galilee. The longing hope and dream of years had changed to verity. These waters He had crossed so many times. Those surrounding hills, and intervening plains His eyes had gazed upon. At last I myself was beholding all. I was reverently joyful.

The boat in which I was sailing was of the same general sort He must have used. Customs change little there; and only a boat of some such sort was fitted for

voyaging on such waters. It was a boat between twenty and thirty feet in length ; very broad in beam ; built most solidly ; with one great mast on which was hung a wide lateen sail, ready for spreading if the winds were favoring ; when no winds blew, long stout oars, grasped by perhaps a dozen rowers, must propel the vessel.

When, there at the ancient city of Tiberias, the shore was left, all the winds were whist, the little lake was as a sea of glass. We must be rowed northward toward the perhaps site of Capernaum, while the miles slowly drifted astern. But as we approached our destination, suddenly there was even violent change. Now the winds blew fiercely, and the hitherto smooth waters piled themselves into dashing waves amid which the boat staggeringly tossed. It was only with the utmost care and difficulty a landing could be had.

Then how vivid it all seemed to me. How the memory of the record flashed

upon me. Upon waters as smooth as those I had seen at first, Jesus and His disciples had embarked. Upon some such rowers' bench as I then was looking on, Jesus, worn out with various labor, lay sleeping the drenching sleep that submerges utter weariness. A storm, quicker and fiercer far than that I saw, assailed. But so deeply was Jesus sleeping on that hard rowers' bench that neither the tossing of the boat, nor its almost foundering as the waves flung their angry crests over the gunwales, at all wakened Him. The disciples, experienced sailors of that inland sea though they were and accustomed as they were to its whims of tempests, are terrified. Their cry to Jesus does what the storm cannot. It awakens Him. At His calm command, and instantly, the tumult of both wind and wave is changed to quietness.

And the awed disciples can only ask the inevitable question—"Who then is

this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (Mark iv. 41). That question, inevitable concerning Jesus then, is even more inevitable and insistent concerning Jesus now; for now this Jesus looms above the Christian centuries. He who is such Fact as our former chapter has attempted to outline; He who, as Jean Paul Richter so eloquently and truly says, "being the holiest among the mighty, the mightiest among the holy, lifted with His pierced hands empires off their hinges, turned the stream of centuries out of its channel, and still governs the ages";—this unique, surprising Jesus must steadily provoke the question, "Who then is this?"

CHAPTER III

The Answer of Jesus

THE answer which this Jesus shall give to this insistent question about His Person must be chiefly confined to the words which Jesus has to say about Himself, to the self-designations of Jesus.

It is to be noted that Jesus steadily puts the most determining value upon words. Words, in the thought of Jesus, are not trifles light as air. They are the lasting expressions of the one speaking them. They react upon and upbuild or degrade the character. They will con-

front us at the judgment. "Every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof at the day of judgment" (Matt. xii. 36). They expose the inner personality. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii. 34). Jesus' own words are the vehicle of power. "The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life" (John vi. 63). Jesus' own words are the test of discipleship and the path into knowledge. "If ye abide in My word, then are ye truly My disciples; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John viii. 31, 32).

And Jesus is affluent of words about Himself, about His Person. I culled out, that I might set them in order and the more effectually study them, the words of Jesus about Himself given in the four Gospels. I was surprised to find that I had thus bulked together almost the major part of the four Gospels. And

surely the words concerning Himself of this Jesus—this luminously teaching One, this mightily claiming One, this sinless One, this One whose words are so athrill and lasting with strange dynamic energy—surely His words are worth our heeding as we seek answer to the imperious question “Who then is this?” Certainly His own answer to the question must be the truest and most convincing.

I. The Son of Man

One main answer and teaching of this Jesus as to His own Person is that He is the Son of Man.

How frequently this designation, the Son of Man, occurs in the four Gospels may be seen in the fact that this title occurs in St. Matthew’s Gospel thirty-two times ; in St. Mark’s Gospel thirteen times ; in St. Luke’s Gospel twenty-four times ; in St. John’s Gospel twelve times ; —in all, in the brief records of the four Gospels, eighty-one times.

It is to be immediately noted that Jesus invariably designates Himself as *The Son of Man*; as though, in His own estimation, He were Son of Man in some paramount and exclusive meaning.

Study, for a little, in what manifold and various relations this Jesus designates Himself the Son of Man.

Jesus is the Son of Man in the earthly plight of homelessness and poverty. "And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have lodging-places; but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head" (Matt. viii. 20).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, is in demeanor, uniformly social, unascetic, welcoming, brotherly. "The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold, a gluttonous man and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!" (Matt. xi. 19).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, is urgent

with a beneficent life-purpose. “ Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many ” (Matt. xx. 28). “ For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost ” (Luke xix. 10). “ He that soweth the good seed is the Son of Man ” (Matt. xiii. 37).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, is clothed with power, even while on earth, to forgive sins. “ But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath authority on earth to forgive sins (He saith to the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house. And he arose, and straightway took up the bed, and went forth before them all; insomuch that they were all amazed, and glorified God, saying, We never saw it on this fashion ” (Mark ii. 10–12).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, declares Himself to be the supreme test, standard, motive, of human conduct. “ Blessed

are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of Man's sake" (Luke vi. 22). "For whosoever shall be ashamed of Me and of My words, of him shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in His own glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels" (Luke ix. 26).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, declares Himself the fulfillment and consummation of the Old Testament Scriptures. "And He took unto Him the twelve, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all the things that are written through the prophets shall be accomplished unto the Son of Man" (Luke xviii. 31). "The Son of Man goeth, even as it is written of Him" (Matt. xxvi. 24).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, is authoritative interpreter of the Old Testament Scriptures. "And His disciples asked

Him, saying, Why then say the scribes that Elijah must first come? And He answered and said, Elijah indeed cometh, and shall restore all things: but I say unto you, that Elijah is come already, and they knew him not, but did unto him whatsoever they would. Even so shall the Son of Man also suffer of them. Then understood the disciples that He spake unto them of John the Baptist" (Matt. xvii. 10-13).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, sways sceptre over the most sacred institutions and observances. "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath Day" (Matt. xii. 8).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, declares a spiritual union with Himself as close and real as that between the body and the food which nourishes it, to be essential. "Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, ye have not life in yourselves. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood

hath eternal life ; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed. He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood abideth in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father ; so he that eateth Me, he also shall live because of Me. This is the bread that came down out of heaven ; not as the fathers did eat, and died : he that eateth this bread shall live for ever” (John vi. 53–58).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, asserts for Himself a unique descent from heaven. “And no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven” (John iii. 13).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, asserts for Himself a re-ascent into the heavenly glory whence He came. “What then if ye should behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before?” (John vi. 62).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, declares that the method of glorifying for Himself, and for His followers, must be that of sacrifice. “ And Jesus answereth them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of Man should be glorified. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a grain of wheat fall into the earth and die, it abideth by itself alone ; but if it die, it beareth much fruit. He that loveth his life loseth it ; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal ” (John xii. 23, 24).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, declares Himself to be the connecting bridge between earth and heaven. “ And He saith unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man ” (John i. 51).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, would have His disciples distinctly recognize Himself as the Messiah. “ Now when Jesus came into the parts of Cæsarea Philippi,

He asked His disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah: and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father who is in heaven” (Matt. xvi. 13-17).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, asserts for Himself a clear prevision concerning Himself. “And while they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of Man shall be delivered up into the hands of men; and they shall kill Him, and the third day He shall be raised up” (Matt. xvii. 22, 23). “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself. But this He said, signifying by what manner of death He should

die" (John xii. 32, 33). "And they were on the way, going up to Jerusalem; and Jesus was going before them: and they were amazed; and they that followed were afraid. And He took again the twelve, and began to tell them the things that were to happen unto Him, saying, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man shall be delivered unto the chief priests and the scribes; and they shall condemn Him to death, and shall deliver Him unto the Gentiles: and they shall mock Him, and shall spit upon Him, and shall scourge Him, and shall kill Him; and after three days He shall rise again" (Mark x. 32-34).

Jesus, as the Son of Man, unequivocally asserts for Himself a future glorious return, and deciding Judgeship. "For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then shall He render unto every man according to his deeds" (Matt. xvi. 27).

*II. The Teaching of the Self-designation
the Son of Man*

What now is to be said about this so frequent and so various self-designation of Jesus—the Son of Man, of which the foregoing instances are but scanty specimens?

This self-designation of Jesus must impress us with its *Reality*. Veritably this Jesus was man. No face than His wears more accurately and manifestly the human lineaments. It is affecting to remember that the first mention of Jesus, other than in the New Testament, and in nearby contemporary history, is mention of Him in derision, and as at best a fanatic man. Says Tacitus, “Christus, from whom the name—‘Christian’—had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius, at the hand of one of our Procurators, Pontius Pilate; and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for a moment, again broke out,

not only in Judea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful, from every part of the world, find their centre and become popular." So, as man, as only one among the common run of men; and, if at all marked, marked only as the starter of a mischievous superstition and by a consequent criminal execution, Jesus looks forth, for the first time, from history other than the New Testament. Any more prominent puppet of Nero, of which Emperor Tacitus was then writing, would bulk larger in the historian's thought than the man Jesus slain by the Procurator Pilate.*

The *body* of Jesus was that of man. Previous to the Resurrection little wonder is told of it, save the wonder of its birth; and even thus it came forth from the womb of a human mother. The

* See *Christian Doctrine* by R. W. Dale, LL. D., pp. 45, 46. I have received various suggestions in my own discussion of the reality of our Lord's Humanity from Dr. Dale's chapter on "The Humanity of Our Lord," in that volume.

body of Jesus grew, as does ours, from infancy through the intervening stages to maturity. It was craving with bodily wants. Jesus hungered, as the leafy fig-tree promised fruit. Jesus thirsted, as the fever the crucifixion kindled began to burn. Jesus was wearied, as the sun's heat smote Him on His long journey from Jerusalem northward through Samaria. Jesus slept, so profoundly that the clashings of the tempest could not disturb His slumber. The body of Jesus was substantial. They were real feet the tears of the penitent woman drenched; those were real eyes flooding with sympathy at the tomb of Lazarus; that was a real head anointed beforehand for its burial by the loving Mary; that was no phantom cheek which Judas kissed; those were real hands the nails fastened to the cross-beams; it was a real side the spear of the Roman soldier cleft; it was a real broken heart whence the blood and water flowed; that was a real dead body, limp and heavy

with the strange helplessness and weightiness a real death brings, which was taken from the cross, wrapped in cerements, laid in the new tomb.

The *mind* of Jesus was like that of man. He was "becoming full of wisdom" (Luke ii. 40). His horizons widened as ours do. His knowledge grew from less to more. As a boy He was asking questions of the doctors in the Temple as well as answering them (Luke ii. 46, 47). He did not dwell in a limitless and always cloudless noon of knowledge. Frequently He made inquiries—"How many loaves have ye?" "How long time is it since this came upon him?" "Where have ye laid him?" "Do ye not yet perceive, neither understand, have ye your heart yet hardened?" We are distinctly told that in Nazareth He *marvelled* because of their unbelief. Jesus Himself tells of a certain limitation of His knowledge, and concerning a vast matter—"Of that day

and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only" (Matt. xxiv. 36; Mark xiii. 32).

Jesus was man, in the usual *feelings* and *affections* of our humanity. He had special friendships; He was more in kin with some than with others, as we all are. His heart went out, in peculiar way, to the young ruler (Mark x. 21). "Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus" (John xi. 5). St. Peter, St. James and St. John belonged to the inner circle of the twelve. St. John was the eminently beloved.

Jesus craved, as we all do, the *closer companionship* of trusted comrades in unusual trial and stress. "He took with Him" the three disciples toward whom His heart quickest turned, and saying to them, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," besought them to abide and watch with Him (Matt. xxvi. 37, 38).

Jesus knew the heat of a *righteous wrath*, as when, concerning the man with the withered hand, captious and cruel enemies were straining basilisk eyes to discover chance of accusation of Him, Jesus "cast His glances round" "with anger, being grieved at the hardening of their hearts" (Mark iii. 5). So also, Jesus was full of a longing pity and yearning for the distressed. How often do we read of His having "compassion"—that word, in the original, so surcharged with heart-break for others, we have no English word which can at all adequately tell forth its tenderness.

So too, Jesus was subject to the external *assaults* and inner *conflicts* to which our humanity is never altogether stranger. It was only "for a season" that the baffled adversary left Him, after the temptation in the wilderness. And how true is the soul of Jesus to our own in His experience of those buffeting cross-currents when, in the presence of some

vaster duty or suffering, the questioning spirit must regain its bearings and strongly reassert itself. "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say?—Father, save Me from this hour? But for this cause came I unto this hour. Father, glorify Thy name" (John xii. 27).

Also, Jesus knew, only in intenser way, the most crushing spiritual *burdens* and *depressions*. And these with Him, as with ourselves, reacted upon and dragged down His body. There in Gethsemane, "being in an agony He prayed more earnestly; and His sweat became as it were great drops of blood falling down upon the ground" (Luke xxii. 44). And whatever abyss of vicarious significance those imploring words, "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me?" (Mark xv. 34) may hold, they certainly carry as well the meaning of the profoundest, almost despairing spiritual dejection, with which, in their darkest hours, our own bestormed

hearts may claim at least a meagre kinship.

Surely, the Son of Man was veritably man. Touch Him anywhere and you elicit the traits and responses of humanity.

“ Consider, Sir !

A human heart beat there ! a human brain
Pondered and pitied and was sorrowful,
Behind that sovereign brow. The blood of us—
Of women and of men—coursed crimson, warm,
In those rich veins ! Nay, and He ate our meats,
And drank our drinks, and wore the dress we wore ;
And His hair fluttered in the breeze which stirred
Peter’s and John’s and mine.” *

Also, the Son of Man is a self-designation of *Service*. It is the son’s place to serve rather than to be served. Not in any arrogant and lordly way does this Jesus take His place among us ; but in the way of glad, lavish, even filial ministry, counting no task too great or too lowly which He may render those among whom He will assume no higher place

* Sir Edwin Arnold.

than that of Son. In this regard of serving, even specifically, is this Jesus *The Son of Man*. Take that condensation of the beneficent activity of Jesus with which St. Peter furnishes us (Acts x. 38), "Who went about doing good." Analyze the phrase a little. "Who"—that is, He who; His was a direct service, not so much one wrought through others, as a service to which He Himself gave actual hand. "Went about"—He sought chance for helping; He did not wait till opportunity forced itself upon Him. "Doing"—His was not the passive and often lazy flooding of sentiment; rather was it the practice of a real and personal exertion. "Good"—the sedulous and unremitting purpose of Jesus was to veritably load with benefit.

" But he who lets his feelings run
In soft luxurious flow,
Shrinks where hard service must be done
And faints at every woe." *

* John Henry Newman.

But never thus did the serving Son of Man. And never once did He use His vast, strange power over nature, over disease, over demons, over angels, for His own weal.

Also, the Son of Man is a self-designation of *Veiling*. During the last hours of His life on earth Jesus said, and even to His long-time and trained disciples, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now" (John xvi. 12). If such reticence on the part of Jesus were necessary toward those who had, for years, been His special pupils, surely such withholding was needful in His more general and public ministry. Only the prepared ground can prosperously receive the seed. Take, for example, Jesus' idea of the Messiah. "The outward exaltation of the Jew, his triumphant elevation above all the empires of the earth, the foot of the Israelite placed on the necks of the Gentile kings, the Solomonic glory of Jerusalem in-

tensified, the wealth of every clime pouring in upon the chosen people, the priests and scribes surrounding the Messianic throne in gorgeous array and satrapic power” *—these were the notions of Messiah and of Messiah’s reign which inflamed the thought and fired the longing, both of the Jewish leaders and, almost unanimously, of the Jewish populace in the time of Jesus. The true idea of Messiah and of Messiah’s Kingdom which Jesus came to herald, show forth, found, must be taught warily ; to the select souls here and there, who only were able, and they but partially, to receive the teaching. The Messianic teaching of Jesus must be the leaven *hidden* in the meal till the whole mass should gradually be leavened. It was not until the last cycle of His ministry, and after His own long and intimate tutoring them, that Jesus could elicit from His disciples, there amid the seclusion of Cæsarea Philippi,

* *Jesus, His Life and Work*, by Dr. Howard Crosby, p. 354.

the confession that He was unquestionably the Christ of God, the long looked-for Messiah. This self-designation of Jesus, the Son of Man, enables Jesus to both conceal and at the same time gently to teach His own overturning, loving, patient, internal, spiritual Messiahship and Kingdom. Sometimes, even on June days, the veiling mists are gracious lest we be blinded by excess of light.

So too, this constant self-designation of Jesus, the Son of Man, must have veiled and chastened the hindering awe which, otherwise, Jesus must have inspired. To be sure, He was the lowliest among the lowly, the gentlest among the gentle, so welcoming and accessible that little children would nestle in His arms; but often there was a strange presence proceeding from Him, the spell of a superhuman power, as when He forgave the palsied man his sins and buttressed the forgiveness by the man's instant healing; as when at His word "Be muzzled," the

riot of wind and wave crouched into a great calm. This gracious title, the Son of Man, falling so constantly from the lips of Jesus, was, as it were, a beckoning hand reached out, that awe might not scare and deter.

Also, the Son of Man is a self-designation of *Disclosure*. The title discloses, in Jesus' own conception of Himself, His thorough and interbraiding *sharing* with us. "The Son of Man is no man's son, is, as it were, the child or offspring of the race."* Nothing human is foreign to this Jesus. To be sure, as we have seen in our first chapter, He was untouched of sin. But sin is abnormal, does not belong to man's essential being. And the utmost stress of the mission of Jesus is to save men from it. To this end Jesus stands on no far and isolated peak of other being, but descends to tread our earth, to put Himself under the sad burdens sin has foisted on us, to over-

* Dr. Fairbairn.

flow with an unfailling and limitless sympathy, to be close brother with the least. It is significant that neither disciple nor evangelist ever themselves speak of Jesus as the Son of Man. Once only, by other lips than His own, is Jesus so called in the New Testament. In vision, the martyr Stephen exclaimed, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God" (Acts vii. 56). What can be the explanation of the singular silence on other lips of this title the Master so constantly placed upon His own? I think it was, as has just been said, the various flashing forth of the notwithstanding otherness of Jesus. The disciples and the rest needed to be assured that this so great Being was yet deeply intricate with them, friend above all friends, truest brother, veritable sharer in the dependence, weakness, sorrow, straitness of their own plight. How precious such disclosure! And as precious for us to-day as it must have been

to those amazed yet fascinated followers of Jesus as He taught, wrought, pitied, helped in Palestine.

Of the *ideal for man* is this self-designation of Jesus also disclosure. "Jesus thus names Himself as belonging to mankind—as one who in human nature has accomplished such great things for human nature—who is man in the supreme sense, the sense corresponding to the idea, who makes real the ideal of humanity." And how sorely sin-blurred humanity needed, and still needs, such ideal! It is easier to teach than to be. Lofty precept is one thing; lofty precept actualized is another.

And of *contrast* this title, the Son of Man, is also disclosure. "The most effective way to throw light upon sin is not to illustrate its nature by living a life of exceptional sinfulness, but to live a sinless life among the sinful. As a matter of fact, from no other source has light so strong and searching fallen upon the ac-

tual state and character of man as from the life and character of Christ. His moral greatness has shown men their defects. He has done more at once to humble human pride and to lift up human aspiration than any other, for He has shown men what they were and what they ought to be.”* And it was because, as *the Son of Man*—the one member of the race treasuring up and, at the same time, flawlessly illustrating and showing forth all excellencies, that Jesus at once condemned as standard, and stirred and incited as example.

The Son of Man, this self-designation of Jesus, is also the disclosure of *fitness for function*. Jesus is man's Saviour and final Judge. None other than the Son of Man can fill such function. There must be community of nature and experience to adequately fill it. A young man was under great strain and plunged into deep despondency. His mood was partly the

* *Outlines of Theology*, by W. N. Clarke, p. 279.

result of circumstances, partly because of his own wilfulness. One whom he knew and could trust came to help him if he might, to reprove him if he must. He who thus came proved his fitness for his coming by his method. "I have felt just as you are feeling," was his first word. "I have known just the trials and bafflings which are assaulting you." Such words were as the June sun to frosted flowers, to the young man. So his path was not as untried and lonely as he had thought. Then this friend went on to persuade, reprove, impel to better courses; having first displayed a fellow-feeling, springing from a similar experience. That ministry saved that young man. No other could. To his dying day he who was that young man can never be thankful enough for it.

It is halting illustration, but it a little helps. The Son of Man "hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Heb. iv. 15). So His ex-

perience makes Him vibrate with sympathy, while His sinlessness enables Him for a kindly yet unerring judgment. "Sinners are not fit to judge of sin—their justice is revenge; their mercy is feebleness. He alone can attemper the sense of what is due to the offended Lord with the remembrance of that which is due to human frailty; he alone is fit for showing manly mercy who has, like his Master, felt the power of temptation in its might and come scatheless through the trial."* And how infinitely fit for such function is the Son of Man!

"But Thee, but Thee, O Sovereign Son of Time,
But Thee, O poet's Poet, wisdom's Tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O perfect life in perfect labor writ,
O all men's Comrade, Servant, King or Priest—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect or shadow of defect,
What rumor, tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace

* F. W. Robertson.

Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's or death's—
Oh, what amiss may I forgive in Thee,
Jesus, good Paragon, Thou Crystal Christ.”*

But whence came this title—the Son of Man? Was it entirely original with Jesus, or was it, in a manner at least, derived? Some say the title was wholly original with Jesus—a title altogether new—coined by Him.

But consider a few facts. A title, at least somewhat similar, is in large use in the Old Testament. The Eighth Psalm sings: “When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers, the moon and the stars which Thou hast ordained, what is man that Thou art mindful of him, or the son of man that Thou visitest him?” (Ps. viii. 3, 4).

In the Eightieth Psalm this note is struck, “Let Thy hand be upon the man of Thy right hand, upon the son of man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself” (Ps. lxxx. 17).

* Sidney Lanier, *The Crystal Christ*.

In the prophecy of Ezekiel the phrase son of man occurs with a ninety-fold iteration. It is thus Jehovah constantly addresses the prophet. A few specimens must suffice. "Son of man, stand upon thy feet, and I will speak unto thee" (Ezek. ii. 1). "Moreover He said unto me, Son of man, eat that thou findest; eat this roll, and go speak unto the house of Israel" (Ezek. iii. 1). "And the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them" (Ezek. vi. 1, 2). "And He said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest" (Ezek. xxxvii. 3).

Also, there is that famous passage in the prophecy of Daniel. "I saw in the night visions, and behold, there came with the clouds of heaven one like unto a son of man, and he came even to the ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given

unto him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him ; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed ” (Dan. vii. 13, 14). Of the whole vision of which the above is part, Dr. James Denny, in his *Studies in Theology*, page 36, luminously says, “ Daniel’s vision contains, in the briefest outline, a religious philosophy of history—a sketch of the rise and fall of powers in the world till the final sovereignty comes. The prophet sees four great beasts come up from the sea and reign in succession. What they have in common is that they *are* beasts—brutal, rapacious, destructive. But they have their day ; the dominion they exercised is taken away from them ; it is transferred,—and here the vision culminates,—to one like a Son of Man. The brute kingdoms are succeeded by a human kingdom, the dominion of selfish-

ness and violence by the dominion of reason and goodness ; and this last is universal and everlasting. This is the historical antecedent of the name, at once so intimate and so mysterious, which Jesus appropriated to Himself—the Son of Man.”

“For the Son of Man shall come in the glory of the Father with His angels ; and then shall He render unto every man according to his doing ” (Matt. xvi. 27). “And then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man in heaven : and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory ” (Matt. xxiv. 30). “Again the high priest asked Him, and saith unto Him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? And Jesus said, I am : and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of power, and coming with the clouds of heaven ” (Mark xiv. 61, 62). How is it possible to read such statements

of Jesus, and not see that they get their suggestion and their coloring from the majestic prophecy of Daniel?

And there is nothing at all derogatory to Jesus in granting to the full that the self-designation of Jesus as the Son of Man strikes its roots back into the Old Testament. It rather enhances and makes more emphatic the dear truth of His real humanity, His interwining brotherhood. He was "becoming full of wisdom" (Luke ii. 40). The book which fed and nourished His growing mind was the Old Testament. Never were one's whole thought and feeling so incited and flushed with a special literature as was Jesus by the Old Testament. So, naturally and rightfully, from that Old Testament did He appropriate that title which, on one side of it, best expressed His consciousness of His mission and His office. Nor does this view at all damage the unique originality of Jesus. "The secret of Shakespeare no more lies in his sources

than does the secret of the Parthenon in the quarry out of which it was built.”* As the Parthenon glorifies the quarry so does Jesus glorify and make precious both the elder Scripture in which the suggestion of the title lay, and the self-designation itself in which we see and feel so clearly and so deeply the throbbing of the mighty human heart of Jesus.

A recent contention is that the title, Son of Man, is a labored translation into the Greek from the Aramaic—the probable speech which Jesus used—of the word *barnasha*; that this term means only man; that, therefore, Jesus, using this word, proclaimed Himself simply *man*, assuming no special Messianic or official title in His self-designation.

It is to be said, in answer, that such supposed meanings of Aramaic words are, as yet, conjecture; that, even granting that

* Dr. James Stalker.

Jesus used the word *barnasha*—as *He used it* the word meant more than man only without peculiar dignity and authority ; that with the prophecy of Daniel in the mind of Jesus, the word, as *Jesus used the word*, must have meant more than merely a usual man ; that—even allowing the contention about *barnasha* to be true, though there are no sufficient reasons for allowing it—it is as impossible, in the light of the four Gospels, to dissociate the Messianic and official idea from Jesus as it would be to destroy a canvas and preserve the portrait.*

There is a quotation from Thomas Carlyle in *The Christology of Jesus*, by Dr. James Stalker, so admirable in itself, and so properly applicable to those so determined to account for Jesus by methods simply natural and second hand, that I cannot forbear quoting it myself. Says Thomas Carlyle—“ Show our critics a

* See *The Teachings of Jesus*, by Dr. George B. Stevens, pp. 90-91.

great man, they begin to, what they call, 'account for him.' He was the 'creature of the time,' they say; the time called him forth; the time did everything, he nothing. This seems to me but melancholy work. The times call forth? Alas, we have known times call loudly enough for their great man, but not find him when they called. The time, calling its loudest, had to go down to confusion and wreck because he would not come when called. I liken common times, with their unbelief, distress, perplexity, their languid doubting character, impotently crumbling down through even worse distress to final ruin, all this I liken to dry, dead fuel, waiting for the lightning out of heaven that shall quicken it. The great man, with his free, direct force out of God's own hand, is the lightning. All blazes now around him. The critic thinks the dry, mouldering sticks have called him forth. They wanted him greatly, no doubt. But as to calling him

forth! They are critics of small vision who think that the dead sticks have created the fire.”

III. The Son of God

A further main answer and teaching as to the Person of this Jesus is that He is the Son of God. This self-designation is not always in this special form. Sometimes it is contracted into “The Son” or “My Son.” Sometimes it is involved in the statement of the relation the Son bears to the Father. It is noteworthy how multitudinous these various designations are in the four Gospels. Let me try to display this in the way of enumeration. I adopt the classification of the passages used in *The Christology of Jesus*, by Dr. James Stalker. After a good deal of very careful counting I come to the following approximate result:

The number of passages in the four Gospels in which Jesus is called the Son of God *by others, Himself sometimes adopt-*

ing the name, are in St. Matthew fifteen times, St. Mark seven times, St. Luke ten times, St. John six times; in all ^{thirty} ~~twenty~~ ^{eight} times. Of this class of passages these are specimens.

“And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway from the water : and lo, the heavens were opened unto Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him ; and lo, a voice out of the heavens, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (Matt. iii. 16, 17).

“And the tempter came and said unto Him, If Thou art the Son of God, command that these stones become bread” (Matt. iv. 3). “And they that were in the boat worshipped Him saying, Of a truth Thou art the Son of God” (Matt. xiv. 33). “He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed

art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah : for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven ” (Matt. xvi. 15-17). “ And when he saw Jesus from afar, he ran and worshipped Him ; and crying out with a loud voice, he saith, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, Thou Son of the Most High God ? ” (Mark v. 6, 7). “ And when the centurion, who stood by over against Him, saw that He so gave up the ghost, he said, Truly this man was the Son of God ” (Mark xv. 39). “ And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee : wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God ” (Luke i. 35). “ And behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High ” (Luke i. 32). “ And demons also came out from many, crying out, and

saying, Thou art the Son of God. And rebuking them, He suffered them not to speak, because they knew that He was the Christ" (Luke iv. 41). "Then said they all, Art Thou then the Son of God? And He said unto them, Ye say that I am" (Luke xxii. 70).

"And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God" (John i. 34). "Nathanael answered and saith unto Him, Rabbi, Thou art the Son of God; Thou art the King of Israel" (John i. 49). "And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John vi. 69). "She saith unto Him, Yea, Lord: I have believed that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God, *even* He that cometh into the world" (John xi. 27). "The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by that law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 7). "But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that

believing ye might have life through His name ” (John xx. 31).

The number of passages in the four Gospels in which Jesus calls Himself “The Son”—are in St. Matthew six, in St. Mark one, in St. Luke three, in St. John fifteen; in all twenty-five. Of this class of passages these are specimens. “All things have been delivered unto me of my Father; and no one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him” (Matt. xi. 27). “He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him: for He said, I am the Son of God” (Matt. xxvii. 43). “But of that day or that hour knoweth no one, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father” (Mark xiii. 32). “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing: for

what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner. For the Father loveth the Son, and showeth Him all things that Himself doeth : and greater works than these will He shew Him, that ye may marvel" (John v. 19, 20). "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (John xiv. 13).

The number of passages in the four Gospels in which Jesus calls God His Father, are in St. Matthew twenty, in St. Mark three, in St. Luke nine, in St. John thirty-one ; in all sixty-three. Of this class of passages these are specimens. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. vii. 21). "For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Matt. xii. 50). "Whosoever

therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation ; of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels ” (Mark viii. 38). “ And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as My Father hath appointed unto Me ” (Luke xxii. 29). “ Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them ; for they know not what they do. And they parted His raiment, and cast lots ” (Luke xxiii. 34). “ And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, He said, Father, into thy hands I commend My spirit : and having said thus, He gave up the ghost ” (Luke xxiii. 46). “ Therefore doth my Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again ” (John x. 17). “ In that day ye shall know that I am in My Father, and ye in Me, and I in you ” (John xiv. 20). “ Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath : the cup which My Father hath given me, shall I not

drink it?" (John xviii. 11). "Jesus saith unto her, Touch Me not; for I am not yet ascended to My Father: but go to My brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto My Father, and your Father; and to My God, and your God" (John xx. 17).

Jesus calls God Father or the Father, in St. John's Gospel, seventy-one times. Once, in St. John's Gospel, Jesus addressing the Father, calls Himself "Thy Son." "These things spake Jesus; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, Father, the hour is come; glorify Thy Son, that the Son may glorify Thee" (John xvii. 1). Also, in St. John's Gospel, Jesus specifically calls Himself "the Son of God." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live" (John v. 25). "Say ye of Him, whom the Father hath sanctified, and

sent into the world, Thou blasphemest ; because I said, I am the Son of God ? ” (John x. 36). “ When Jesus heard that, He said, This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby ” (John xi. 4).

Also, in St. John’s Gospel, Jesus specifically declares Himself “ from God. ” “ Not that any man hath seen the Father, save He that is from God, he hath seen the Father ” (John vi. 46). “ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came forth from God, and goeth unto God ” (John xiii. 3). Also, in St. John’s Gospel, Jesus is called by others “ The only begotten Son ” ; and also declares Himself to be such. “ No man hath seen God at any time ; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him ” (John i. 18). “ And the Word became flesh,

and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth" (John i. 14). "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God sent not the Son into the world to judge the world; but that the world should be saved through Him. He that believeth on Him is not judged: he that believeth not hath been judged already, because he hath not believed on the name of the only begotten Son of God" (John iii. 16-18). I entirely believe these to be the words of our Lord Himself.

IV. The Messiah

Another designation of Jesus, ascribed to Him by others, and by which He very frequently designates Himself, *e. g.* Matt. xvi. 20; xxiii. 10; xxiv. 5, 23, 24; xxvi. 64; Mark ix. 41; xii. 35; xiii. 21; xiv. 61, 62; Luke iv. 18, 21; xx. 41; xxii. 67, 68;

xxiv. 26, 46; John iv. 42; xi. 27; xx. 31, is that of "The Messiah" or "The Christ." There is surely in this title, which Jesus so constantly both accepts and assumes, a self-revelation and teaching concerning His Person.

But this title is more closely concerned with the *Sacrificial Work* of Jesus as Anointed and Atoning Priest, and is not so precisely concerned with teaching about His Person—though assuredly only such Person could be the world's great High Priest and sufficient and efficient Sacrifice—and therefore, the discussion of the title "Messiah" or "Christ" does not so appropriately fall within the particular limits of this small volume.

V. Master, Lord, God

These are also self-revealing titles which Jesus assumes or permits. The title "Master"—this title, in the meaning of rightful and Supreme Teacher, Jesus frequently allows. He is thus

steadily addressed by the disciples and by others, and He as frequently accepts it. He also Himself distinctly assumes it.

“So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and sat down again, He said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master, and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that ye also should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, A servant is not greater than his lord; neither one that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, blessed are ye if ye do them” (John xiii. 12–17). The title “Lord”—this title, in the meaning of possessing inherent authority, Jesus often both allows and assumes. “And they came to Him, and awoke Him saying, Save, Lord, we perish” (Matt. viii. 25). “For the Son

of Man is Lord of the Sabbath" (Matt. xii. 8). "If I then, your Lord and Master" (John xiii. 14).

The title "God"—this title Jesus at least once, without questioning it, accepts, and, in another place, as distinctly implies His whole right to it. "Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Because thou hast seen Me, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John xx. 28, 29). "If ye had known Me, ye would have known My Father also: from henceforth ye know Him, and have seen Him. Philip saith unto Him, Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and dost thou not know Me, Philip? he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?" (John xiv. 7-9).

VI. *What must be Gathered from these Self-designations*

These various self-designations of Jesus, and these designations so frequently ascribed to Him by others and accepted by Him as true and proper titles, are certainly shining with teaching concerning the conception by Jesus of His own Person.

Without question, from all these exalted self-designations and accepted epithets from others, we cannot gather otherwise than that Jesus was conscious constantly of an *altogether lonely and unique* personal relation with the Infinite Father.

This consciousness of such unshared and unique relation with the Father is to be seen in the persistent *differentiation* of Himself by Jesus from all others. Steadily Jesus has peculiar speech concerning this relation. In this regard, Jesus, though He is so constitutively Son of Man, is yet other, and more than usual men can be, though they may be the

loftiest of their sort. "Teach us to pray," besought the disciples; and the only instance of the use by Jesus of the term "Our Father," is when, as by teacher to pupil, He directs them to address God as "Our"—that is, their—Father. The Fatherhood of God, though Jesus constantly teaches it, is never, on the lips of Jesus, a common term including Himself with others. How deeply significant is this dividing Himself from others by Jesus in such use of prayer! How evidently does this show that there was, in the consciousness of Jesus, a separateness, real and wide, from others in His own relation with the Father! And this apartness from others, because His was such unique relation with the Father, steadily appears in many another word of Jesus, *e. g.*, "All things have been delivered unto me of my Father" (Matt. xi. 27). "And behold, I send forth the promise of my Father upon you" (Luke xxiv. 49). What profound intimacy and lustrous

partnership of knowledge with the Father Jesus asserts as the result of this unique relationship! "No one knoweth the Son, save the Father; neither doth any know the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son willeth to reveal Him" (Matt. xi. 27).

This consciousness of an exclusive and unique relation with the Father is still further revealed in the declaration by Jesus that He is "*the only begotten*" of the Father. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son." "His Son, the only begotten," is the order of the Greek words (John iii. 16). I hold with such commentators as Lange, Stier, Meyer, Alford, that these are the veritable words of Jesus Himself, and not an addition and intrusion by the Evangelist. Certainly these words can mean nothing other than a most diverse and particular relationship with the Father.

This consciousness of unparalleled re-

lationship, on the part of Jesus, with the Father is further evident from the fact that Jesus always declares Himself as *being*, and not as *becoming*, the Son of God. Others may *become*, in a certain meaning, sons of God (John i. 12); Jesus already *is* "The Son of God," and in meaning superlative. "If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I came forth and am come from God; for neither have I come of Myself, but He sent Me" (John viii. 42). "I came out from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go unto the Father" (John xvi. 28).

This consciousness in Jesus of this relationship with the Father alone and singular, further manifests itself in the clear claim by Him to *divine attributes*. For example—to the divine attribute of Pre-existence. "What then if ye should behold the Son of Man ascending where He was before" (John vi. 62). "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto

you, Before Abraham was born, I am ” (John viii. 58). “ And now, Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was ” (John xvii. 5). For example again—the divine attribute of Omnipresence. “ For where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them ” (Matt. xviii. 20). “ And lo, I am with you all the days, even unto the consummation of the age ” (Matt. xxviii. 20). For example again—the divine attribute of Omnipotence. “ All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth ” (Matt. xxviii. 18).

The acceptance by Jesus of distinctively *divine* titles also discloses the consciousness in Jesus of a relationship with Deity sundered from all others. “ But Simon Peter, when he saw it, fell down at Jesus’ knees, saying, Depart from me ; for I am a sinful man, O Lord ” (Luke v. 8). And to the prostrate Peter there

is no rebuke from Jesus, such as St. Peter himself gave to the kneeling Cornelius when he would unduly reverence the apostle—"Stand up; I myself also am a man" (Acts x. 26). "Thomas answered and said unto Him, My Lord and my God" (John xx. 28). And Jesus did not, in the least, disown the title which only Deity may fittingly receive.

The cloudless challenge of Jesus that He reveals the Infinite Father; that sight of Him is the precise equivalent of sight of God, is crowning proof that in His consciousness Jesus stood to the Father in a relation even abyssmally unique. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv. 9).

Let me quote a few sentences from Professor Harnack. These affirming words of the great German teacher are, it seems to me, most valuable because in this direction he so stoutly affirms, however much, in other directions, he may

choose to deny. "Jesus is convinced that He knows God in a way in which no one ever knew Him before. This consciousness of the unique character of His relation to God as a Son. . . ."

"Again and again in the history of mankind, men of God have come forward in the sure consciousness of possessing a divine message, and of being compelled, whether they will or not, to deliver it. But the message has always happened to be imperfect; in this spot or that defective. . . ." "But in this case"—that of Jesus—"the message brought was of the profoundest and most comprehensive character. . . ." "Defective it is not. . . ." "antiquated it is not, and in life and strength it still triumphs to-day over all the past. He who delivered it has as yet yielded His place to no man, and to human life He still to-day gives a meaning and an aim—He *the Son of God.*"*

* *What is Christianity?* by Professor Adolf Harnack, pp. 138-140.

St. John tells us (John i. 12, 13) "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name; who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Here arises a capital and determining question. As one answers it his whole religious thinking and feeling must take shape. This is the question—Does this unique relationship of Jesus with the Father mean a relationship differing only in degree from that of those who, accepting Jesus, are given the right to become children—sons—of God? Does this sonship of the usual Christian differ only in amount from that of Jesus, or is the Sonship of Jesus something differing from that of the usual Christian in limitless quality? Answer this question in one way, and Jesus is but fairest specimen of the sort of sonship possible to all Christians; answer this question in another way, and, while

Christians are, in their sort, sons of God, Jesus is *the* Son of God in a way separated, peculiar, incommunicable. For myself, I am certain that the last answer is the only true one, and for reasons like these :

Because only by such answer can the entirely unique relationship with the Father, which Jesus so steadily claims, be at all accounted for.

Because the assumption by Jesus of divine attributes, His acceptance of divine titles, His positive declaration that sight of Him is exactly equivalent to sight of God, can have no other meaning than that Jesus was Himself consciously sharer, not only in the human nature, but as veritably and thoroughly in the Deific nature.

Because, while it is deeply true that man may be in real kin with God, is created in His image, and so is capable of genuine spiritual converse with God—it is still also true, and must ever be, that

man must remain man ; can never himself pass upward into being deity. " God made thought, love, and volition to be essentially the same in man that they are in God. The life of God is a life of intelligent volition, and so *upon his lower plane* is the life of man. The relation between God and man is not such that man by growing can become God. Limits are set to man above in the very constitution of his nature, and he cannot pass them. He may become a perfect man, but he cannot transcend his nature and become infinite like God. Human nature is essentially finite ; limitations are a part of it." " It is not true that man without limits would be God, for man can never be without limits ; but it is true that God within limits would be man, and it is conceivable that God, in the Son, might place Himself within the limits of humanity." " We behold in Jesus a relation to God that we find nowhere else." " God was in Him as He never was or

will be in any other human being.” There was “a peculiar quality in the human life that Jesus lived, and in Him as living it. Human as it was, that life differed in relation to God from other human lives. In great measure He intended other human lives to resemble it; and yet our sources of information set it before us as a life that can never be wholly paralleled by any other.”*

Therefore, since Jesus is in such unique relation with the infinite Father that He is Himself Deific, He both can and does reveal to us God.

That was no small contention which clashed at the Council of Nicæa—whether the Son of God was *Homoousion*, of one essence, substance, nature, being, with the Father; or whether He was only *Homoiousion*, of similar essence with the Father, and consequently did not differ in sort and range from any finite spirit

* *Outline of Christian Theology*, by William N. Clarke, pp. 239, 264-266.

made in the likeness of God. Mr. Froude tells us how Thomas Carlyle used, in his earlier years, to berate the tearing the Christian world to tatters over a diphthong; but Mr. Carlyle learned better in his later years, and saw how Christianity itself was at stake in the controversy, how, if the Arians had won, Christianity would have dried away into a dusty legend.

Since the Son of God is of one substance with Deity, He can, therefore, disclose God. "The Son reveals the Father, the apparent Christ reveals the unapparent God. He alone does this, or can do this; and He can do it without any risk of mistake, because He is *essentially* the Father's image. If Christ is only a creature, His qualities can only occupy a certain space in the area of God's revelation of Himself; we have not got to what is ultimate and all-embracing in getting to Him. But if He is God it makes all the difference; in Him dwells not one quality of God, but 'all

the fulness of the Godhead bodily ' ' (Col. ii. 9). *

God is beyond my comprehension. His glory is like the sun, too dazzling for my vision, if I were to be admitted into His immediate presence I should be smitten and confounded. Even the seraphim can only endure the blaze of His close light as they reverently veil their faces with their wings. When I think of God, the Absolute, the Infinite—I can only say, “This knowledge is too wonderful for me.” “Thy judgments are a great deep.”

There are some plants which grow right up, in their own sturdy self-sufficiency. There are others which can only clasp and climb. The human soul is like the clinging plant; it droops except there be some strong trellis to uphold it. In order that my soul grow loftily it must have some near, yet high,

* *The Incarnation of the Son of God*, by Bishop Gore, pp. 123, 124.

support which, with its poor faculties, it may lay hold on. What do I need then? I need God near me; God brought somehow, and in some measure, into the terms of my apprehension.

Talk to me of abstract power, of abstract holiness, of abstract love—though I may heedfully listen to you, I cannot altogether understand you. Perhaps you do not quite understand yourself. But show me divine power actualized, divine holiness personified, divine love throbbing in a heart like mine, and all are made real to me, and are, in some measure, lowered to the level of my little thought. I can cling to such disclosure, I can feel myself lifted to the Throne as I lay hold of that.

See how, and in but a single direction, Christ shows us the divine love, and brings the certainty of it down to us. See: the birth of every babe is made sacred by His own birth; the wedding joy is sanctified and sent on in stronger pulses

by His presence; childhood nestles beneath His blessing; the least touch of want, but upon the utmost fringe of His robe, unloosens the stream of loving help; when the sisters bewail their dead brother, the eyes of Christ are suffused with tears; when the nails tear Him and the thorns wound Him, love finds excuse in ignorance and Christ prays for His murderers, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do;" and the tragedy upon the cross is but the truth of the divine love written in the red and awful characters of a divine sacrifice. Thus God's love I become aware of, sure of, in Christ. He interprets it to me. He makes it real. He brings it close.

So also, in other directions, I come to know God in Christ. Christ tells who God may be. Even my finiteness can lay hold of Christ. I am not left to vague and trying thought about the Infinite and the Absolute, about Force and Law. I hear Christ's words—"He that hath

seen Me hath seen the Father ;” and in that vision my soul is satisfied.

VII. The Problem of the Person, and a hint as to its possible Solution

What now is to be further said about this Person Jesus Christ who, as Son of Man and Son of God, according to His own teaching, carries in Himself so evidently the two natures—the nature human and the nature Deific? Of course in this complex Personality we meet a problem. But should that surprise us? Is not every one of us a problem to himself?

“ How poor, how rich, how abject, how august,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
How passing wonder He who made him such ! ”

When to myself I am such wonder, the fact that He, one of whose prophetic names is “ Wonderful ” (Is. ix. 6), should be a problem to me ought not, either to

astonish me, or be the least reason for my rejecting Him.

As we gaze upon this Jesus Christ, made evident to us in the New Testament, the unescapable fact about Him is the presence in Him of profound contrasts. As, in the case of no other being who has ever appeared within the arena of our knowledge, He possesses this, and at the same time that strangely differing quality. In Him even contradictions find strange marriage. Admirably has the late Dr. Henry B. Smith set over against each other the vast contrasts present and, at the same time, conjoined in the one Person, Jesus Christ. "Christ is called the Son of David, yet David calls Him Lord; He was understood to claim equality with the Father—as man He had not where to lay His head; He took part with flesh and blood, yet thought it not robbery to be equal with God; He took the form of a servant, yet His proper form was the form of God; He taber-

nacled in the flesh, yet came down from heaven; He said that He could of His own self do nothing, yet He is said to be the Lord of all; His mother is called Mary, yet He is over all, God blessed forever; He was born under the law and fulfilled the law, and yet in His own name gave a new and more perfect law, and brought in a new and everlasting righteousness; He was received into heaven out of the sight of His disciples, yet He is still with them, with any two or three of them always, and even to the ends of the earth; He was found in fashion as a man—and yet is the image of the invisible God; He hid not His face from shame and spitting, though He be the very brightness of the Father's glory; He increased in stature, yet is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; He increased in wisdom, yet knew the Father even as the Father knew Him; He died at the mandate of a Roman governor, yet is the Prince of the kings of the earth; He could

say, 'The Father is greater than I,' yet also say, 'I and my Father are one—he that hath seen Me hath seen the Father ;' He said, in the time of His temptation, unto Satan, 'It is written, "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him *only* shalt thou serve,"' yet He also declared that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father ; and of Him it is asserted that every knee should bow to Him, and every tongue confess that He is God, to the glory of God the Father.'*

Pare down, round the edges of, belittlingly interpret, the teachings of Jesus about Himself as given us in the New Testament, as you may please ; if only, you will not cut out and fling away an entire half of those teachings, it is as impossible to resist the impression of a real, however strange, doubleness in His Personality as it is to resist the sensation of

* *System of Christian Theology*, by Henry B. Smith, D. D., LL. D., p. 386.

sight when the sunbeam strikes the retina of the eye. Construct a circle of all the elements belonging to even the largest sort of a human nature, and then attempt to make the circle of the Person of Jesus, as He has taught us of His Person, coincident with it, and the circle of His Personality sweeps beyond it as does the horizon overpass the chalk circle the schoolboy describes upon the blackboard when he demonstrates his proposition in geometry. On the other hand, put together all you have ever learned of Deity, and try to express the Personality of Jesus solely in the terms of Deity, and you must discover that you have dropped entirely out of the account a whole side and share of what constitutently belongs to this Jesus, as He, in the New Testament, has disclosed Himself. Complexity of being is the immediate and insistent impression which comes from any open-minded looking at the Person Jesus.

Nor is it scientific to deny this so evi-

dent complexity. That only is a scientific method which takes resolute regard of all the facts. To shut one's eyes to this or to that element in the complex Person Jesus is as unscientific as it would be for a geologist to declare that the carboniferous was the only geologic era through which the earth had passed.

No; complexity—strange indeed, yet real as is Jesus Himself—is the primary and clear fact about the Person Jesus Christ. And this double range of being in Him has found forth-telling in that epithet which can be appropriately given Jesus, but can be given to Him only—the Divine-human Jesus.

I think these wise, true words of Mr. Ruskin, “We lose half the meaning and evade the practical power upon ourselves, by never accepting in its fulness the idea that our Lord was ‘perfect man’; tempted in all things like as we are. Our preachers are continually trying, in all manner

of subtle ways, to explain the union of the divinity with the manhood, an explanation which certainly involves first their being able to describe the nature of Deity itself, or, in plain words, to comprehend God. They never can explain, in any one particular, the union of the natures; they only succeed in weakening the faith of their hearers as to the entireness of either. The thing they have to do is precisely the contrary of this—to insist on the *entireness of both*. We never think of Christ enough as God, never enough as man; the instinctive habit of our minds being always to miss of the divinity, and the reasoning and enforced habit to miss of the humanity. We are afraid to harbor in our own hearts, or to utter in the hearing of others, any thought of our Lord as hungering, tired, having a human soul, a human will, and affected by events of human life as a finite creature is; and yet one-half of the efficiency of His atonement, and the whole of the

efficiency of His example, depend on His having been thus to the full." *

“To insist on the entireness of both” the natures—that, it seems to me, is the first thing and the only scientific thing to do.

The *human element* in the Person Jesus Christ is to be steadily and clearly recognized; is to be grasped in all thought of Him; is to be ruggedly insisted on as to its reality and integrity. The ancient Docetæ declared that the human body of Jesus was but a phantasm, something only seeming to be, not existing actually;—that we may never say. The later Gnostics, like Valentinus, said that the body of Jesus was wholly pneumatic—spiritual: that it passed through the body of His mother as water through a reed: that Jesus took up with Himself nothing of the human nature which was of the substance of His mother; neither that may we declare. The Apollinarians as-

* *Modern Painters*, Vol. iv, pp. 372, 373.

serted that the human nature of Jesus was, at highest, fragment only ; that while Jesus did possess a human body and a human soul, He missed possessing a human spirit, the human spirit being dislodged and thrust away by the deific principle. But such a mutilated Christ answers neither to the plain requirements of the New Testament, nor to the deep calling of humanity for a whole Saviour.

We may not sublimate the human nature of Jesus into a kind of mist and film ; nor may we so subtract from it as to cut into or cut away its pith and verity. We are to insist on its entireness. “ For verily not of angels doth He take hold, but He taketh hold of the seed of Abraham. Wherefore it behooved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, that He might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself

hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted" (Heb. ii. 16-18).

Also, and on the other hand, and as we continue to gaze upon this complex Person, we must, if we would at all scientifically recognize the whole facts in the great instance, as entirely take account of the divinity which so luminously shines in Jesus. And this divinity we may not prune down to any other meaning than that of Deity.

There has come about, in the use of the word divine, a giving it a scanty, shallow, misleading sense. The word has gotten badly lowered into a poor synonymousness with only the grand, the impressive, the beautiful. As some speak the word divine, it signifies but the highest of a sort—not the utmost, the Deific. So those who would hold Jesus simply in the natural and human category are constantly, but always misleadingly, calling Him divine. He is the divine man,

such say, and they are very free with reverent and applauding speech about Him. But if you press such you will discover they mean that Jesus is divine only in the sense in which poets call some rare day in June divine, or in the sense in which art-critics sometimes rave about what they choose to declare a divine picture. For such Jesus is never divine as Deity; He is only divine as possibly the utmost and ideal man. Putting this quite Pickwickian meaning upon the word, such can declare, still calling Jesus divine, that He by no means enters, in any wise, the realm of essential Deity.

But He who accepted from the at last believing and adoring Thomas the ascription which only Deity may receive, and altogether without rebuke of the disciple—"My Lord and my God," He who, without the slightest reserve or qualification, declared Himself to be the disclosure of the Infinite, that sight of Him was veritable sight of God, must have been

conscious of share in the divine nature in the measureless meaning of that nature. Or, for the old dilemma—“*Aut Deus aut non bonus,*” either God or not good—still stands, Jesus must have consciously deceived, which last horn of the dilemma, in view of the sinless character of Jesus, is unthinkable and impossible.

No; and other Scripture bears out the teaching of Jesus concerning His share in the divine nature in the utmost meaning of that nature—“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God;” “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us;” “Who being the effulgence of His glory and the very stamp of His essence;”—no; in the supreme meaning of Deity is Jesus Deity.

But how can two such elements as a nature essentially human and a nature essentially divine be conjoined in the one Person? In the presence of such a problem what better can we do than ex-

claim with the great apostle to the Gentiles—"And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness" (I Tim. iii. 16). While so much insoluble mystery hangs about one's self, can we expect to entirely scatter the mystery shrouding the Person of the wonderful Christ?

I find hint, and at least a gleaming of light for myself here, in the distinction between a nature and a person. "Nature, as compared with person is that substratum or condition of being which determines the kind and attributes of the person, but is clearly distinguishable from the person itself. Christ assumed human nature, but He did not assume a human person; and the two natures were so conjoined as to constitute a single personality."* Not a human person, like Peter or James or John, did the Deific principle in Jesus take upon itself, but

* *Christian Theology*, by E. G. Robinson, D.D., LL.D., President and Professor in Rochester Theological Seminary, and later, President of Brown University and Professor of Ethics in the University of Chicago, p. 216.

the Deific principle in Jesus did take upon itself a human nature. A separated subsistence, like the simply human personality of Peter or James or John, the human nature in Jesus was not. The human nature in Jesus was impersonal, not yet separated and emerging into a human personality. The human nature in Jesus came to its personality because of and through its union with the already personal divine Logos. That which was the basis of personality in Jesus was not the human nature assumed, but was the personal divine Logos already existing and assuming.

Thus,—and here at least a little light seems to shine for me,—by the assumption by the divine and already personal Logos of a human nature which became personalized through its union with the already personal divine Logos, did the human nature and the divine nature come to union in the one complex Person, Jesus Christ.

And so, the resulting complex Person, Jesus Christ, did not have two separate consciousnesses and two separate wills, but did have one theanthropic consciousness and one theanthropic will.

?
The, to me, most satisfactory statement about the great mysterious matter I have ever come on, is the following: "The two natures united in the person of Christ constituted a single theanthropic personality. This personality appears in the New Testament in two ever-shifting lights, corresponding to its two unmixed natures and their unblended but interpenetrating and mutually modified attributes; but always as one and the same person with one consciousness and one will. Those opposite sayings of His which present Him now in a divine and now in a human aspect, are not to be referred, the one to the man Jesus and the other to the Divine Logos, as if the consciousness and will of one nature were sometimes in the ascendancy and some-

times those of the other. On the contrary, Jesus Christ was a single person, one divine-human being, the God-man, who, with one undivided consciousness and a single unvarying will, contemplated, sometimes His earthward relations and humiliations, and sometimes the preëxistent position He had temporarily forsaken. . . . The Divine Logos in becoming man did not cease to be divine, and the human, in being united to the divine, did not cease to be human.”*

And because the complex Person Jesus was *human*, as well as at the same time divine, light begins to fall for me about the limitations and some ignorancies of the complex Person Jesus. Distinction is to be made between the *presence* and the *manifestation* of the divine in Him. As another says: “This is the key to the doctrine of the *Kenosis*.” That deity should condescend to such union with human nature as to be re-

**Christian Theology*, by Dr. E. G. Robinson, pp. 218-219.

vealed in the terms of human nature is the pith and point, and at the same time the abysmal depth of the divine humiliation. For, necessarily, the Divine Logos must be limited in His manifestation by the human nature which He had assumed. Condescending to take upon Himself a human nature at the embryonic and infantile stages of it, the *manifestation* of the divine in Jesus must, to large degree, be dependent upon the phase and stage that human nature, in its development, had reached. Not less was the Divine Logos *present* in the complex Person, Jesus Christ, when He lay a babe in His mother's arms; but that babyhood, by the very terms of its then only infantile development, necessarily limited the manifestation of the certainly present Divine Logos. So could the complex Person, Jesus Christ, pass through the determined and natural stages of a human development. So could He increase in stature; so could

He grow in wisdom and in favor with God and man ; and all along, and all the time, so could, so must, there be only so much manifestation of the divine in Jesus as was possible for the stage of the human development at that time reached. So, it seems to me, it was possible that the Son of Man, at that period of His development, might not know the day or the hour of the final consummation. Always the *manifestation* of the always present divine nature in Jesus was dependent upon the stage of development the humanity in Jesus had arrived at. Probably there was something special and peculiar in that knowledge about the final end of things. But not knowing then, it does not follow that he could never know. That is a suggestive comment of Bengel—"the stress, in St. Matthew xxiv. 36, is on the present tense, 'No man *knoweth*;' in those days no man did know, not even the Son; but *afterwards* He knew it, for He revealed

it in the Apocalypse.” There was progression of *manifestation* of the divine in Jesus in proportion as a progressing development of the human in Jesus gave chance for the divine in Him to shine more radiantly forth. “It is more probable that the glorified human mind of Christ on the mediatorial throne now knows the time of the day of judgment than that it is ignorant of it. The Logos, though present, could not properly and fittingly make such a manifestation of knowledge through that infant body and infant soul, as he could through a child’s body and a child’s soul, and still more through a man’s body and a man’s soul. It would have been unnatural, if the Logos had empowered the infant Jesus to work a miracle or deliver the Sermon on the Mount. The repulsive and unnatural character of the apocryphal gospels, compared with the natural beauty of the canonical gospels, arises from attributing to the infant and child Jesus

acts that were befitting only a mature humanity.” *

Have I, in what I have been writing, been “darkening counsel by words without knowledge”? Quite possibly I have to some. I have been trying to tell where, to myself, at least some light seems to shine on the vast problem of the Person of Jesus.

I was reading how Leonardo da Vinci painted at, and yet could not complete, his greatest picture, “The Last Supper.” He wrought easily and victoriously at the heads of the apostles; but when he came to trying to give form and color to what he conceived ought to be the portrait of Jesus, he was baffled. He could not at all, by any art, tell Jesus adequately forth. The space in the great picture he meant to have filled with a vision of Jesus, he could never fill. Jesus was too mighty

* In the preceding discussion I have allowed myself to make somewhat free use of an essay of mine on the Person of our Lord published in *The Homiletic Review* for March and April, 1894.

for him. Another hand than that of Leonardo da Vinci, dared—any glance at the picture shows how inadequately—to attempt the impossible.

So must the unique and divine-human Jesus sweep beyond and shame any attempt at the complete explanation of His complex Person. Our main duty is not so much attempted explanation of Him, as thankful and adoring reception of Him; of Him who, being at once Son of Man and Son of God, reveals God to man, and atoningly opens for sinful man the way to God.

CHAPTER IV

Some Conclusions

I. As to the Supernatural Birth

IN Professor Harnack's volume,* he says, "Two of the Gospels do, it is true, contain an introductory history (the history of Jesus' birth); but we may disregard it; for even if it contained something more trustworthy than it does actually contain, it would be as good as useless for our purpose. That is to say, the Evangelists themselves never refer to it, nor make Jesus Himself refer to His antecedents. . . . Paul, too, is silent;

* *What is Christianity?* p. 33.

so that we can be sure that the oldest tradition knew nothing of any stories of Jesus' birth."

It is useless to deny that words like these, and from so great a teacher, reveal a tendency—in these days, and in certain quarters, a very strong tendency—to treat the historic statements of St. Matthew and St. Luke concerning the birth of Jesus from the Virgin, as statements not weighted with the substance of doctrine, as something not necessary to Christian belief, as the assertions of myth and legend, gathering, as the years went, about the purely natural generation and birth of Jesus.

But further on in this same volume, Professor Harnack, having thus declared the accounts of the supernatural birth of Jesus unhistorical, is obliged to confess himself confronted by a difficulty and a mystery concerning Jesus altogether unmovable and insoluble. He is speaking of the peculiar and unique consciousness

of Jesus as the Son of God, so apparent in all the teachings of Jesus about Himself. Professor Harnack says (p. 138): "How He came to this consciousness of the unique character of His relation to God as a Son; how He came to the consciousness of His power, and to the consciousness of the obligation and the mission which this power carries with it, is His secret, and no psychology will ever fathom it."

And must not everyone denying, or even questioning, the birth of Jesus from the Virgin, find himself striking against the same dense difficulty? Are not the declarations of the Evangelists of the birth of Jesus from the Virgin precisely the clue, and, after all, the only real clue to the so evident and constant consciousness of Jesus that, as the Son of God, He did stand to God in a relation altogether separate and singular? Is it, after all, conceivable that such shining and exalted consciousness could have ever come to

one who was the issue of no special divine parentage, to one born only from the usual line of a human ancestry? Is the problem of the complex person of Jesus in the least helped toward even a partial solution by the denial of the supernatural birth? Is not the acceptance of the fact of such birth the very light we need to at all account for the "secret" of the unique consciousness of Jesus as veritably, and in a solitary way, the Son of God?

Besides, think of the exquisiteness of the narrative of the supernatural birth of Jesus. How tender, delicate, disclosing, and at the same time wonderfully and beautifully reticent it is! The self-surrender of Mary to the will of God that that Holy Thing might be born of her and be called the Son of God; her willingness, since that was also the will of God, to herself pass under the necessarily accruing misconceptions of it all about her pure and fair virginity; her breaking

forth into such rapture and chastened praise that she was to be—what every Hebrew woman had for centuries been longing to be—the mother of Messiah ; her womanly and shadowing treasuring of the circumstances of the birth of Jesus in her heart, and the impossibility that she, a mother, could ever have been mistaken about the manner of her boy's birth ; at the same time, the full, fair, free knowledge of Joseph, her betrothed, about it all, and his reverent acceptance of it all ; and after the birth from the Virgin, the marriage of Joseph and Mary, and so no slightest discredit cast upon the holy estate of marriage—it is beyond the bounds of the conceivable that such a narrative should have been concocted, and have been the product of a legendary aftergrowth. The narrative fits all the great necessities of the great event as accurately and as gently as the sunlight fits the healthy eye and gives it vision. Nothing in any literature can match it. As the

overshadowing Power of the Most High had to do, according to the narrative, with the conception and the birth, so must the Power of the Most High have had to do with the narrative which enshrines and tells of the incarnation. To suggest that the narrative tells untruly is to suggest the impossible in view of the matchless narrative itself.

Besides, the fact of the supernatural birth is not so out of order and athwart all analogy as it may sometimes seem to be ; any one at all acquainted with the investigations of recent science knows that production from one parent is not an unheard-of thing in nature. Says Dornier, "The new science recognizes manifold methods of propagation." Says even Professor Huxley, "I have not the slightest objection to offer *a priori* to all the propositions of the three creeds. The mysteries of the church are child's play compared with the mysteries of nature. The doctrine of the Trinity is

not more puzzling than the necessary antinomies of physical speculation. *Virgin procreation* and resuscitation from apparent death are ordinary phenomena for the naturalist."

Besides, is it the truth that the other evangelists and St. Paul never refer to the supernatural birth of Jesus? Does not St. John's "And the Word became flesh" coupled with his sublime forthshadowings of the preëxistence of the Word—"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the word was God," necessitate a birth supernatural? And, it seems to me, as mountains imply and rest upon their rocky bases, so do St. Paul's statements concerning our Lord and Saviour imply and rest upon an actual intrusion of Deity into our humanity in the august Person Jesus Christ. Take but a single specimen: "Who being originally in the form of God, counted it not a thing to be grasped at, to be on an equality with

God ; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, becoming in the likeness of man ; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, yea, the death of the cross'' (Phil. ii. 6-8). What can such language of St. Paul's be but the more internal and philosophic statement of the historic fact of Incarnation by supernatural conception and birth which St. Matthew and St. Luke record ?

And still besides, as the complex personality of Jesus rises before you, in all its sinlessness, various loveliness, majesty, can anything be more precisely congruous with such personality than is the supernatural birth ? Would not a merely natural procreation and birth be most incongruous with the character of Jesus ? Utterly and without the slightest reservation do I myself joyfully subscribe to that great and fundamental article of the creed, commonly called the Apostles', "conceived by the Holy Ghost ; born

of the Virgin Mary. As Canon Liddon says, "And Christianity from the first has proclaimed herself, not the authoress of an apotheosis, but the child and product of an Incarnation."* But that is precisely and necessarily what you do, denying the supernatural birth—you apotheosize man; you refuse belief in the differentiating test and note of your Christianity—separating it by whole diameters from all other religions—that Christianity is the religion of the descent of God to man in Jesus Christ. Most congruous with the essential heart and meaning of Christianity is the supernatural birth of Jesus.

II. As to the Miracles of Jesus

How congruous with the personality of Jesus is the recorded fact of His miracles. Why, in the presence of this Divine-human One, should the enwreathing Him by beneficent signs, wonders, works, ex-

* *The Divinity of our Lord*, p. 27.

cite surprise or criticism or opposition? Would not their absence be the real reason for surprise? Would not the absence of them, in view of what Jesus is, be the utmost unnatural? Primarily it is Jesus who legitimizes His miracles, not His miracles Jesus. As the English writer, Mr. J. Brierley, has so well said, "We are beating about the bush in talking about Christ's miracles; Christ Himself is *the* miracle."

III. As to the Resurrection of Jesus, and the Other Life

One day, years since, I passed out of the beautiful brightness of the Italian sunshine into the gloom of an old church in Florence.

The church was very dark—so dark, and perhaps my eyes were blinded by the radiance out of which I had just come, that I could scarcely see to guide myself along its aisle. But pushing further into the darkness of the church, and

as I now remember it, turning a kind of corner of a pillar—suddenly, and with the full light of the day gleaming upon it through a clear cleft in a distant window, I came upon a picture which stopped, thrilled, held me. It was Guido Reni's "Ecce Homo"—the picture of the head of Jesus with the crown of thorns. I had often seen reproductions of it in print and photograph; but now I stood before the matchless original. The sublime sorrow of the face, and at the same time the patient and fathomless self-sacrifice of it; the blood dropping on the face here and there from the wounds the thorns had gashed—how vividly real it seemed to me, as I stood there in the gloom, while the light glorified the picture.

Fasten your thought on this picture for a moment—*Ecce Homo*, Behold the Man!

Think what He had suffered—the tasking farewell from the disciples in that upper room in Jerusalem the night be-

fore; the awful agony in Gethsemane; the desertion of His disciples—do not think He would not feel the desertion of His friends as you and I would feel it; the caviling inquisition by Annas, Caiaphas, Sanhedrin; in the early morning after that fateful night, the trials by Pilate, by Herod, and again by Pilate, and all the howling rage of the mob surrounding; then the lacerating scourging; then the sport against Him of the rough soldiery—putting in His hand a reed for sceptre and crushing upon His brow the thorns for crown, and blindfolding, smiting, spitting on Him; then Pilate, seeking to stir a little pity in the heartless throng, leading Him forth and saying, as at the moment of this picture, *Ecce Homo*—Behold the man! But the mob spurns Him, chooses, instead of Him, the murderer Barabbas. All this He suffered.

Think what He suffered afterward. The journey to the place of crucifixion;

the fainting beneath the heavy cross-beam He was obliged to carry—do you wonder He fainted after the garden agony, the trials, the insults, the scourgings, the sleeplessness of that fearful night and early morning? Then the awful crucifixion itself; the worn, bleeding body hanging from four great wounds; the last cry—“It is finished; Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit;” the head falling death-struck; the stab of the Roman spear; the heart’s blood draining out.

All this He suffered, and thus He went into the deadest death. Then there was the burial in the new tomb.

Suppose that had been all. It would have been all—as far as this world goes, it must have been all—had Jesus been no more and other than an ordinary man, even though he were, of men merely, the loftiest. Then those faithless lines of Matthew Arnold had been the true epitaph for Jesus—

“Now He is dead ! Far hence He lies
In the lone Syrian town ;
And on His grave, with shining eyes,
The Syrian stars look down.”

But no Syrian stars with shining eyes do look down upon His grave. Lo, on that great first day of the week that new tomb was empty of Jesus. He vacated it by the glorious resurrection. That is the effulgent fact. “But now *is* Christ risen from the dead (I Cor. xv. 20).

I noticed, in the vale of Chamouni, that the mountains ruled the valley, not the valley the mountains. The valley could only wind and go as the mountains let them. The valley could not thrust away the mountains, it must submit to them.

So does the effulgent fact of the resurrection of Jesus rule history. It cannot be explained away. It cannot be thrust out of history. It compels history and marshals it.

Even David Friedrich Strauss annihi-

lates the much vaunted swoon theory of the resurrection of Jesus. He says, "It is impossible that a Being who had stolen half-dead out of the sepulcher, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening and indulgence, and who still at last yielded to His sufferings, could have given to the disciples the impression that he was a conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life; an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made upon them in life and in death; at the most, could only have given it an elegiac voice, but could by no possibility have changed this sorrow into enthusiasm, or have elevated their reverence into worship."

So does every other theory, which seeks to explain the resurrection of Jesus in the terms of the merely natural, vanish as the mists do before the sun, in the

presence of the radiant and unconquerable fact.

And the resurrection of Jesus was an utter vanquishing of death. I have detailed His sufferings and grim-visaged death that against their background truer vision might be had of the vast glory of His triumph. Jesus rose into immortal health and strength. It was as though death had been an invigorating bath. Behold the Man thorn-crowned and sinking as in Guido Reni's picture. But do not too long and only in such guise behold Him. Behold Him in the victory of His resurrection. And how congruous with His complex, divine-human personality is the glorious resurrection of Jesus! How incongruous with all He was and taught had death been able to maintain dominion over *Him!*

And the resurrection of Jesus is the main and masterful certainty of the fact of the other life. What a "pent-up

Utica" our thought of life had been without it. On the thither side of death Jesus emerges, and from Him, risen from the tomb, as light from the sun, streams the effulgent certainty that death is not "wall but door."

Says Professor Adolf Harnack: "*This grave*"—of Jesus—"was the birthplace of the indestructible belief that death is vanquished, and there is a life eternal.* It is useless to cite Plato; it is useless to point to the Persian religion, and the ideas and the literature of later Judaism. All that would have perished and has perished; but the certainty of the resurrection and of a life eternal which is bound up with the grave in Joseph's garden has not perished, and on the conviction that *Jesus lives* we still base those hopes of citizenship in an eternal city, which makes our earthly life worth living and tolerable. 'He delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to

* The Italics are Professor Harnack's.

bondage,' as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews confesses. That is the point, and although there be exceptions to its sway, wherever, despite all the weight of nature, there is a strong faith in the infinite value of the soul; wherever death has lost its terrors; wherever the sufferings of the present are measured against a future of glory, this feeling of life is bound up with the conviction that Jesus Christ has passed through death, that God has awakened Him and raised Him to life and glory. What else can we believe but that the earliest disciples also found the ultimate foundation of their faith in the living Lord to be the strength which had gone out from Him? . . . It is not by any speculative ideas of philosophy but by the vision of Jesus' life and death and by the feeling of His imperishable union with God that mankind, so far as it believes these things, has attained to that certainty of eternal life for which it was meant, and which it

dimly discerns—eternal life in time and beyond time.”*

*IV. As to the Rational Personal Attitude
toward Jesus*

I was riding through the streets and into the country about Leadville, Colorado. My companion was a young man who had come thither to take charge of some large mining interests. As we rode together, he was telling me how unsatisfactory to himself had been his life, how full of mists, as to religious certainties, his mind was; how he longed for such certainty, how perplexed he was about discovering the path which could lead him to it.

Then, substantially, this conversation took place between us. Said I, “Suppose you wanted further to explore, or to wisely locate gold-mines in this region, to whom would you go for suggestion

* *What is Christianity?* by Professor Adolf Harnack, pp. 175, 176.

and help? Would you go to somebody who himself knew little or nothing of gold mining, of the tests for gold's presence, of the sort of sands or strata amid which gold would be likeliest found? Or would you go to someone who, by long experience in and careful study of such gold-bearing regions as these, had become expert about them?" "Certainly I should go to an expert in such matters," my friend instantly replied.

Then I answered, "Is not Jesus Christ *the* expert in religion? Since He is at once Lord and Brother, since He came forth from God to tell us of Him, and, sharing our nature by incarnation, can tell us of God in the terms of our nature, is it possible to find a higher expert in the great matters pertaining to both God and man than Jesus? Must He not be, what He declares Himself to be, and what His sinless life and wonderful teaching also declare Him to be—the Way, the Truth, the Life? What better

thing, or surer, can you do than to unconditionally surrender yourself to this divine-human Jesus? Jesus is the path into scattered doubts and religious certainty."

My friend, in effect, said he would do as I suggested—accept Jesus as personal Lord and personal Saviour, and, looking to Him for truth, seek to practice what Jesus should teach him in his own living.

If my friend did this honestly, I am sure he got on into the light. Can there be a better thing to do? Can there be a truer, nobler attitude toward this divine-human Jesus? Said Jesus, and countless experiences of searching souls bear out the truth of what He said: "If any man willeth to do His will, he shall know of the teaching, whether it is from God, or whether I speak from myself." "I am the light of the world, he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life."

“What first were guessed as points, I now know
stars.”

“I say, the acknowledgment of God in Christ
Accepted by the reason, solves for thee
All questions in the earth and out of it,
And has so far advanced thee to be wise.”*

* *A Death in the Desert*, by Robert Browning.

INDEX OF SUBJECTS

A

- Ananda the disciple of Buddha, 51.
Arnold, Matthew, poem on the grave of Jesus, 84.
 Sir Edwin, on Christianity and Hinduism, 38.
 Sir Edwin, poem on the Humanity of Jesus, 103.
Ashmore, Dr. William, missionary to China, 38.

B

- Barnasha, the Aramaic word, 119.
Beck, John, Moravian missionary, 29.
Boat on Sea of Galilee, 81.
Browning, Robert, quotation from "A Death in the Desert,"
 192.
Bushnell, Dr. Horace, on the sinlessness of Jesus, 70.

C

- Carey, Dr. William, 29.
Carlyle, Thomas, on great men, 120.
 on the value of a diphthong, 146.
Certainty of the Teaching of Jesus, 39.
Chadwick, George A., on the historicity of Jesus, 7.
Challenge of Jesus that He reveals God, 140.
 as to His sinlessness, 68.
Chamouni, Vale of, 184.
Character of Jesus, 72.
Chinese Christians, 28.
Clarke, Dr. William N., on essential difference between God
 and man, 144.

- Cobb, Frances Power, on historicity of Jesus, 7.
 Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, on criminality of sin, 63.
 Crosby, Dr. Howard, on Jewish thought of the Messiah, 106.

D

- Dawson, William J., on probable appearance of Jesus, 78.
 Denney, Dr. James, on greatness of the consciousness of Jesus,
 48.
 on Daniel's vision, 116.
 Determining question as to Jesus, 142.
 Derivation of the title "Son of Man," 114-119.
 Didon on the meaning of the claims of Jesus, 54.
 Differentiation of Himself by Jesus from all others, 135.
 Disraeli, Benjamin, 10.
 Divine titles, Acceptance of, by Jesus, 139.
 Doubters' confessions concerning Jesus, 3-10.

E

- Edersheim, Dr. Alfred, on Jewish parties in the time of Christ,
 14.
 Emerson, Ralph Waldo, on influence of Jesus, 4.
 Environment, 13.
 Example of Jesus, 33.

F

- Forgiveness of sins, The claim of Jesus to, 49.
 Fulfilment of prophecy in Jesus, 47.
 "For His sake"—poem, 55.

G

- Gladstone, William Ewart, 28.
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang, on historicity of Jesus, 5.
 Gore, Bishop, on essential Deity of Jesus, 146.

H

- Harnack, Prof. Adolph, as to the reality of the resurrection
 of Jesus, 7.
 as to the consciousness of Jesus, 140.
 as to the Supernatural Birth of Jesus,
 171.

- Heredity, 10.
Holmes, Dr. Oliver Wendell, on first sin, 59.
Homocousion and Homoiousion, 145.
Human feeling of criminality for sin, 61.
Hunt, Holman, picture of "The Shadow of the Cross," 27.
Huxley, Prof., as to analogy of Supernatural Birth, 176.

J

- Jesus blessing little children, Dutch picture of, 31.
His claims, 45-59.
His dynamic and perpetuating power, 73-77.
His home, 20.
His national atmosphere, 14.
His personal appearance, 77.
His position toward the sexes, 30.
His sinlessness, 59-72.
His teachings, 31-45.
His toil, 25.
His universality, 10-31.
the Son of God, 122-131.
the Son of Man, 87-95.

- Jerusalem, The destruction of, 43.
Jews, The, 11-13.
Judas, his remorse, 67.

K

- Kenosis, 165.

L

- Lanier, Sidney, poem on the "Crystal Christ," 113.
Leckey, William E. H., on historicity of Jesus, 6.
Liddon, Canon, on incarnation, 179.
Lonely and unique personal relation of Jesus with the infinite Father, 135.
Love of God as disclosed by Jesus, 148.

M

- Master, Lord, God, 132-134.
Messiah, The, 31, 32.
Mill, John Stuart, on historicity of Jesus, 9.
Milman, Dean, 44.
Miracles, 179.

- Mount of Olives, 45.
 Rainier, 2.
 Washington, 41.

N

- Napoleon concerning Jesus, 75.
 Narrative of the Supernatural Birth, 174.
 Nazareth, the town of Jesus, 18.
 Newton, Sir Isaac, 28.
 Number of times the designation Son of Man occurs in the
 four Gospels, 87.
 of passages in the four Gospels in which Jesus calls
 Himself, or is called, the Son of God, 123-129.
 of passages in the four Gospels in which Jesus calls
 God, "Father, my Father, the Father," 129.

P

- Parker, Theodore, on historicity of Jesus, 4.
 Perpetua, 50.
 Personality of Jesus historic fact, 3.
 Prayers of Jesus proof of His sinlessness, 69.
 Predictive element in the teaching of Jesus, 42.
 Pre-existence of Jesus, 45.
 Problem of the Person of Jesus, 150-170.

R

- Rational personal attitude toward Jesus, 184.
 Renan, 2.
 Reni, Guido, the "Ecce Homo," 181.
 Resurrection and the other life, 180.
 Richter, Jean Paul, 84.
 Robertson, Frederic W., 113.
 Robinson, Dr. E. G., as to the distinction between nature and
 person, 162.
 as to the single personality of Jesus, 164.
 Rousseau, on the historicity of Jesus, 3.
 Ruskin, John, on the two natures in Jesus, 155.

S

- Scope of the claims of Jesus, 56.
 Sea of Galilee, Sailing on and storm on, 82.

- Shakespeare, 28.
Smith, Dr. Henry B., on contrasts in Jesus, 151.
Socrates, 39.
Son of God, The, 122-131.
Son of Man, The, 87-95.
Stalker, Dr. James, "The Christology of Christ," 120.
Strauss, David Friedrich, on historicity of Jesus, 5.
 on swooning theory of the resurrection, 185.
Supernatural Birth of Jesus, 171.
Supreme allegiance, claim of Jesus to, 50.

T

- Teaching of Jesus not impracticable, 33.
 of the self-designation of Jesus as Son of Man
 as to reality, 96.
 as to body, 97.
 as to mind, 99.
 as to feelings and affections, 100.
 as to craving companionship, 100.
 as to righteous wrath, 101.
 as to inner conflicts, 101.
 as to spiritual burdens and depressions, 102.
Teaching, A self-designation, service, 103.
 veiling, 105.
 disclosure, 108.
 ideals, 110.
 contrast, 110.
 fitness for function, 111.

V

- Various relations in which Jesus designates Himself as Son of Man, 88-95.
Vinci, Leonardo da, picture of the "Last Supper," 169.

W

- Winningness of Jesus, 78.
Words, the importance of, in the thought of Jesus, 85.
Whittier, John Greenleaf, poem "Our Master," 74.

INDEX OF TEXTS

Exodus	xx. 3	54	Matthew	xiii. 37	89
				xiv. 33	123
Psalm	viii. 3, 4	114		xvi. 13-17	94
	lxxx. 17	114		15-17	124
				20	131
Ezekiel	ii. 1	115		27	95, 117
	iii. 1	115		xvii. 10-13	91
	vi. 1, 2	115		22, 23	94
	xxxvii. 3	115		xx. 28	89
Daniel	vii. 13, 14	116		xxii. 37, 38	54
Matthew	iii. 16, 17	123		xxiii. 10	131
	iv. 3	123		xxiv. 5, 23, 24	131
	v. 17	48		30	117
	vii. 21	127		36	100, 167
	viii. 20	88		xxv. 31-46	59
	25	133		xxvi. 24	90
	x. 37, 38	53		37, 38	100
	xi. 19	88		64	131
	27	126, 136,		xxvii. 43	126
		137		xxviii. 18, 20	139
	28	52	Mark	ii. 1-12	50
	xii. 8	91, 134		10-12	89
	34, 36	86		iii. 5	101
	50	127		iv. 41	84
				v. 6, 7	124

Index of Texts

199

Mark	viii. 38	128	John	i. 49	125
	ix. 41	131		51	93
	x. 21	100		iii. 13	92
	32-34	95		16	137
	xii. 35	131		16-18	131
	xiii. 1, 2	43		iv. 42	132
	21	131		v. 19, 20	127
	32	100, 126		25	129
	xiv. 61, 62	117,		vi. 37	52
		121		38	46
	xv. 34	102		46	130
	39	124		53-58	92
				62	92, 138
Luke	i. 32, 35	124		63	86
	ii. 40	118		69	125
	40, 46, 47	99		viii. 31, 32	86
	iv. 18, 21	47, 131		42	46, 138
	41	125		58	46, 139
	v. 8	139		x. 17	128
	vi. 22	90		36	130
	ix. 26	90		xi. 4	130
	xi. 1-5	69		5	100
	xviii. 31	90		25	52
	xix. 10	89		27	125, 132
	43, 44	43		xii. 23, 24	93
	xx. 41	131		27	102
	xxii. 29	128		32, 34	95
	44	102		xiii. 3	130
	67, 68	131		12-17	133
	70	125		14	134
	xxiii. 34, 36	128		xiv. 6	52
	xxiv. 26	132		7-9	134
	44	48		9	52, 140
	46	132		13	127
	49	136		20	128
				xvi. 12	105
John	i. 12	138		28	138
	12, 13	142		xvii. 1	129
	14	131		4	69
	18	130		5	47, 139
	34	125		xviii. 11	129
	40	20		xix. 7	125

John	xx. 17	129	I Cor.	xv. 20	184
	28	140			
	28, 29	134	Philippians	ii. 6-8	178
	31	126, 132			
	xxi. 22	52	Colossians	ii. 9	147
Acts	vii. 56	109	I Timothy	iii. 16	162
	x. 26	140			
	38	104	Hebrews	ii. 16-18	159
				iv. 15	112

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