

UC-NRLF



SB 606 037

A RABBI'S IMPRESSIONS
OF THE OBERAMMERGAU
PASSION PLAY

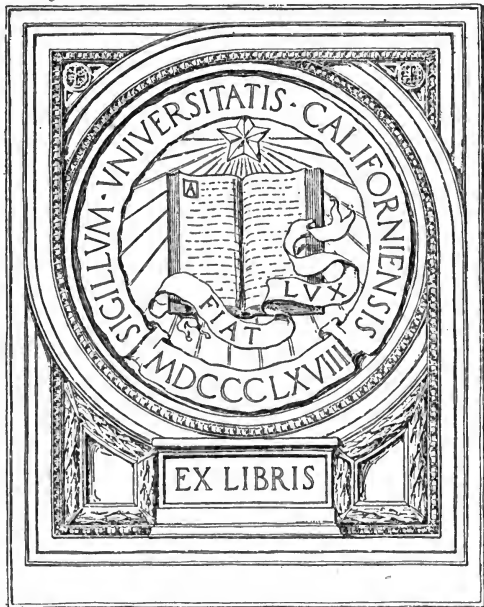


RABBI JOSEPH KRAUSKOPF, D.D.



GIFT OF

Elizabeth Whitney Putnam



855mv
012
K9





Harrist O. Peirce

1904

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

A Rabbi's
Impressions
of the
Oberammergau
Passion Play



from

Harriet Lloyd Peck

f



A.E. Francis Photo

John Kramersky

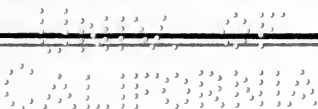
A Rabbi's Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play

BEING A SERIES OF SIX
LECTURES.—WITH THREE
SUPPLEMENTAL CHAPTERS
BEARING ON THE SUBJECT

BY

Rabbi Joseph Krauskopf, D.D.

PHILADELPHIA
EDWARD STERN & CO., INC.
M C M I



*Copyright, 1901, by Edward Stern & Co., Inc.
All rights reserved*

Press of Edward Stern & Co., Inc. Philadelphia

W. M. S.
ALBANY, N. Y.

To My Wife,

BY, WHOSE SUGGESTION I WITNESSED
THE PASSION PLAY AT OBERAMMERGAU, AND
BY WHOSE ENCOURAGEMENT I GAVE
UTTERANCE TO THE THOUGHTS EXPRESSED
WITHIN THESE PAGES,

*I dedicate this volume with affection
and appreciation.*

C o n t e n t s

A Rabbi's Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play

<i>Foreword</i>	11
I. <i>Introduction</i>	17
II. <i>In the Forenoon</i>	37
III. <i>In the Forenoon—Continued</i>	58
IV. <i>In the Afternoon</i>	86
V. <i>The End</i>	113
VI. <i>The Summary</i>	134

Supplemental

<i>What of the Old Testament Prophecies of Christ?</i>	155
<i>Talmudic Parallels to New Testament Teachings</i>	182
<i>Paul—The Founder and Spreader of Christology</i>	192





Foreword

ORIGINALLY but one lecture on the *Oberammergau Passion Play* was contemplated by the author. Developing his subject, he found himself obliged, in justice to his theme, to make of the one lecture three. The widespread interest which the treatment of the subject awakened, and the keen desire of large audiences, and of a yet larger reading public—both of Jews and non-Jews—to hear and read more and more of a *Rabbi's Impressions* of that unique presentation of the gospel story of Christ's Passion at Oberammergau, not only changed the three lectures into six, not only exhausted two large pamphlet issues of them, but has also necessitated this new edition, supplemented by a number of chapters, which bear on the subject, and which throw additional light on the question discussed.

But the great demand for these lectures is not the only reason for their issuance in book-form. They would have been delivered

from the pulpit of the Reform Congregation Keneseth Israel, even if no interest in them had been evinced, and they would have been issued in printed form, even if no one had shown a desire to peruse them. The discourses would have been obliged to create that interest, no matter how difficult the task, no matter how slow the progress. The *Oberammergau Passion Play* has made clear that there are falsehoods enacted and taught that must be uprooted, and that there are truths suppressed that must be brought to light, and given the widest publicity, if the Jew is to be spared further suffering, and if the Christian is to be saved from further wrong-doing against Israel.

This is the purpose of this book. It is issued for the Jew and for the non-Jew, with love for both, in the spirit of truth, in the interest of peace. It is believed that the book contains a possibility of reuniting in Jesus, the man, those who have been separated in Jesus, the Christ. It is believed that with such an end as a possibility, the book may at least be found deserving of a thoughtful perusal.

Foreword

In the telling of its story, studious care has been exercised to avoid theological technicalities and the scholastic pedantries, with which books of this nature are usually burdened. It has been deemed advisable to spare the reader a mass of citations and references, Biblical and otherwise, which, without giving additional light to the general reader, might but have confused him and made the reading unattractive. The literature upon which the author bases his arguments is accessible to all. The Old and the New Testament, the Talmudic and Patristic writings, Ancient History and Modern Reason, these are the sources from which he has drawn his conclusions. His sources are at the command of all, and his conclusions can be weighed and tested by all. His convictions he asks none to accept and none to condemn until his arguments have been subjected to a critical examination.

To many the author's presentation of the subject will be new, to many unwelcome. It is to be remembered, however, that looking at the gospel stories, for many years, from the view-point of one's own creed is not a

Foreword

sufficient ground for the condemnation of another's point of view. The other side is entitled to a hearing, until research and study have proven it false. There was a time in church-history when condemnation without examination was not only a duty but also an act of faith. In our days, however, it is our duty, in the interest of faith, to subject belief to critical inquiry. If our faith rest on truth, it need have no fear of inquiry, not even of the most critical. If our faith cannot stand the test, not all the opposition of all the world will enable it to stand in the face of truth. Faith is mighty, Truth is mightier, but mightiest of all is the Faith that rests on Truth.

THE AUTHOR.

Germantown, Philadelphia, May, 1901.

A Rabbi's Impressions of the
Oberammergau Passion Play



A Rabbi's Impressions of the Oberammergau Passion Play

I

Introductory

“Let them hear, and say, It is truth.”—*Isaiah* xliii, 9.

“And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.”—*St. John* viii, 32.

WHAT think ye of Christ? This question of questions of the New Testament, that has been asked and re-asked countless times by countless people since Christianity entered this world, has had quite a rival in the past year in the question: “What think ye of the Passion Play?” Not a day in Europe last summer but that this question was asked, and answered, almost as diversely as have been the answers to its rival question of the New Testament. And the question has spanned the Atlantic, and has become almost as frequent here as across the seas. Wherever one's having been at Oberammergau becomes known, the very first question is sure

A universal question—
“What think you of the Passion Play?”

to be, "What think you of the Passion Play?"

Reasons why
hitherto
evasively
answered.

Up to this day, my answer has invariably been an evasive one. I could not praise, and I would not condemn. I could not condemn without probably giving hurt to my Christian interrogator; I could not praise without doing wrong to my own people. I felt that an intelligent and purposive answer to so complex a question as this necessitated, as a prerequisite, either an intelligent questioner, one sufficiently versed in Biblical lore, more especially in New Testament criticism, or an unprejudiced listener, one eager to know and willing to hear the truth, the whole truth, no matter whether the truth heard confirm or subvert former belief. Such questioners and listeners being very rare, I believed it wise rather to say nothing than say what, by not being understood, might make confusion yet more confused.

And why
full answer
given here.

Here in this pulpit, however, I do not feel this hesitancy. Here that preparatory work in Bible criticism has been done; here that faculty of listening to stern truth, however destructive it may prove of long-cherished fancies, has been cultivated so long, that one need have no dread of telling one's honest thought for fear of giving offense or meeting with fanatical opposition. Here I even regard it my duty to give full answer to the

Oberammergau Passion Play

question "What think you of the Passion Play?" For ever since I have seen the play I have felt that, while on the one side it is no small compliment to the Jew that a play, in which almost all the actors impersonate Jewish characters, should have attracted, within one summer, one quarter of a million of representative people from all parts of the world, on the other side I know of nothing that could have rooted deeper, among these people, the existing prejudice against the Jew, and spread wider, the world's hatred of him, than this Passion Play of Oberammergau. There were moments, when listening to the play, when seeing one gross misrepresentation of the Jewish people after the other, I felt as if I had to rise, and declare aloud to the thousands that crowded the auditorium, that what they heard and saw, was, as far as it depicted or typified the Jew, unhistoric in fact, false in interpretation, cruel in inference.

But, as taught by Shakespeare, sufferance being the badge of all our tribe, I restrained my feelings, and kept my peace, as we Jews have been obliged to do these past eighteen hundred years, obliged to suffer injustice, misrepresentation, contumely, in return for having given the civilized world many of its noblest characters, most of its highest ideals, all of its most sacred literature, in return for

Another instance of "Sufferance is the badge of all our tribe."

having given to Christianity its life, and all that mankind values best therein. As the train pulled out of Oberammergau, one of the last glimpses I caught of the picturesque little village was that magnificent group of statuary, representing Christ upon the cross, with the Virgin Mary and St. John at his feet, erected by the late unfortunate King Ludwig of Bavaria, on a towering eminence back of the town. That proud monument had a tragic fate. When being carted to its site up the mountain road, the wagon slipped on one of the steep inclines, the statue of St. John fell to the ground, unfortunately upon the body of the sculptor, its creator, and crushed him to death. "How symbolic the fate of the sculptor of that colossal group is of the fate of the Jew!" thought I, as I gave it a last parting look. He it was, the Jew, who was the mighty sculptor of Christianity; his creative genius it was that gave it its colossal dimensions; it was his mallet and chisel that sculptured the towering grandeur of Jesus, and, in return, Christianity fell upon him when on its ascent to eminence, when on its rise to power, and pressed him down, down, and crushed him—not to death, for the Jew is not of mortal clay—crushed him to the dregs of the earth.

But here I am already at the end of the play, and on my way out of the town, when I

Oberammergau Passion Play

have not yet had a word to say of my getting into the town, nor anything of the play itself, nor of the persons who enacted it. It was a little after the noon hour, one August day last summer, that our train reached the far-famed town of Oberammergau. It needed no conductor to tell us that we had arrived at the goal of our journey, for the bustle and excitement about the station, the crowding and rushing, the calling and shouting in a Babel of tongues, were certainly indicative that we had reached the one village in the world to which such masses of people could flock at one time, and put up contentedly with such meagre accommodations. About the first thing that caught my eye upon alighting was a large train-shed, that towered vast and high above the little cottages of the mountain-encircled town. So large a train-shed for so small a place was rather puzzling, but before an hour had passed, I knew that what I had taken for a train-shed was the theatre in which the celebrated Passion Play had been performed, twice and three times a week, since May, before more than a hundred thousand people, and in which it was to continue to be enacted, the same number of times a week, till the end of September, before another hundred thousand and more.

Arrival in
Ober-
ammergau.

While I mistook the theatre, I could not

Character-
istics of
the village
actors.

very well mistake the actors. It required no guide to point them out. The boy that carried your grip, the lad that drove you to your lodgings, the household that received you at the cottage door, the girl that waited on you at the table, the man that blackened your boots, the woman that washed your clothes, the children that played at her feet, the men that served you in the shops or at the stands, in the restaurant or in the post-office, that tended the sheep and cattle on the pastures, these were all actors, all easily recognized,—the men and boys by their long hair reaching down to their shoulders, the women, as well as the men, by what I might call a Biblical cast of countenance. For so many generations have the people of this town performed this play, during one whole summer in every ten years, as a thank-offering, ever since a certain plague had ceased its ravages in their midst, nearly three hundred years ago, that it seems to have exercised a psychical influence on their looks and manners, on their modes of thought and speech. Their occupation, for an equal length of time, as carvers of crucifixes and holy images, and the omnipresence of such images in that town wherever you turn and look, have no doubt exercised an equal influence on the physical and spiritual nature of these people.

Oberammergau Passion Play

With a mountain scenery that is almost Palestinian as a background, the village has the appearance of a bit of Judea transplanted into the heart of the Bavarian Alps. The people seem to belong more to the past than to the present. The sound of modern Bible criticism has never re-echoed within their mountain recesses. They are haunted by no doubts, harassed by no unbeliefs, because their faith has never been questioned. One is as much disposed to envy them as to pity them,—to envy the warmth and depth of their faith, to pity their God-given reason completely fettered by blind credulity. There is a seriousness in their faces that is striking. They who impersonate noble parts do not only *act* their parts on the stage, they *live* them, and live them in their daily lives. Anton Lang, the village potter, and Anna Flunger, the postman's daughter, seem as much the Jesus and Mary off the stage as on it. They play neither for entertainment nor for profit. They have again and again refused tempting offers to perform their play at Vienna, Paris, New York. It is not a matter of gold with them, but of religion.

They have their ambitions, like other people, but no ambitions of a worldly nature. Their fondest hope is to be found worthy to play a leading part in the Passion Play; their highest ambition is some day to play the part

of Jesus or of the Virgin Mary. For these parts the children seem to be trained from their very cradles. Life has no higher object; heaven itself can have no higher honor. If we could read the hearts of the Oberammergauan mothers, I have no doubt but that we would find graven there most fervent prayers that they might live to see their children either as Jesus upon the cross or as Mary or John at his feet,—just as the pious mother of Israel of old was in the habit of praying that the expected Messiah might be vouchsafed to her, or, if a daughter be born instead, that she might be worthy of becoming the Messiah's bride; just as she trained her boy with the utmost religious care, not knowing at what moment he might make his Messiahship known, and enter upon the redemption of Israel. It is said that when word was brought to Josef Mayr, who had played the rôle of Jesus three consecutive decennials, that a younger man had been chosen for that part, his heart was almost broken, and, to save his life, they had to create for him a new part, the *Choragus* to each of the seventeen acts. It is said that an Oberammergauan maiden will rather forego marriage than risk losing the privilege of impersonating the coveted rôle of *the Virgin Mother of God*, since a married woman is not permitted to take that part. I verily believe that if the

Oberammergau Passion Play

Parliament of Bavaria were to come to some of these villagers, and give them the choice between becoming King of Bavaria or playing the part of Jesus in the Passion Play, they would answer without a moment's hesitation: "Rather one day the rôle of Jesus than a lifetime a real King."

It was certainly a strange experience for me to mingle with so many saints and heroes of the Church, to break bread in the house of him who impersonated Jesus, and with his father, who enacted the part of King Herod; to see and meet there the villagers representing characters which we are accustomed to read of in our Bible, or hear mentioned in churches, or see painted on cathedral walls; to meet them in their everyday character as carvers, carpenters, herdsmen, milkmaids, weavers, blacksmiths, traders, and behold them the next day with crowns and tiaras upon their heads, with silks and satins and gold and tinsel upon their bodies, walking and talking on the stage with a grace and eloquence worthy of the most distinguished actors. It was certainly novel for me, and another Rabbi who was with me, to chat for hours with Andreas Lang, who impersonated, in the play, the part of the Rabbi. He was quite astounded to learn that he had spent the evening with two real Rabbis, and no Jews ever having lived in that town (and

Strange experience, that of mingling with Biblical characters.

only about half a dozen Protestants), he was probably as much surprised to find us different from what he expected a Jew to be, as we were pained the next day at the bitterness with which he enacted the part of the Rabbi. He related to us that two English ladies had refused to remain as lodgers at his house, upon learning that it was he who so persecuted Christ; and he told us of the feeling that had been displayed against Gregor Lechner, who for two decades had enacted the part of Judas, as his father before him had done, people actually treating them as traitors, refusing to lodge at their house, often even recoiling from their touch. When this Lechner was asked whether he was training his little son to play that part some day, he answered, "God forbid. I love my child too much to bring the same sufferings upon him which I and my father before me have been obliged to endure."

When I left my genial informant, I pondered on this display of bigotry, and wondered not that the world, believing the Jew to have really performed the evil things falsely charged against him in the New Testament, should have been, and should still be, so bitter and cruel against him, seeing its bitterness and prejudice even against those who simply enact such parts in a play. And on the following evening I could not but think

When mere impersonators of Jewish characters are hated, what wonder that real Jews should be hated?

Oberammergau Passion Play

that had I not conversed the night before with Andreas Lang, and had I not found him a kindly and intelligent man, I might have been led to judge of his nature by the bitterness of his impersonation of the Rabbi; and I well understood why so many Christians, who do not know us as we really are, who do not meet us, or hear our story, judge us by what they see recorded against us in Christian Scriptures, by what is taught against us in Christian Sunday-schools, by what is preached against us from Christian pulpits, by what is published against us in Christianized literature.

The dawn of the following morning threatened a rainy day. We were not surprised nor disappointed, having learned by experience that rain is the rule in Alpine regions, and having been told that almost two out of every three performances are given, without the omission of a single scene or line, with the rain descending on the unsheltered stage upon, at times, hundreds of actors; for there are scenes in this Passion Play in which nigh unto eight hundred persons, half of the population of the little village of less than three hundred houses, take part, from the hoary-headed sire, bending heavily on his cane, to the infant in arms. We were thankful that enough of the spirit of advance had penetrated this mountain-village to have moved

Open-air performance given despite the rain.

them, for their last year's play, to the construction of a covered shed, so that the thousands of spectators, uninured to mountain storms, might be enabled to enjoy the play, free from discomfort or ill effects. It did worry us at first to see the rain pouring down upon the artistically and, at times, gorgeously robed players on the stage, but as they did not seem to mind it in the least, we gradually ceased troubling ourselves about their enacting Scriptures for us in the midst of a drenching rain. If their regard for tradition is so great that they will not stretch a roof over their stage because their fathers before them never had such shelter, if their conservatism is so very rigid, it seemed a waste of sympathy to extend it where none was wanted.

The
audience.

The town, wakened by the sweet chimes of the church, was astir early, for the play commenced at eight o'clock sharp, to last, with an hour and a half intermission at noon, till half past five in the evening,—certainly a hard day's work to follow a play eight hours long, in a thronged hall, on a small, wooden seat, in a cramped position. But we had not come for comforts; so there was no one who complained, either before or after. It was one of the best-natured crowds I ever saw, and certainly one of the strangest. From the railroad station, down the mountain-sides, out of the cottages, from every street and lane and

Oberammergau Passion Play

pathway, the people streamed toward the hall, in all sorts of attire, speaking all kinds of languages, displaying all sorts of physiognomies, representing all sorts of classes and conditions:—lords and cardinals, bishops and priests, Jews and Gentiles, generals and privates, merchant-princes and venders, for all I know, probably also kings and queens *incognito*. Some came on horseback, some in touring-coaches, some in liveried carriages, some in hay-wagons; some who had breakfasted, and some who enjoyed their breakfast while marching along, a glass of beer in one hand, an opera-glass and a sausage in the other.

Though five thousand people crowded to the doors, there was no confusion in entering, none in finding our seats. It did not take long for the vast hall to fill to standing-room, nor long for the play to commence. Exactly at eight o'clock the second cannon-shot rang out, and almost immediately the mystically-quaint strains of an invisible orchestra resounded, and from the right and left of the stage, thirty-five men and women, beautifully attired, filed in as a Chorus of Guardian Angels, to enact the Prelude.

If you can imagine this auditorium three times its size, its roof coming to an end just above these front seats, thus making the hall enclosed on three sides, and entirely open

The play
begins.

The theatre
and the stage.

in front—the fourth side ; and if you can imagine this pulpit platform to be about one hundred and fifty feet wide, constituting the stage, entirely uncovered and separated from the hall, and in the centre of this vast platform, toward the rear, a covered and curtained stage, a stage upon a stage, in which the tableaux and special scenes were enacted with changeable sceneries ; and if you can imagine a passage-way running from the rear, at right angles to each end of the uncovered platform, representing picturesque streets of Jerusalem, and each of these passage-ways flanked at the terminal, on the platform, with a residence, one the home of the Jewish High Priest, Annas, the other the home of the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate ; and, back and over all this artificial scenery, the natural towering ranges of the rugged, often cloud-capped Tyrolese Alps,—if you can picture these to yourselves, you will have some conception of what the place looked like in which the Passion Play was enacted.

If, in addition, you will picture to yourselves each of the seventeen acts introduced by the Chorus of Guardian Angels, telling in beautiful *Recitative*, accompanied by the orchestra, the spiritual lesson taught by the act about to follow, and each *Recitative* followed by the *Choragus*, the speaker of the *Prologue*, describing, with the aid of one or

The manner of
presentation.

Oberammergau Passion Play

two most artistically rendered *Tableaux*, the presumptive foreshadowing in the Old Testament of the dramatic scenes of the New Testament,—enacted immediately after the exit of the Chorus and Choragus,—if this you picture to yourselves, you will have a conception also of the manner in which the Passion Play was performed.

Up to the commencement of the Prelude I felt the keenest enjoyment in having come, in the strange sights I had seen, in the quaint and interesting people I had met. But from the moment the play began, the enjoyment ceased. I had resolved to look at the play as a sightseer, not as a critic. I had thought I could deceive myself, but I soon found I could not. I had made myself believe that I had come as a tourist, to look at the *Passion Play* as I might look at any other spectacular performance, as I might look at the *William Tell* play in Switzerland, or at the *Hiawatha* play in Canada. But I could not. The moment the play began, and the opening hymn was sung, and the opening lines were spoken, the tourist turned critic; the traveller, theologian; the cosmopolitan, Jew. The moment the Prelude began to tell us that we are under the curse and wrath of God, and that atonement and salvation can be found only in the blood of His incarnate Son; the moment the tableau of the expulsion of

Bad impression
the moment the
play began.

Adam and Eve was presented, to teach that Paradisian happiness will be forever barred to us if we do not open our obdurate hearts to the belief in the only Saviour ; the moment we were told of the sweet airs of peace that breathe through the world since God's only-begotten Son was sent to earth, commissioned, by his own pre-ordained death, to take upon himself the sins of human kind,— that same moment the unyielding Jew within me rose to his full height, to assert anew his deathless allegiance to that pure form of monotheism from which our fathers never departed, not even in darkest ages and under direst cruelties. That same moment there came a vivid remembrance of cruel wars that had been waged in the name of the Prince of Peace, and of the wars waged by Christian nations, in China, South Africa, in the Philippine Islands, even while the thanksgiving hymn was being sung by the Passion Players because of the peace the only-begotten Son of God had brought into the world. That same moment I distinctly heard the agonizing cries of my unfortunate fathers, who, throughout many dark and cruel centuries, were given the choice between either believing in Him who had suffered and died for the salvation of human kind, or suffer and die for not believing in Him ; who were subjected to cruelties, such as find no equal in the blood-

Oberammergau Passion Play

stained tomes of history, for refusing to subscribe to a dogma that scripturally is unfounded, theologically contradictory, philosophically irrational, scientifically impossible.

And when, immediately after the Prelude, Jesus made his appearance upon the stage, in that fateful entry of his into Jerusalem; and when the hatreds and conspiracies against him were set in motion, in which his brother Jews are represented in an infamous light, and in which the grossest violence is done to Jewish history and laws, to make the innocent Jew responsible for the Roman's guilt, to heap the blackest crimes upon the defenseless Jew so that the cruel Roman might be vindicated,—I perceived clearly that it was not for entertainment I had come, but for present discomfort and for future work. I had heard of the emotional and hysterical outbreaks on the part of some of the spectators at the sight of the outrages perpetrated against the Jesus of the Passion Play; I had heard that some had been so wrought up by the play as to become temporarily insane, and run about town haunted by wildest hallucinations, and I could readily understand why; and I could also imagine the kind of feelings against Jews that hundreds and thousands of these spectators would take home with them to all parts of Europe, and to distant lands across the seas,

Its powerful anti-Jewish influence shows necessity for counteractive teaching.

as a souvenir of Oberammergau. Many an one, I felt, had brought his craft of credulity into the dry-docks of Oberammergau, much the worse for its having been tossed and beaten by the tempestuous seas of modern research, and was having it overhauled, was having its leaky places pitched, its ropes stretched, its masts reset, its sails mended, its bolts tightened, ready for a cruise of another decade of years in the waters of blind belief, for another decade of years never to think it worth his while to hear the Jew's story, to hear the Jew's version of what is recorded against him in the New Testament, of what is enacted against him in the Passion Play of Oberammergau.

And when afterwards I learned how the play had affected some Jewish people who had witnessed it, how they felt that but for their being Jews the Passion Play might easily have led them to hate the Jew ever after, how they instinctively felt that our history and our laws were being misrepresented in that play, and deplored that they had not at their command the knowledge with which to answer the charges made, with which to clear themselves of the guilt accused,—I recognized yet clearer that it was not for pleasure I had come, but for work. If the Jew does not defend himself, or cannot, how should the Christian know that he is wronging him? If

Shows
necessity for
equipping Jew
with knowl-
edge of true
story.

the Christian can go to so much trouble in portraying unhistoric Jews, to the detriment of the Jew, shall not the Jew make known the real historic Jew? With a quarter of a million of intelligent adults from all parts of the world, who saw the play last summer, thinking now more or less unkindly of the Jew,—and it can not well be otherwise,—with probably thousands of them now talking and preaching and lecturing on the Passion Play in all parts of the world, with the aid of magic lantern, cinematograph and panorama; with thousands of newspapers and magazines publishing illustrated accounts of the Jew's cruelty toward Jesus, shall the Jew look on silently, and not say a word in his defense, and not publish a line that might cause if even but a few to know the Jewish version of the story, that is so realistically, yet so unhistorically, presented on the boards of Oberammergau?

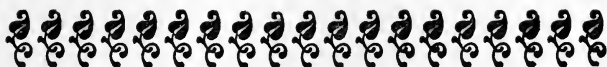
From the time of Christianity's rise to power till the days of the Reformation, for more than a thousand years, the Jew could not tell his story without paying the penalty for it in the torture chamber, upon the scaffold, or at the stake. From the days of the Reformation to the dawn of modern Bible criticism, he was permitted to speak,—but only in whispers, and only in the hearing of those to whom truth was authority, and not authority

The Jew being now permitted to speak, his duty is to make his innocence known.

truth. In these days, however, when, thanks to Strauss, Renan and their noble confrères, the Jew may speak freely, and loudly, and in the hearing of all the world, all that he has to say in his own defense, he must speak, or he must cease grumbling at being misunderstood.

Once the true story known the long persecuted will be the honored of men.

Once the Jew shall know and tell his story, which the world, in these days, really wants to hear and know, and many a dark cloud will disappear, many a grievous error will vanish, many a long-enduring wrong will be righted. Once the Jew's truth shall be known, and he will not only be permitted, but will even be asked, to take his stand as a man among men—more honored than most for the greater services he has rendered; to take his stand as a brother of Jesus—more honored than the worshipper of Jesus, because of the greater homage he has rendered him by speaking of him as an exalted human being, not as a Being Divine; as a godly preacher, not as a preaching God; as a masterly divine, not as a Divine Master; to take his stand as a son among the sons of God—more honored than most, because of his life-long battle to keep his *One God*, the God of the Decalogue, free from the accretions of heathen temples, free from the admixtures of pagan pantheons.



II

In the Forenoon

“Let all the people walk, every one in the name of his god ; but as for us we will walk in the name of the Lord our God, for ever and ever.”—*Micah* iv, 5.

And one of the scribes came, and . . . asked him, Which is the first commandment of all? And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments *is*, Hear, O Israel ; The Lord our God is one : And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength ; . . . And the second *is* this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

And the scribe said unto him, Well, Master, thou hast said the truth : for there is one God ; and there is none other but He : And to love Him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the soul, and with all the strength, and to love *his* neighbour as himself, is more than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.—*St. Mark* xii, 28–33.

ONE would never have thought that the little village of Oberammergau sheltered nigh unto five thousand souls within its three hundred cottages, that August night when I was its guest, so motionless it lay, in the midnight hour, along the banks of the Ammer. Not a sound was heard save the rushing of the rapid-coursing stream and the occasional rumblings of rolling rocks in the mountains above. Long I sat at the open window, peering out into the

A midnight
reverie at Ober-
ammergau.

night,—thinking, querying, prophesying. I was in a Biblical frame of mind. Saul-like, I had strayed among the prophets, and their spirit was upon me. All evening long I had mingled with Scriptural characters; had heard men and women addressed or spoken of, not by their given names, but by the names of the characters they enacted in the Passion Play—here, Peter, John, Nicodemus; there, Caiaphas, Lazarus, Nathanael; yonder, Mary, Martha, Magdalene. I seemed to breathe the very air of Palestine; to have walked the very streets of Jerusalem; to have held converse with ancient-day dreamers and enthusiasts, one of whom I was to see, the following day, nailed to the cross, a martyr and a God.

Induced by the
omnipresence
of the cross.

What that scene would look like I had no difficulty to guess. I had encountered representations of it, pictured or sculptured, or reminders of it in the form of the plain cross, wherever I had turned that day. Long before I had even reached the town, I had caught sight of a gigantic cross on the towering Kofelberg, penetrating the very clouds, reaching into the very heavens, and glistening in the golden radiance of the noon-tide sun. And the very last thing I caught sight of before sinking to rest that night was a crucifix over my bed. The very mountains and the clouds overspreading

Oberammergau Passion Play

them seemed to assume cruciform shapes, and, strangest of all, even the animal on the pasture seemed to carry the emblem on its back. The *Passion's Esel*, the little colt that carried the Christ of the Passion Play, could be seen any day pastured with exceeding care, and treated with great consideration, because nature had distinctly traced upon its back the sign of the cross.

Peering into the night, I sought for the gigantic cross on the summit of the Kofelberg, which had extended so radiant a greeting to me ere yet I had reached the town. I found it not. Dark and heavy clouds concealed it from sight. Late that afternoon it had already surprised me by its change from dazzling gold to a leaden hue. (I learned later that its change of color was due to its being covered with tin, the metal reflecting differently at different times, in accordance with the different lights that fell upon it.)

Golden first, leaden later, clouded last! Had I beheld a symbol of the fate of the Cross? Had I read, in nature's language, the story of the Cross's past and present, and the prophecy of its future? Was thus to fare the story of God's Virgin-begotten Son, having come down on earth, from somewhere out of the sky, to die a voluntary death upon the cross, for the sake of human kind—a story that flashed out glitteringly and far, when

Towering cross on the Kofelberg concealed by clouds.

Was it a prophecy of the clouding of the Cross?

the Church was in the noon-tide of her power, but which, since the Reformation, has worn a leaden hue, and which, in these days of critical research and scientific inquiry, has with very many, even of the Christian fold, become so clouded as to have passed beyond the confines of belief? Was the exclamation: "*The cross is not visible from Concord!*" that arose because the belief in the *supernatural* birth and *miraculous* deeds of Christ had been repudiated by the transcendental philosophers who met in the town of Concord, under the master-spirit of Emerson—was that exclamation to resound also at the banks of the Ammer? Was the invisibility, on that night, of the gigantic cross of the Kofelberg, a prophecy that a time was coming when, with respect to *the supernatural Christ*, the teaching even there will be: "*The cross is not visible from Oberammergau*"?

If that time is coming, continued I musing, what effect will the disbelief in a *supernatural Christ* have upon those who hitherto have had implicit faith in him? I thought of the tens of thousands of Unitarians, who have discarded that belief, and who morally and intellectually are certainly none the worse for paying homage to Jesus the man, instead of worshipping Christ the God. I thought of the Jews, who have preceded the Unitarians by tens of centuries in obeying the

Elimination of
Supernatural
Christ will not
affect some
people's faith.

Oberammergau Passion Play

Sinai Commandments that forbid having any other God besides Jehovah, or taking God's name in vain, or making any image for the purpose of bowing down to it in worship, and who, morally and spiritually and intellectually, are certainly not behind those who pay to Christ an homage that belongs to God alone. I thought of the thousands of students in high schools and universities who are becoming more and more lost, not only to Christianity, but to all religious influences, because asked to believe what critical reason pronounces irrational, what logical mind refuses to accept. Why then should fears be entertained of evil results following a repudiation of a pagan-borrowed dogma of the early Church?

But I also thought of the millions who are happy in that belief, and who are good because of it. And I asked myself: Have we a right to deprive them of their happiness, to rob them of the source of their goodness, by clouding their childlike faith? Has not that faith been a bridge that has enabled many a straying and erring one to pass from misery and sin and despair to penance and righteousness and hope? Had I not myself observed, in my mingling with these Oberammergauans, that what made these humble peasants so devout and sweet was largely due to their implicit faith, that what they be-

But would deprive others of their religious stay and happiness.

lieved and enacted was truth, and all truth? And would it not be cruel, even but faintly to hint to them that their *supernatural Christ* is a mythological fiction and not an historical fact?

Best course for each to follow his own God.

And so I concluded my midnight musing with the thought that, in a theological difference as fundamental as this, the prophet Micah's advice was probably the best: Let other people walk, each in the name of his god; but, as for us, let us continue to walk in the name of the One God, for ever and ever.

But must not be done at expense of another's honor.

But also at this conclusion did I arrive, that while people are free to believe whatever they choose, that freedom does not include the privilege of building up their faith at the expense of another people's honor; that while Christians have a perfect right to ascribe to Jesus whatever miracles and supernatural happenings they please, they have no right to do this at the cost of falsifications of Jewish history, of mistranslations of Jewish Scriptures, of misinterpretations of Jewish laws and institutions; that while it would be wrong for us even in the slightest degree to interfere with the Christian belief, or to cast the slightest aspersion upon it, it is not only our right, it is our duty, to defend ourselves from calumnies that have been heaped upon us, in the name of *the Supernatural Christ*.

Oberammergau Passion Play

Too long have we suffered because of such calumnies ; it is time for us to tell our story, and it is time for the Christian to hear that story told. I have no desire to win any one from Christianity, but I have the strongest desire to wean Christians from injustice. I have no wish to make other feet travel my people's road, but it is my resolve to keep others' hands off my people's throat. I may praise as highly as any one the Christian's preachment of turning the other cheek to the smiter, but I do object to the Christian's continuing to smite my people, and for no cause at all. I will yield to none in recognizing the civilizing influence of the man of Nazareth ; I am ready to bestow on him as high a tribute as any one has yet bestowed ; if I cannot say that it was he who made Divinity human, I am ready to rank him among the foremost of those who have made humanity divine. With all this recognition and admiration, I am not ready to see him elevated at the cost of my people's honor, to see him turned into a God at the cost of my people being turned into demons, to see him made a suffering Christian deity at the cost of my people being made to suffer the hatreds and insults of the Christian world.

Jews have too long suffered from such a wrong.

It is of this wrong done to my people in the Passion Play, or rather in the Gospels of

This wrong re-
enacted in the
Passion Play.

the New Testament, of which the Passion Play is but an elaboration, that I shall speak to you. And whenever, in speaking of it, I touch upon Jesus, I beg of you to remember that, as George Eliot kept before her a copy of Thorwaldsen's Christ, when translating Strauss' "Life of Jesus," so that, when tearing to shreds the myths and falsities spun into the life of the real Jesus, she might, by occasionally looking into the kindly face of *Jesus, the man*, keep herself from writing too harshly of *Christ, the God*, even so have I before me, when speaking of Jesus, the kindly yet suffering face of the grievously wronged Nazarene Jew, who, far from having wished to separate himself from his monotheistic people and found a trinitarian faith, gave, when asked for a statement of the chief commandments, the answer the Jew has given from the first, and gives to this day: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is One. And Him shalt thou love with all thy heart and soul and might. And thy brother shalt thou love as thyself."

Magnificent
scene of
Christ's entry
into
Jerusalem.

To this Jesus let us now turn, and follow his tragic fate from his triumphal entry into Jerusalem to his lamentable death upon the cross. It was a magnificent scene, one of the most memorable of the Passion Play, that which represented a throng of hundreds of people variously and picturesquely attired,

as a promiscuous Oriental crowd, gathered all the way from northern Galilee to the southern capital, would naturally have been, singing hosannahs to Jesus' first public appearance in Jerusalem, accompanying him in joyous yet solemn procession to the Temple mount, throwing palm-branches along his way, and acclaiming him "Royal Son of the Royal House of David!" "King of the Jews!"

It was a scene that could not be beheld without a mingled feeling of awe and sorrow. Its picturesqueness could not be surpassed. It clearly showed the work of nine years of rehearsal, of nearly three centuries of stage tradition, and of every-day orthodox faith. The love and reverence displayed by the throng of people toward their hero was not the love and reverence of a play,—it was real and intense. Accustomed as they are to kneel to the lifeless image of Christ, what wonder that, when in the presence of the living impersonator of Christ, the breathing, speaking, acting image that tradition and art have pictured him to have been,—what wonder that they should forget that it was but before one of their own, their fellow-peasant, the village potter, they bowed in worship, and, under the influence of their ecstasy, believe that the divine afflatus had been showered upon him, by Christ Himself,

The awe the impersonator of Christ casts upon the people.

because of his enacting His passions on earth, for the sanctification of man! What wonder that the people should have almost instinctively fallen back, and opened the way to the Christ-representing Anton Lang, as he entered a room or passed in the street! What wonder that the children should have awaited his coming at the door of the stage, at the end of each performance, and accompanied him, in a sort of triumphal procession, to his home! Hero-worshippers as we all are, it is but a small step for these humble, pious people to pass from kneeling before a Christ-image of wood and stone to worshipping an impersonator of Christ of throbbing flesh and pulsating heart and blessing hand and godly speech.

The
impersonator
of Christ
described.

And this Anton Lang, in looks and bearing, gave every manifestation that he believed himself *the Christ*, while impersonating him. I was told that in the early morn of the day on which the first performance of the last Passion Play decennial was given, in which he was to impersonate for the first time the part of *Christus*, he presented himself in the village church for mass, and bore himself while there, and when he walked away, as if in an ecstatic trance, so profoundly impressed and stirred was he by the part he was about to assume. Great things are related of the impersonation of this part by

his predecessor, Josef Mayr,—and great things had been expected of Peter Rendl, last year's impersonator of St. John, who, as son-in-law of Josef Mayr, had been trained for the leading rôle, but who was prevented from enacting it by reason of being unable to raise a beard,—the traditions of the village preventing any character from being in any way "made up." But I doubt whether a better *Christus* could have been found than in this Anton Lang, and who, being but twenty-five years of age, gives promise of still better impersonations in the decennials to come. Tall and graceful; with long, blond, flowing locks; large, fair eyes; an open, manly countenance; delicately moulded features; a kindly, yet earnest look; majestic, as he sat upon the colt, led by St. John and surrounded by his disciples, benignly dispensing his blessings upon the people to the right and left with graceful waves of the hand,—it was a presence as august as it was entrancing.

If fault was to be found with his appearance at all, it was in its being a little too Teutonic and not enough Jewish. There were wanting in his countenance those deep lines of suffering which two thousand years of persecution, because of the proclamation of the One God, and the adherence to God's Law, had stamped upon the Jew's face, more

Only fault in his being more Teutonic than Jewish.

* especially in the days of the Roman's tyranny, at the time of Christ.

But more fault to be found with crowd's acclamation of him as "King of the Jews!"

But much more serious fault was to be found with what ensued. The awe, which had thus far pervaded me, changed into sorrow the moment I caught the words of the crowd's exultant acclamation: "Hosannah to the Son of David! Hail to the King of the Jews!" The moment the ear caught the sound of these words, the eye had a distinct vision of a Roman cross with a deluded Jewish martyr upon it, and over his head the Roman initials I. N. R. I. of the words IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM, the words meaning "*Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews.*"

The need of the hour was father to the shout.

It was a wild shout, that of "Son of David," and must have been an unpleasant shout in the ears of Jesus, for none knew better than he that he was of humble Nazarene birth in northern Galilee, and that his cradle had stood far from the royal city of Bethlehem in the south, whither popular belief had looked for the rise of the emancipator of Israel from the insufferable oppression of the Roman.

Wild as was that shout, the poor, deluded people were probably to be pitied more than to be blamed. The wish was father to the shout. Here was a man whose wondrous preaching and healing and magnetic power and spiritual grandeur they had heard and

Oberammergau Passion Play

seen and felt, or of which they had heard wondrous reports. And there was the Roman, crushing the tributary nation of Palestine under his iron heel, ruling the people with a pitiless hand, subjecting them to cruelest insults and humiliations, outraging not only their national honor but even their religious laws and institutions. What could have been more natural than the question: "Why may not that wicked Roman be crushed by this godly man?" "Why may not the expected Saviour of the Davidian House be this man of wondrous powers?"—powers easily exaggerated, and royal ancestry easily confirmed, among an excited and credulous populace in exciting and credulous times. "Why may not he be the chosen of God to rid the capital and the nation of the heathen and the stranger, and inaugurate the reign of justice and peace forever more?"

It was a beautiful dream, a pardonable hope. And one can readily see how easy it was for a crowd of such a heterogeneous and inflammable nature to pass from the shout of "Hail to the Son of David!" to the acclamation of "Hail to the King of the Jews!" But, alas, it was a shout and acclamation in the worst possible place, and at the worst possible time, and in the hearing of the worst possible of all men in Palestine,

But made in
the worst time
and place.

Pontius Pilate, the Roman Procurator of Judea. Nowhere in all Palestine, from Dan to Beersheba, could such an acclamation have sounded more treasonable than in the streets of Jerusalem, at that time, a few days before the Paschal festival, which, in obedience to the requirement of the Mosaic Law, gathered into the capital of the nation all the able-bodied adult male Israelites from far and near, and at which festival—the Egyptian redemption having taken place on the Passover—it was popularly believed that the Roman and final emancipation would likewise take place.

Pilate's cruel hand had silenced such outbursts before.

Pilate's eyes and ears, always wide open, were never more so than during these days, when he distributed his armed guards in civilian dress among the people, to keep a sharp watch on the doings and sayings of the pilgrims, and on none more keenly than on the Galileans, who had proven themselves the most seditious of them all, a few of whose proclaimed or self-proclaiming Messiahs he had already summarily dealt with on the cross, and whose followers' ardor he had believed he had cooled with the edge of the sword.

But people's yearning for political redemption and redeemer continued.

But all his cruelty, far from intimidating the people, had only made them all the more seditious. The whole nation was feverish with excitement; many of them hysterical

from fear and alarm, and subject to the wildest hallucinations; many thirsting for revenge, because of past and present sufferings; all throbbing with ill-suppressed wrath against the Roman, and longing and praying for redemption and for the redeemer. The Messianic hope, nursed and tended for seven or eight centuries, burst into an intoxicating, almost deranging, bloom. Awake or asleep, they were haunted by the wildest visions of the long-awaited about to come, of the long-dreamed glory about to burst in celestial splendor upon the House of Israel. All was in readiness,—the time was ready; the people were ready; the throne was ready; it wanted but the King, the Messiah, the Deliverer and Saviour, and the accursed rule of the Roman would be at an end, and the reign of the Messiah would begin, to endure forever.

And of all who had preceded him in the claim of the Messiahship, probably none had a stronger conviction that he was the divinely commissioned to re-establish the kingdom of Israel than this Jesus, the carpenter's son of the Galilean town of Nazareth. His marvelous power over his followers had probably deluded them into that belief, and their delusion had deluded him. Long had he fought that delusion,—as may be seen from the deep concern displayed by him early in his public career in having all exclamations, rumors

Jesus deluded into belief that he was the looked-for redeemer of his people.

and reports of his Messiahship suppressed ; patients, friends, even his disciple Peter, all are carefully enjoined "not to tell any man anything" of his being the Christ. But it was an age of delusions, and he was conquered by them at last. What may have started as a mere hope, as a fond dream, became a belief, a dogma, the nearer they approached from the northern interior country to the southern capital of the nation. Rolled on by a mighty wave of credulity, in that dangerously credulous era, there was no longer any stopping till they had dashed against the rocks and had spread destruction wide. It needed but his triumphal entry into Jerusalem, was probably their belief, for God to make known His anointed unto all the nation, and to seat him as the Messiah upon the vacant throne of David, and to inaugurate, by his hand and spirit, the redemption of Israel.

But what had seemed so real and so natural in the interior country, assumed a different aspect once they were within the walls of Jerusalem. Their shout of "Hail to the King of the Jews!" was loud, yet the answer was but the echo of their shouting. The fire that well-nigh consumed them failed to kindle others. The capital was cold, freezing cold, and silent as cold, a silence that was painfully ominous. In vain these dreamers and en-

But the capital
shared not
his delusion.

Oberammergau Passion Play

thusiasts strained their ears, and peered into the skies,—no Gabriel's trumpet announced the advent of the Anointed One; no Heavenly Messenger appeared to present an oriflamme to the Divinely Chosen Leader; no thunders and no lightnings, no luminous stars and no showers of meteors, welcomed the Long-Awaited One. Burning with the ardor and patriotism of the northern interior country, and ignorant of the preparedness and watchfulness and strength of the Roman, they were amazed at the irresponsiveness of the capital. They had expected Jerusalem eagerly awaiting their shout, instantly to take up its refrain, and sweep the nation with it, and sweep the country free of the cruel heathen,—which might have happened, if, instead of a country-band of unarmed, bare-footed fishermen and peasants and artisans, with a gentle, peaceful preacher and healer as their leader, a warrior of the David or the Maccabee type had come with an army of soldiers behind him to inaugurate the era of redemption; as really did happen, a century later, when the valiant warrior, Bar Cochba, entered upon his ill-fated rebellion against Rome, with hundreds of thousands of armed men behind him, and with some of the foremost leaders of Israel for his chief supporters.

But this band of well-meaning, yet deluded country enthusiasts awakened no such con-

The capital
knew the fatal
consequences
of treasonable
acclamation
as king.

fidence among the leaders of the people. While outwardly turning a deaf ear to their acclamations, inwardly they probably trembled at the fate awaiting the deluded leader and many another innocent one. Higher yet than the shout, "Hail to the King of the Jews!" they heard the cruel Pilate's command to the chief of his guard, as they had heard it before: "Seize the traitor! Stretch him upon the cross! Disperse the crowd with the edge of the sword! Let it be performed rigorously and speedily, before the advent of the Passover, before the city teems with pilgrims!" A cruel command, yet a natural one, in those cruel days, and in a tributary, seditious country, by a foreign governor, who ruled in mighty Cæsar's stead, with absolute power over life and death, and one very cruel and very unscrupulous besides. We Americans are certainly not as cruel as were the ancient Romans, and yet, would our chief military representative treat any leader differently who were to make a like entry into the city of Manila, and be in like manner acclaimed "King of the Filipinos"? Neither is Lord Kitchener as cruel as was Pontius Pilate, and yet would he treat differently any Boerish leader who would make a like entry into Pretoria, and in like manner be there acclaimed "President of the Boers"?

From what followed may be clearly inferred that the irresponsiveness of the capital sobered Jesus, opened his eyes wide to the fatal mistake he had made. What he had never realized in the country, amid the swarm of his zealous followers, he saw clearly now in the capital of the nation. The delusions—which are so wont to overcome intensely religious and visionary characters who are otherwise profoundly intellectual, which made Martin Luther see devils and shy inkwells at them, which made Savonarola believe that he could pass unscathed through fire, which made Sir Matthew Hale hang innocent women as witches,—the delusions loosened their hold on Jesus, and gave way to his old-time clear and sound judgment. Clearly he saw that he had played the foremost part in a public act of treason; he saw the fate that awaited him, and yet clearer he saw his immediate duty. There was no escape for him from the Roman cross,—but he might save his disciples, he might save his followers. They had deluded him, but it was he who had been the cause of their delusion and deluding. He must speedily retreat from Jerusalem, give them his last message and the signal for their flight and dispersion. And then he must surrender himself to the Roman, so that, by his voluntary surrender and subsequent death, his disciples and fol-

Recognized at last and prepared for by disillusioned Jesus.

lowers, they who had so intensely believed in him, might be saved from the Roman's sword of vengeance.

This historic fact blurred by falsifications against Jews.

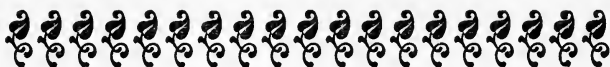
But not so is the truth told in the Passion Play, nor in the New Testament, whence the Passion Play of Oberammergau derives its text and theme. There is introduced, and realistically enacted, a mass of falsehoods, of base inventions against the Jews, that obviously never happened, never could have happened, that are flagrantly self-contradictory, that violently outrage the history and law and religion and constitution of the Jew, that had their origin, and that were forced into the gospel stories, at the time when early Christianity had established itself and had become polemical and vindictive, when the theological differences between the monotheistic Jew and the trinitarian Christian had become intense, when the Roman empire was recognized as the most fertile field for the propagation of the new faith, and when, therefore, on the theory that "the end justifies the means," it was deemed politic not only to mingle Pagan myths with Jewish history, blend Grecian gods with a Jewish martyr, but also exculpate the Roman from having crucified Jesus, and lay the guilt upon the Roman-conquered, Roman-persecuted, Roman-despised Jew.

But of this incrimination of the Jew and

Oberammergau Passion Play

exculpation of the Roman, of this blackening of the Sanhedrin and whitewashing of Pontius Pilate, which follows in the Passion Play close upon Jesus' entry into Jerusalem, I must speak in my next discourse. I had thought to cover to-day the part enacted in the Passion Play during the forenoon. But I find I had misjudged the time. It takes much time to exonerate a character, which to blacken, a few brief hours, a few brief words, may suffice. I shall be obliged to devote another discourse to the remainder of the part that was enacted in the forenoon. But what is one more hour, what are a dozen more hours devoted to the vindication of our name, compared with the eighteen centuries that have been devoted to the branding of it? It will take more than another hour, more than months and years, probably centuries, before our character will be cleared of the heinous accusations that have been heaped upon it. Yet cleared it will be. The Jew, who has outlived all, will yet live to see the hour of his full and final vindication. God rules—and Justice will be done.

Which will be analyzed in our next discourse.



III

In the Forenoon

(Continued)

“Why should brother deal treacherously against his brother?”
—*Malachi ii, 10.*

“Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you: till heaven and earth pass away, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass away from the law, till all things be accomplished. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, he shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” *Words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount.*—*St. Matthew v, 17-20.*

Credulity
above reason
in former
times.

ONE of the most celebrated of early Church legends is that which tells of St. Augustine walking one day on the seashore, meditating on the mystery of the Trinity, and encountering a little child fetching water in a seashell, and emptying it into a little hole in the sand. Inquiring of the child as to the motive of its labor, it replied that it proposed to empty the ocean into the little cavity it had prepared. “Impossible!” exclaimed St. Augustine. “Not more impossible,” answered the child, “than for thee, O Augustine, to solve the mystery of the Trinity.” Having answered thus, it van-

Oberammergau Passion Play

ished. What the saint had believed to have been a child thus proved to have been an angel. What he believed to have been a child's playful utterance thus proved to have been a divine revelation. From that hour St. Augustine ceased brooding on the mystery of the Trinity. Henceforth he accepted it on faith.

It was a pretty legend, and it proved very convenient in saving others from the hopeless task of trying to solve this and other troublesome mysteries of the Church, and made it easy for them to accept doctrines and dogmas on the authority of faith, after the example of a saint of the Church. Those credulous days, however, are no more. That which was easy and even commendable in former centuries has become difficult and quite reprehensible in this. The teaching of "Believe, and be saved" has changed into "Prove, and save thy belief." A mightier saint than Augustine has risen, whose name is Reason; and be the belief never so old and never so Church-encrusted, if it bears not the imprint of this modern saint, it cannot escape being cast aside as myth or counterfeit. Past is the time when the Church could teach with great sanctity that the greater the impossibility of a belief the greater is its mystery, and therefore, all the more to be believed. In our age, it has be-

Critical
research a
necessity in
ours.

come an axiomatic truth that the creed worth believing is worth inquiring into. If it can stand the test of critical inquiry it will be all the stronger for the test; if it cannot, then not all the credulity in the world, nor all the authority or enactments or encyclicals of the Church, will be able to save it.

More especially for the Jew.

And also this has become a truth, that, whatever be the attitude the Christian may take toward subjecting his belief to critical inquiry, with the Jew it has become a solemn necessity. The honor of our ancestry and the shame of our posterity make it an obligation.

If charge true Jew must do penance to Christ.

If all that was enacted last summer in the Passion Play at Oberammergau be true, we have no right to continue as Jews. If all the villainies we are charged with in that play, or in the New Testament, whence that play derives its text and theme, be true, then the sooner we acknowledge our guilt, the sooner we call down the everlasting curse of God upon our ancestors for their heinous crimes against the Virgin-born, Death-resurrected, Heaven-ascended, Only-begotten Son of God, the sooner we crawl to the Cross and there pour out our very souls in contrition, the better will it be for our honesty and for our future salvation.

But if our searching inquiry prove the New Testament teachings against the Jews

false, unfounded, the invention of malice, the fabrication of policy, then it becomes our sacred duty, for our suffering ancestry's sake, and for the sake of our posterity doomed to suffer, not to rest, nor to keep silent, till all the world shall know the wrong that has been done to us, and that is still being done, till the Christian himself, conscience-stricken at last, shall feel moved to recognize his error, expunge it from his Scriptures, banish it from his pulpit, and atone for all his past outrages against an innocent people by an amplitude of love in the future.

If false,
Christian must
right wrongs
against Jew.

To the Passion Play, therefore, let us return, and continue the analysis we have thus far made. In our last discourse, reading the entry of Jesus and his followers into Jerusalem in the light of history, we saw how a band of peasants, fishermen and artisans had made their way from the interior country of the north to Jerusalem, the southern capital of Judea, at that time a tributary province of Rome, under one of the most cruel of Roman governors, Pontius Pilate ; how, in their longing for deliverance from their cruel oppressor, and in the state of hysterical and credulous excitement in which they lived, they had deluded themselves into the belief that Jesus, the gentle preacher and healer, was the looked-for Deliverer of the nation ; how, in their enthusiasm and in their ignorance of

Triumphal
entry of Jesus
into Jerusalem
re-stated.

Rome's military strength at Jerusalem, they had permitted themselves to make a triumphal entry with their hero, and to proclaim him, in the capital, "King of the Jews!"—a proclamation shout that in the ear of the Roman meant high treason in that seditious era, and called for dire and speedy punishment.

He creates
a riot on
the Temple
mount.

Before continuing the story of Jesus in the light of history, let us hear what follows upon Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem, as enacted on the stage of Oberammergau, or as told in the pages of the gospels. Scarcely had the echo of the exultant Messiahship proclamation of the rustic pilgrim-band died away, when Jesus approached the booths in which sacrificial offerings were for sale, and the stands where the foreign money of the pilgrims was changed for the native coin, and in bitter language denounced the merchants for trafficking within the sacred Temple grounds. And yet more bitterly he turned upon the priests and scribes for permitting such a desecration of the Sanctuary, denouncing them as utterly corrupt. And working himself into a passion, he seized a scourge, and with it lashed the merchants out of their shops, upset their tables, brushed their money to the ground, set free the doves, poured out the oil, scattered the spices, and created a general havoc among

the wares, and consternation among the priests and people.

As an invention of dramatic interest, the introduction of this scene was a happy thought, and as a bit of acting it was superb. As a bit of history, however, it was a flagrant blunder, a blunder that made the malicious object of its introduction only too painfully apparent. It would certainly have been a strange proceeding for a leader, far-famed for his gentleness and forbearance, for a Prince of Peace, for an exultantly proclaimed "King and Deliverer of his People," to inaugurate his Messianic reign with starting a riot among the people, with openly and fiercely attacking the priests and teachers of Israel, with laying violent hands on the bodies and properties of people peacefully pursuing their lawful trades—and all this in one of the courts of the Temple grounds, at a time when pilgrims were streaming to the Sanctuary for the celebration of their festival of liberty, at a time when the Roman garrison in Fort Antonia, almost within earshot of his voice, was keenly on the alert for the slightest outbreak among the revolution-suspected people.

If ever there was a time when peace was needed among Israel itself, that was the time; and if ever there was a man to knit the people in closest bond of mutual sympa-

Which is historically false.

Jesus not a man of passion or riotousness.

thy and helpfulness in the hour of the country's direst distress, Jesus was that man. Not he the man to brand the teachers of his people "hypocrites," "scorpions," "whited sepulchres." There was not enough of gall in him to force such words to his lips. He who preached to love the enemy, to bless those that curse, to do good to those that harm, to resist no evil, certainly could not harm nor curse them that had not harmed nor cursed. This bitter denunciation of the teachers of Israel is the language of the later-day Romanized vindictive theologians of the Church militant. From his earliest childhood, at his mother's breast, he had drunk in the Jew's reverence of the teacher in Israel, of the judge who judges in God's stead; and in all his studies of the history of Israel he had not come across a time when the teachers of Israel were more deserving of reverence than in that age that produced a Philo, a Hillel, a Gamaliel, a Jochanan ben Saccai. Too many a pilgrimage had he made to Jerusalem, in accordance with the requirement of the Mosaic Law, during the thirty-three years of his life, not to have known that the sale of sacrificial offerings, and the exchange of foreign money for native coin, within that court of the spacious Temple grounds, called the Court of the Gentiles, were practices authorized by

Oberammergau Passion Play

the Temple statutes, and, far from being a profanation, was an accommodation to the pilgrim, as is the sale of crosses, candles, rosaries, or votive offerings, near the doors of cathedrals, at the present day.

Had that scene been true, that of a stranger, at the head of a band of country-people, making a treasonable entry into Jerusalem, and then rushing upon the traders' booths in one of the Temple courts, destroying property, lashing people, abusing priests and teachers,—had that scene been true, the watchful Roman in Fort Antonia close by would have recognized in this newly proclaimed "King of the Jews" not a mere deluded creature (who was to be quietly hunted out in the dead of night; to avoid troublesome disturbance during the assembling of the pilgrims), but a dangerous fanatic and agitator, a public disturber of the peace, to be seized and silenced at once. For no offense at all, simply for causing a commotion among the people, merely for creating a fear of an uprising, Herod Antipas had, but a short time before this riot, caused the banishment and imprisonment of John the Baptist, and subsequently his decapitation. It was on this very Temple mount, and likewise on the Passover festival, that, some years before this, a revolution had broken out under the reign of Herod Archelaus,

If true, Rome
would have
silenced him
at once.

which was quelled only after great bloodshed; and it was there, and again on the same festival, that, shortly after this, another revolution broke out against the Roman Procurator Sabinus, with the same bloody results. It was for that very reason that Rome feared the annual approach of the Passover, and that the Roman cohort held the Temple mount under vigilant surveillance, and that the Procurator himself made it his duty to take up his residence in the city of Jerusalem shortly before and during this festival, to be on hand in case of an uprising.

If true, Jesus
would never
have entered
Temple.

Had that scene been true, we would never have heard of Jesus entering the Temple for worship, immediately after his public display of passion and riotousness. The desecrated state of the Temple and the corruption of the priesthood, of which he had but just complained so bitterly, would have prevented his entering a "den of thieves," a "hive of wickedness," for divine service. Had not he himself taught that God, being a Spirit, is everywhere, and they who seek Him in spirit and in truth will find Him everywhere, in the secret closet as much as in the public synagogue? And had he not been taught by the Rabbis that wheresoever man draws nigh unto God there God draws nigh unto man? Had he not worshipped before and after in places other than the Temple? He had no need,

Oberammergau Passion Play

therefore, of the Temple to satisfy his craving for worship; nor would his foot ever have crossed its threshold, had it been the place of corruption the Passion Play represented it, and the gospels teach it to have been.

And never prayed man with a devouter congregation than Jesus prayed that day in the midst of his brethren. And never was Temple freer from corruption than was that of Jerusalem at that time. Theirs was a woful time. Never a day closed that brought not its fear of the coming morn. The veriest tyro could read athwart the sky that the final death-struggle between Judea and Rome was at hand. It was a tearful time, and, therefore, a prayerful time. It is only in seasons of ease and luxury that the heart turns from God and yields easily to corruption. In a time of stress and storm such as was Israel's in the days of Christ, heart and soul and mind are humble; eye is very quick-sighted to religious duty, and ear very sharp to God's command. God then is a stern reality, worship a comfort, religion a stay. Had they been less scrupulous about their religion and their Temple, they would have been less opposed to the Roman, and thereby would have suffered less of his cruelty.

Never a devouter congregation than gathered at that time.

Oh, the infamy, to charge the Jews of the

Charge
of Temple
corruption
infamous.

time of Christ with making of their Sanctuary a place for barter and gain, when they regarded it a sacrilege even to enter the Temple carrying a staff or purse, or with shoes or dust upon their feet! Oh, the infamy, to charge the Jews of the time of Christ with making of their Temple "a hive of wickedness," when they offered the bitterest opposition to Herod's profanation even of the city of Jerusalem by the erection of a theatre in which golden images formed part of the decorations! Oh, the infamy, to charge the Jews of the time of Christ with making of their Temple "a den of thieves," when, upon Pontius Pilate's soldiers entering the city of Jerusalem carrying on their standards the image of the Roman Emperor, the people arose in great numbers, and for five days and nights besieged the Procurator for the removal of the images, and on the sixth day heroically bent their bare necks under his soldiers' swords rather than trespass against the Second Commandment, and permit the presence of images within the Holy City! Oh, the infamy, to make of Jesus a ruthless denouncer of Temple priests and teachers, a reckless breaker of laws, a dangerous disturber of the peace at a dangerous time, when his very heart bled for his people, when his very soul thirsted for the Temple, when at the mere

Oberammergau Passion Play

sight of Jerusalem he had wept, when but one yearning possessed his ecstasized spirit : to bring to his people peace and not war, joy and not sorrow, hope and not despair ; when for that peace and joy and hope he had braved to hear himself proclaimed the Messiah, had dared a traitor's death upon a Roman cross !

But time is pressing, and so we must turn from these historic reflections once more to the tragic scenes of the Passion Play. While Jesus and his disciples are engaged in their devotions inside the Temple, there are very busy doings outside. Seemingly the whole city of Jerusalem, with its hundreds of thousands of people, is represented as animated by but one thought: how to revenge itself on that one country-enthusiast who had been proclaimed "King of the Jews" by a band of country-people, and who had entered upon his Messiahship by destroying property, lashing people, denouncing priests and teachers. Let us pause long enough to ask ourselves what would happen if a band of country-people, from some northern interior gubernia of Russia, had made a triumphal entry into Moscow, had rushed upon the Kremlin, had there proclaimed its leader "Czar of all the Russias !" had then rushed upon the shops and booths in the vicinity of the Cathedral of St. Michael, in which ikons,

All Jerusalem
represented
plotting
against Jesus.

candles and other church paraphernalia are offered for sale, upsetting counters, overturning tables, destroying property, lashing merchants, denouncing priests and officers, —what would happen? A detachment of soldiers would speedily be ordered out to seize or scatter the rioters, and to give the leader, if not a taste of the hangman's rope, a chance to cool off, and to work off, his ardor in one of the Siberian mines.

But not so at Jerusalem, as represented in the Passion Play. Jesus and his disciples are permitted to finish their devotions in the Temple, are allowed to make their way in peace to the hills back of Jerusalem, while the whole Temple court is afire with clamors for revenge. Two High Priests, the heads of the academies, judges of the courts, chiefs of the Sanhedrin, high officials and dignitaries, hold solemn conclaves, secret meetings, with all the insignia of office, to devise ways and means how they might obtain possession of this unarmed, unknown, unprotected, unbefriended, Nazarene enthusiast, and in all their speeches and accusations and plottings and proposed cruelties give expression to a venomous maliciousness, to a bitterness of hatred, that could not possibly have been more intense even if a whole legion of devils had broken loose against the Jews, that could not possibly have been worse

even if the poor deluded Galilean had snatched from off the chiefs of the nation all their honors and had placed them upon his own head, even if the gentle preacher had leagued himself, at the head of a mighty army, with the Roman, sworn to the destruction of the Temple and of the Holy City.

A hatred as bitter as this must have a commensurate cause ; a fear such as theirs of proceeding against him openly must have a reason. It is an axiom in criminology that unless there is a motive there can be no crime. Their not proceeding against him openly could not have been from fear of the Roman, for even if Jesus had been guilty of the Temple riot, more yet had he offended against Rome by his public act of treason. It could not have been from fear of causing needless bloodshed among the followers of Jesus, for most of these had been won over to their side by artful pleas and speeches, and hence it would have been quite an easy matter to seize him and put him out of harm's way. How shall we account for this hatred of the chiefs of the nation? Had it been a Herod, the detested semi-heathen, the assassin of three of his sons, the murderer of his wife and relatives, the slayer of hundreds of the people and of scores of the chiefs of the Sanhedrin, had this abhorred Idumæan come into their power, such a venomous hatred

Hatred must
have cause.

as was theirs, that was content with nothing short of death, would have been quite intelligible, even if unpardonable.

Proclamation
as "Son of
David" no
cause.

But—granted even that Jesus had been guilty of the Temple riot, which, considering his delusion, an arrest, or a fine, or an expulsion from the city, would have amply expiated—what crimes had he committed against the Jews to have merited such bitter execration, such a hatred to the death? Was it his having been proclaimed "Royal Son of the Royal David"? There was humor in that, but no offense. None knew better than the Rabbis of the Sanhedrin the genealogical tables of the Davidian House in the city of Bethlehem close by, and that the carpenter's son of far-away Galilee had no place in it, nor ever had laid claim to it himself.

Nor his
boasting of
supernatural
powers.

Was it—if it be true—his having boasted, while the delusion was still upon him, that if they would tear down the Temple, he would restore it in three days? There was humor in that, but no offense; seeing that it had taken forty-six years to build the Temple, and that even then it was not yet finished, there was little danger of their obliging him with tearing it down so as to give him a chance to restore it in three days.

Nor his
teaching.

Was it the report of his preaching, that had reached Jerusalem? Sifting the real preaching of Jesus from that which was credited to

him a century or two later for certain doctrinal and polemical and vengeful reasons, of which I shall speak in my next discourse, there was nothing that Jesus ever preached or taught that had not the heartiest endorsement of the Rabbis of Israel. Not a precept had he ever uttered that had not proven him a Hebrew of Hebrews. His every word breathes of the religious and moral and social atmosphere of his time. His every act is the translation into deed of the aspirations of the pious and cultured Jew in the days of Palestine's bondage under the cruel Roman. His every declaration to the people is a restatement of his fundamental position that he had not come to make common cause with the Gentile, but to preach to Israel; that he had not come to antagonize nor to destroy, but to fulfil; that he had not come to remove as much as a jot or tittle of the Law and the Prophets, but to preserve their institutions and to conserve their spirit. His every admonition to the people was a reiteration of the teaching of Moses to worship the One God, and to love Him with all their heart and soul and mind, and to love their neighbors as themselves. His every teaching with regard to the Scribes and Rabbis, members of the Sanhedrin, was that they sit in Moses' seat, and whatsoever they bid that should be done. His very manner of teaching, his

aphorisms and quotations, his parables and illustrations, is the manner of the Rabbis of his time. Not a reform principle that he taught, which they had not taught; not a ceremonial abuse to which he objected, which they had not objected to; not an ethical lesson that he enjoined, which they had not enjoined; not a prayer that he offered, which they had not offered; the very "Lord's Prayer" was a specimen of the kind of prayer they prayed; the very "Golden Rule" was the Rule taught in every school.

Nor his
healing.

Or perhaps this fiendish hatred of the Rabbis against one of their own was due to the reports that had reached them of the wondrous miracles he had wrought in healing the sick, in ridding afflicted ones of evil spirits, in awakening people out of trances. Making due allowance for exaggeration—the invariable concomitant of popular glorifications of popular heroes—there was nothing in his cures that could give offense, that, on the contrary, could not but give delight. There was nothing in this that to the Rabbis could even seem strange. Rome's cruelty, the Herodian outrages, fear of the approaching national catastrophe, intense excitement, had made it an age of widespread and deep-seated nervous disorders, an age of all sorts of delusions, hallucinations, hysterias, catalepsies, which, as the Rabbis themselves had

Oberammergau Passion Play

experienced, yielded quite readily to the sympathetic, soothing look, word, touch, treatment of men of such large magnetic and spiritual powers as Jesus proved himself to have possessed.

What, then, could the motive have been of a hatred as fierce as that which the Passion Play exhibited on the part of the Rabbis against Jesus? The answer is quite simple : as a historic fact, there was as little hatred as motive. There is not one word of truth in all these trumped-up charges against the Rabbis, in all the gospel-recorded bitterness of Jesus against the Scribes and Pharisees, or of the Scribes and Pharisees against Jesus. There was as little knowledge of it as there was cause for it at the time of his fatal collision with the Roman law, and Rome's cruel interpreters and executers of it. And there was no knowledge of it, as we shall see in our next discourse, till a century or two later, when in the interest of policy, and for the sake of propagation of the new creed in the Roman Empire, and because of hatred of the protesting Jew, the Roman had to be cleared of the guilt of having killed the Christ he was asked to worship, and the Jew had to be charged with having been the Christ-killer, because he refused to accept him as his Saviour.

No motive—
all invention.

In the light of history, let us follow the fate

Makes
preparation
for his
seizure.

of Jesus a little further, before we return to the Passion Play. He knew that his last hour had come. Sorrowing yet more for the faithful twelve than for himself, he tells them delicately that his end is nigh; but they understand him not. At any moment the Roman might appear, and well he knows what would follow. He has himself to get ready, but above all he must get his disciples out of the way. If the Romans come upon them unexpectedly, they will seize him and nail him upon the cross as a deterrent example to other "would-be Kings of the Jews," and mercilessly mow down his devoted disciples. He is ready to die a martyr's death, but the others must not suffer because of him. He must bid them flee to Galilee. He must withdraw from them on some plea, must send one of the trustiest of them, one who had proven his executive ability as treasurer of the little band, Judas of Kariyoth, to make his whereabouts known to the Romans, must bid him to do quickly that which he is to do, so that but the Master alone might die, a martyr to the cause, so that by his death the others might be saved. Better that one die for all than that all should die for one. Such was to be his *vicarious atonement*. Thus was he to take upon himself *the sins of those who had believed in him*.

Sad and stirring as this story is of his last

hours on earth, how marred it has been by shameful admixtures of anti-Jewish theological venom of a century or two later! How different this tearful story in the Passion Play! All that dramatic art and diabolical villainy could gather together are crowded into a climax of treachery that stands unrivalled in the whole range of the world's fiction. It is the *pièce de resistance*, without which the Passion Play would have been deprived of the most exciting of its dramatic interest. Here angel and miracle are introduced. Here the heavy villain, Judas Iscariot, plays his part, and to the bitter end. His very garb, look and gait are calculated to arouse bitterest hatred. Yellow robe, the emblem of envy and treachery; a money-bag in his girdle, to serve as emblem of the Jew's greed of gold; sharp, restless eyes; shaggy hair; a haggard face; a snake-like glide;—an appearance so repulsive as to prove at once the historic impossibility of the character, since a nature like that of the noble-minded and pure-hearted Jesus could never have attached to himself in closest intimacy a character whose very presence dripped poison, whose very voice spoke hypocrisy, whose very eyes sent daggers' thrusts. Everything that is vile in human nature is pressed into that one character of Judas Iscariot. He is covetous, dishonest, mean, rapacious, cun-

Introduction
and description
of Judas
Iscariot.

ning, treacherous. While yet associating with his Master, while yet breaking bread with him at the common table, he is selling him to the priests and scribes for filthy lucre, for thirty shekels of silver, for about twenty dollars. While yet his Master hails him "friend," and offers his cheek to him for the kiss of friendship, there is back of him an armed mob of Jews, to whom that kiss is the signal for laying violent hands upon the friend who had so implicitly trusted his disciple.

Dramatically
thrilling.

It was a difficult rôle, but Johann Zwick was equal to it. And of him it may be truly said that he was about the only *actor* in that whole cast of some eight hundred players. A human being of heart and soul could never *feel* such a part, could but *act* it. And he had only to think of the type of Jew as represented by Church Fathers in the early centuries, as pictured by fanatics during the Dark Ages, as held up for derision and persecution during the Middle Ages and among modern Anti-Semites, and he had all the models he needed for that miserable character, which—although each of the other disciples was a Jew as was the Master himself—was so enacted as to convey the impression that *Judas* alone typified the nature and the way of *the Jew*. At one of the vilest parts of the traitor's acting, a locomotive close by gave a terrible shriek. To me this

Oberammergau Passion Play

modern engine-shriek, in the midst of a piece of ancient-day mendacity, sounded like a modern protest against this villification of one of the disciples of Jesus. A lady near me shuddered—did she shudder at the baseness of the Jew?

And that same Johann Zwink had played the part of St. John during the preceding two decennials. What a change from St. John, the most beloved of all the disciples of Jesus, to Judas, the most execrated of all men! But as unlike as the real character of Johann Zwink, the decorator of Oberammergau, is to the Judas of his impersonation, so unlike was the real Judas of Kariyoth to the Judas Iscariot of the Passion Play or of the gospel stories. There is not one word of truth in all this treachery attributed to him. Examine it from whatever point of view we may, contradiction and disproof are the invariable results.

Examining it *scripturally*, we have no record of "the treachery of the kiss" in the gospel of St. John, which, as the record of the most beloved of Christ's disciples, the bosom friend whom Jesus took to his heart, purports to be one of the most faithful of all the accounts of the life of Christ. We have glaring contradictions as to the end of Judas between *St. Matthew* and *The Acts*. We are told of Christ's announcing his approach-

But no basis
in fact.

Scripturally
false.

ing seizure and end before yet any knowledge of Judas' treachery is had. We are told of Christ's washing the feet of Judas, calling him friend, eating the Paschal meal with him, and all this with full knowledge that Judas is in the meantime bargaining for the Master's destruction. We are told of Jesus having often and publicly taught in the Temple, and of his having made a public entry into Jerusalem, and yet it required a traitor's kiss to point him out to members of the Sanhedrin who have come to arrest him.

Theologically
false.

Examining it *theologically*, we are confronted by the difficulty of Jesus, as is doctrinally taught, knowing all things from the beginning of time, reading the hearts and minds of all men, and yet accepting that viper for his closest association, choosing him for one of his disciples, for one of the elect, permitting the other eleven to run the chance of being corrupted by this miscreant.

And there is that other difficulty, that of Christ knowing of the treachery about to take place, and yet doing nothing to prevent it; on the contrary, urging it on by stinging words. Even if Christ's crucifixion had been pre-ordained, as is doctrinally taught, would it not have been Christ-like to have held up to Judas the enormity of the crime he was about to commit, to have conquered his wicked intention by showing him that the

martyrdom had to be suffered, treachery or not, and thereby to have made a saint of one about to become the blackest of criminals, and all for the paltry sum of twenty dollars! Such a triumph over a trusted disciple could not but have been easy for a Christ, seeing how many other sinners he is reported to have turned from the evil of their way! How should later preachers hope to convert sinners in the name of Christ, when Christ himself could not convert one of his own trusted friends? Having it in his power to prevent the crime, and not doing it, may be well enough for dramatic purposes, but is all wrong for the morals of a Saviour, for the theology of a God. If, according to the Divine plan, the treachery had to be committed, if just in that way Christ's death had to be effected for the salvation of mankind, then the guilt ought to be laid against the theology rather than against Judas. If that was the Divine plan, did not Judas do what had been ordained to be done? Unless my common sense has deserted me, I cannot possibly come to any other conclusion than this: If the treachery of Judas was infamous, the theology that necessitated it was infinitely worse.

Examining it *historically*, we have the fact of a bishop of the early Christian Church, a century after Christ, named *Judas*, which

Historically
false.

name, if the treachery had then been known, would have been as impossible as it is impossible for a Christian, Jew, or American to name his son, respectively, Nero or Pharaoh, or Guiteau. Moreover, we have the fact that—excepting one slight and contradictory notice in a fragment of Papias, and a spurious reference in the New Testament Apocrypha—the early Christian literature, so rich in lore on other characters, good or bad, makes no mention of *Judas*, which could never have been the case if so fertile a story for moralizing purposes had then existed. Next we are told of the bargaining, for the treachery-price, going on on the *Paschal* night before the assembled Sanhedrin, and of *Judas*, together with a number of the members of the Sanhedrin, leading an armed Jewish guard against Jesus, on that same sacred night, when, in the *first* place, Rome at the time permitted no Sanhedrin sessions; *secondly*, even if it had permitted, no Sanhedrin session could be held, according to Jewish Law, on the sacred Paschal night; *thirdly*, there was no armed Jewish guard to arrest any man, and no right to punish, even if there had been an armed guard to arrest; *fourthly*, the Paschal night, when the place of every Jew was in the privacy of his home for the Passover celebration, was of all nights the most impossible one for Jews to be prowling

about in the outskirts of the city, in search of a prisoner, while for the Roman it was the best night possible for quietly seizing and dispatching a traitor, without creating a needless commotion among the people.

Examining this Judas-treachery story in the light of third century polemics, its origin and motive become quite intelligible. *Judas* stood to the Roman as the name of the hated Judean, the name Jew being in the Roman language *Iudæus*, and in the Greek language *Ioudaios*. The name of *Judas*, the Maccabee, had been the battle-cry with which the Judean had rushed against the Roman. *Judas*, the Galilean, had led the zealots in a revolutionary onslaught on the Romans. Rome had bitter memories of the name of *Judas*. No other name could waken in her as bitter a hatred and contempt as this. No other name could lend itself more helpfully than that of *Judas*, in branding the hated and obdurate Judean with the guilt of treason that was connected with the death of Christ. It was a well-aimed dart,—and it hit the very heart. And within the Jew's heart that poison-tipped and hatred-barbed dart has remained to this day.

Let us turn from this horrible falsehood of polemical fiction to history once more, and take yet one glance of Jesus, before the forenoon part of the Passion Play is ended. He is

Invented for polemical purposes.

Christ's agony and arrest at Gethsemane.

all alone in the Garden of Gethsemane. His followers are dispersed. His disciples are scattering. He is on his knees, and in the throes of agony. His whole frame shakes with emotion. His doom is nigh. And yet would he live—his people is still oppressed, and he still so young. He opens his lips, and prays: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; if not, then not as I will but as Thou wilt." Oh, how human is all this, how unlike a death-struggle of a God! And yet, how divine because so human!

A second time and a third time he prays: "Father, if this cup may not pass from me except I drink it, Thy will be done." He has his answer. Not his, but God's will is done. The Roman is upon him. Bravely he steps forward, and, without a tremor in his voice, says: "I am the Jesus of Nazareth whom ye seek." He is bound—but not bowed. He is a Roman prisoner—but a Jewish patriot still. His career is ended. He is on the road to the *via crucis*, to the way of the cross.

How will it
end?
It was a large crowd, yet a silent crowd, that wended its way from the great hall at the noon-hour recess. Deep sorrow seemed spread over every face. The rapid pace seemed checked; the head seemed bowed. Walking along and thinking, I remembered having read in a German paper of some one

Oberammergau Passion Play

having been overheard saying, as he came away from the Passion Play at the noon recess: "The play is not so bad; I wonder how it will end." That one presumably did not know much of the end of Christ. But we Jews know it, and know it well. It has been etched into our souls, burnt into our flesh with fire and sword, with garrote and gibbet, on the rack, at the stake, in the Ghetto. Well I knew how the play ended, and yet, when I considered the falsity I had listened to, the hatred and the malice I had seen enacted, when I reflected upon the wrong that has been done to us, I could not but ask myself: How will it end? When will justice be done to the Jew?



IV

In the Afternoon

“The Lord is merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and in truth ; He shows kindness unto the thousandth generation, forgives sin, yet will He by no means clear the guilty.”—*Exodus xxxiv*, 6-7.

“Fear thou not, for I am with thee ; be not dismayed, for I am thy God : I strengthen thee, yea, I help thee. . . Behold, ashamed and confounded shall be all who were incensed against thee.”—*Isaiah xli*, 10-11.

“And this commandment have we from him (Christ) : he who loveth God loveth his brother also.”—*I. John iv*, 21.

“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth : I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household. He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me ; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.” *Words ascribed to Christ.—St. Matthew x*, 34-37.

“These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them saying, Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans.”—*St. Matthew x*, 5.

“And he said unto them : Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved ; but he that believeth not shall be damned.” *Words ascribed to Christ in St. Mark xvi*, 15-16, but generally admitted to be spurious.

A mediæval
miracle.

NOT far from Oberammergau, almost within sight of it, is the beautiful town of Ettal. That little village enjoys a distinction that is accorded to none of the other mountain hamlets. It is the an-

cient seat of one of the most celebrated of Benedictine convents. Vast are the buildings of the Brotherhood, magnificent is the architecture of its convent-church; yet it is neither the one nor the other that gives Ettal its proud distinction. Its glory lies in having had a miraculous origin, in having within the sanctuary of its church the very statuette of the Virgin Mary which had located that convent-site. When Ludwig, the Bavarian, some six hundred years ago, was about to start for home from Rome, where he had been crowned Emperor, an angel, clothed in a Benedictine garb, presented him with a statuette of the Virgin Mother of God. This precious treasure the pious Emperor carried in his arms all the way from Rome to his native lands. When ascending the mountain-road of Ettal, the statuette suddenly grew heavier and heavier, till at length neither he nor his powerful charger could carry it any further. Here was clearly a miracle, and but one interpretation of it: it was at Ettal where the statuette wished to remain, where the Virgin desired a convent to be established, and a shrine to be consecrated to her. Upon the question being directly put to it, the statuette nodded assent; and to that nod Ettal owes its fame.

Leaving Ettal, and pursuing our road within the Bavarian mountain-forests, we suddenly light upon an old Germanic hut,

An old
Germanic
myth.

the dwelling-place of the *Hundings* of the *Volsung Saga*, made famous by Wagner's Nibelung tetralogy. There stood the mighty oak into which Wotan, chief of the gods, had buried the sword to the hilt, which none but Sigmund, the brave Volsung's son, could withdraw. There was the starting point of those marvelous and mythical deeds that are treasured in the rich storehouses of the Volsung Saga and of the Nibelungenlied.

Belief in the
supernatural
once
common.

A convent located by a statuette of the Virgin Mary, a hut and forest once the trysting-place of gods and demi-gods, a town celebrated for its decennial representations of the sufferings and death of a Son of God—all three within close proximity of each other—what better theme for a mind given to meditations on subjects such as these! Here, within a radius of but a few miles, the Orient and the Occident, the North and the South, the Christian and the Heathen, are brought together in their myths and legends, to demonstrate, as it were, how prone man has been in all ages and in all climes to people the earth with supernatural beings, to ascribe to men superhuman powers, or to assign miraculous origins to natural events.

No longer
held, except
for Passion
Play.

But the age of supernatural happenings has passed, and, in critical minds, also the belief in their ever having happened. Wagner has created widespread interest in the Ice-

Oberammergau Passion Play

landic Eddas and in the Germanic Sagas, but has neither found nor implanted a belief that the gods and the demi-gods, the valkyrs and the norns, of which he sings, ever had existence. Poets still find rich themes for their muse in the quaint lore of the Mediæval Church, but never a trace that the miraculous with which it teems ever occurred. The Passion Play of Oberammergau, however, that deals, from first to last, with the supernatural and the superhuman, with a Heaven-descended, miracle-working, death-resurrected, Heaven-ascended, Virgin-born Son of God, this, and this alone of all the three, we are asked to accept as absolute fact, as holy truth.

Here is, sure enough, a double standard of belief regarding the supernatural. Only the miraculous of the Scriptures is to be accepted as truth, that of any or all other literature is to be discarded as fiction. When we read in the Northern legends of gods appearing in the guise of men, when we read of heroes conquering, single-handed, whole legions of evil spirits, making themselves invisible at will, walking the waters, sailing through the air, passing unscathed through fire, when we read of a dove descending from the sky to turn a swan into a beauteous youth, or of a pilgrim-staff bursting into leaves and blossoms, or of a statue of stone

And for
Scriptural
miracles
in general.

nodding its head in approval of the spot where it desires a sanctuary to be erected to itself,—when of these we read we are told to class them with the tales of the Arabian Nights. But when we read of a Holy Ghost manifesting itself in the form of a dove; of angels appearing in the sky to intone a song of joy at the birth of a God; of a star showing the way to the manger in which the newborn Deity lies cradled; of that Deity performing, in the guise of man, marvelous miracles, such as walking the water, flying through the air, feeding the thousands on a few loaves and a few little fishes, withering a tree by a mere curse, expelling devils out of men and driving them into swine, restoring the dead to life, ascending in the flesh and blood, after burial, to take his seat in Heaven as God, the Son, at the right hand of God, the Father,—when of these we read, we are told that we must believe them as absolute truths, or take the consequences of being eternally damned, after death, for disbelieving them, and, if Jews, of being also eternally persecuted before death.

It was with some such thoughts as these that I made my way back to the Passion Play hall, after the noon recess. My heart, that had been very heavy at the close of the forenoon part of the play, looked painfully forward to the afternoon part. I knew what I had to

After above reflections, witnessed continuation of sufferings of Christ.

expect, judging from the viciousness I had seen enacted on the part of the Jewish hierarchy and the teachers and leaders of Israel, in their plotting and conspiring against the noble Jewish patriot, against him, whom deluded zeal had unwisely proclaimed "King of the Jews" in the capital of a Roman province, at a seditious time; against one, who had in nowise offended against the Jews, nor against the Law of Israel; all of whose teaching and preaching and yearning had been Jewish, and solely for the Jew; who had been animated by but one desire,—a desire, which not a Jew at that time but wished to see fulfilled,—that of restoring Israel to its independence, and freeing Palestine from its cruel oppressor, and sweeping it clean of the Roman heathen, and in which aspiration and unwise proclamation lay the head and front of all his offending, for which he was made a Roman prisoner in the dead of the sacred Passover night, to be speedily despatched in the morning as a traitor upon the Roman cross, before the Passover pilgrims and the residents of the capital could learn of the seizure, before they could run to the rescue of their brother, or rise in revolt against the Procurator, as had occurred divers times before.

I had not long to wait. The very opening of the afternoon part represented one of the

Jesus led
before
High Priest
and abused.

High Priests on the balcony of his house, in the midnight hour, thirsting for the blood of the patriot of Nazareth, unable to sleep until he shall have feasted his eyes on the sight of that miscreant in chains. His feverish craving is soon satisfied. The victim of his hatred is led before him,—not led, but crowded, pushed, jostled by an infuriated mob of Jews. There is but one disappointment, that the prisoner's disciples had been permitted to scatter and escape. Insolent questions are put by the High Priest to Jesus. He disdains to answer them, excepting the one in which he is asked to give an account of the pernicious doctrines he had taught: "I have spoken openly," replies he, "men have heard me; let them tell thee what I have taught." For this dignified answer, he is cruelly smitten in the face, to which Jesus righteously answers: "If I have taught wrong, tell it; if not, why smitest thou me?" This is more than the High Priest Annas, whose name might more worthily have been Haman, can endure. He bids them take the culprit out of his sight, and to afford that delectable treat, of seeing Christ in chains, also to Caiaphas, the other High Priest.

Representation
of High Priest
modelled after
Roman Popes.

We see the unfortunate prisoner dragged through the streets of Jerusalem, amid mockery and abuse. We see him brought before Caiaphas and before the assembled Sanhe-

drin. Caiaphas is the younger High Priest of the two, very cleverly acted by the village beadle of Oberammergau; but not a whit inferior is he to Annas, in hatred against the unoffending son of his race, faith, nation. If the picture of the Jew, as represented by fanatics of the early Church, of the Dark and Middle Ages, of the modern Anti-Semites, served Johann Zwick as a model for his Judas Iscariot, then the pictures of some of the Popes of Rome, at and before the dawn of the Reformation, must have served Sebastian Lang as a model of Caiaphas,—those Popes, whose hands were red and whose souls were black with the blood and poison of assassination; those Popes, who inundated the soil of Europe with the blood of the innocent; those Popes, who founded and operated the Inquisition and Torture Chambers, and intoned *Te Deums* for such massacres as that of St. Bartholomew night; those Popes, who sickened Christianity with the stench of their open voluptuousness and public immoralities; who made a public jest of the religion of that very Christ whose apostolic successors they professed to be; who made a traffic of their religion for the money with which to indulge their luxuries and riotousness; who kept their iron hands relentlessly on the hearts and souls and minds of the people; who

made of Rome a Babylon and of St. Peter a heathen temple ; those Popes, who tortured and strangled and burnt the prophet Savonarola ; who tortured and burnt the saint Huss and the philosopher Bruno ; and who would have tortured and strangled and burnt the reformer Luther, if his time had not grown a little too enlightened for mental serfdom, if the people's spirit, at that time, had not grown a little too bold for spiritual oppression.

Jesus sub-
jected to
mock trial.

But we must return to Caiaphas, the High Priest, and to the Supreme Court of the nation, which had assembled in the sacred Pass-over night to sit in capital judgment upon a Jewish culprit. A mock trial is entered upon. Witnesses are called, and serious indeed are the charges they bring against Jesus. He has been heard declare that, if they would tear down the Temple, he would restore it in three days. He is accused of having spoken disrespectfully of the Rabbis, and of having taught, in regard to the ceremonial law, contrary to their teaching. He is accused of greater crimes still, of having been seen eating with unwashed hands, and of having associated with publicans and sinners and Samaritans ; of having permitted the hungry to pluck ears on the Sabbath, of having actually healed the sick on the Day of Rest. He is accused of still greater crimes, of the greatest of all conceivable crimes, of

having arrogated to himself the right of God in forgiving sin, of having committed blasphemy in calling himself the Messiah of Israel, the Son of God.

The High Priest is horror-stricken. He rends his clothes as a sign of the nation's humiliation and contrition at the blasphemy of one of its sons. "He is guilty of death!" shouts the High Priest. "He is guilty of death!" re-echoes the mob. "He is guilty of death!" decrees the Sanhedrin, and turns him over to a guard for safe-keeping till the break of day, when the Tribunal is to proceed with him to the Roman Procurator, Pontius Pilate, for the Roman's execution of the criminal condemned by them.

Condemned to death.

I have called it a mock trial, and my voice may probably have indicated somewhat of a tone of amusement while narrating this so-called judiciary proceeding of the Supreme Court of the nation, whose president, historically, was the distinguished and peace-loving Gamaliel, and one of whose foremost members was the noble Jochanan ben Saccai. But, as for the impersonators of it at Oberammergau, nothing could have been further from their minds than that they were enacting a mock trial, or that there was any illegality or no legality at all in the whole trial, or that it never was, and never could have been, an historical fact. There was an

Not acted nor witnessed as mock trial in Ober-Ammergau.

earnestness, a naturalness of malice in their performance that cast a pall over the thousands of spectators. On the one hand, the calm dignity of the prisoner—bound but not bowed, silent and yet most eloquent of innocence; on the other side, the envenomed hierarchy, and the chief tribunal of the nation, and the mob, raging against him like a maddened sea against a well-secured lighthouse, it was a spectacle to stir even the most callous, to move even a heart of stone.

The trial a fabrication, like Blue Grotto.

Analyzing my feelings, I found them stirred by two emotions: one was the pity one naturally feels for the wronged in any play on any stage; the other was a curiosity to know how many of that audience could penetrate that crudely-woven web of falsehood, that had been maliciously drawn in front of the Roman to conceal the real offender; a curiosity to know how many could understand that, the offense of Jesus having been solely a political one against Rome, the Jews had as little cause as they had right, to proceed judicially or otherwise against him, more especially as that offense against Rome had had for its intention the deliverance of the Jew. The preceding afternoon I had seen some of the spectators in the celebrated Blue Grotto, near Oberammergau, back of the Linderhof palace of the ill-fated Bavarian King. I had no doubt but that they

Oberammergau Passion Play

had been as profoundly impressed as I had been by the magnificent naturalness of that stupendous piece of imitation, of that bold fabrication of fiction. Did these same people, I wondered, perceive that the whole trial they had just listened to, even though drawn from the gospels, was, like unto the grotto they had seen the day before, a bold fabrication of fiction, the machination of malicious Jew-haters, whose cunning and self-interest had counselled the exculpation of the guilty and the incrimination of the innocent.

I wondered also whether some of that audience had seen the *Hunding hut*, and had learned that even that was all imitation, all fabrication, and that the story of the nodding Virgin-statue at Ettal was all fiction, the invention of Benedictine monks in the financial interest of their order and convent. If they had, I wondered whether they had better reason for believing that trial to have been true, seeing how the whole procedure, in its ignorance of Jewish law, history and institution, proves itself a bungling fabrication of a later age, that had gain for its object, malice for its motive power, vengeance for its tools.

And I wondered also whether any of them had ever heard the remark Prof. Huxley had made, when told as a definition of a lobster, that it was "a red fish that swam backward,"

And like Mediæval miracle and Germanic myth.

A blunder, like that exposed by Huxley.

said he, "the lobster is neither red, nor a fish, nor does it swim backward—all the rest of the definition is true." If they had, then had they seen in that trial an illustration of the kind of error Huxley had so cleverly exposed. With the exception that that trial, from first to last, was not Jewish; that, being a trial for a capital offense, it could not, at that time, have been conducted by Jews according to Roman interdiction; nor that any of the charges brought against the accused constituted capital offense or any offense at all, according to Jewish Law,—with these exceptions, all the rest of the trial was true.

Every
detail of
trial false.

We are told of two High Priests; there could never be more than one, at one time, in Israel. The one is named Annas; Jewish literature knows of no High Priest by the name of Annas at the time when Jesus is said to have stood in trial before him. Of the other, Caiaphas, it has as little knowledge as High Priest in Israel as has the gospel of Mark, the oldest of the four gospel stories, or has the gospel of Luke a knowledge of a trial before Caiaphas. Not until some two hundred years after the death of Jesus do we find in Jewish literature the name of a Joseph of Caipha. Josephus mentions a Joseph as High Priest at the time of Pilate. The addition of the words "*who is also called Caiphas*" in no wise clears the

difficulty, knowing only too well how the work of the Roman-pensioned Josephus, dedicated to Vespasian and Titus the destroyers of Jerusalem, written in Rome and for Romans, had additions and subtractions made to it and from it, by later hands, to suit ulterior purposes. The trial is held in the High Priest's palace—no penal case in Israel could ever be tried in any other place than the legal seat of the Sanhedrin, which at no time in the history of Israel was in the dwelling of the High Priest. The trial is held, and the verdict of death is pronounced on the Passover night—according to Jewish Law, no trial could be held in the night, least of all on the Holy Passover night, nor could a sentence of death be ever pronounced on the same day on which the trial was held. Jesus was condemned for having differed from the Rabbis, and for having spoken disrespectfully of them—a guilt that was one of the commonest and most harmless occurrences in those days of free speech, of schools and sects of widest divergence, from the almost atheistical Sadducees to the extremely orthodox Essenes, both of which had broken with the Rabbinical Law and had spurned the authority of the Rabbis. He is condemned to death for irreligious actions and for blasphemous sayings ; there is not in the whole compendium of the Talmudic Law, an

enactment, a decision, a decree, that could even by the farthest stretch of an orthodox imagination construe as heresy or blasphemy anything that Jesus ever did or said. There is not in the whole history of Israel, from Moses to Jesus, a single case on record of any one ever having been put to death because of differing religious views. Only he who cursed God by the ineffable name of *Jehovah*, and who seduced others into cursing God, and enticed them to idolatry, was a blasphemer according to Jewish law, and guilty of death. Unbeliever that Robert Ingersoll was, not even he, having never cursed God nor enticed men to idolatry, could have been condemned to death by Jewish law, as a blasphemer, much less those thousands of godly and valiant thinkers, who were done to death at the stake, in the torture-chamber, during the Dark and Middle Ages, by the Christian Inquisition, even for but slightly different opinions on doctrines and dogmas of the Church.

But what of the gospels in which this trial and the other fabrications previously touched upon are recorded? What of the phrase "Gospel Truth"? Are not these accounts given in the New Testament, and has not the New Testament, as well as the Old Testament, been written by the hand of God, or by the hand of man under the dictation or inspiration of God?

Is it not so
recorded in
inspired
Scripture?

It is too late a date in the history of our mental progress to postulate a supernatural origin for either the New or Old Testament. The very shortcomings of the writings themselves, their own frequent, flagrant contradictions, their conflict with historic and scientific facts, their occasional childish, absurd, even pernicious, teachings, show only too plainly the hand of man with all the limitations of the age in which it wrote. And when to this we add the fanatical spirit that characterized the Councils in which the canonicity of the New Testament writings was established, the intrigues, the partisan passions, the bitter feuds, the personal encounters, that determined which writings should and which should not constitute the Holy Scripture, and when we consider when and how and by whom and under what spirit and with what motive some of these Scriptures were composed, it becomes a matter of scientific and philosophic necessity to re-emphasize our old-time objection to the old-time teaching with regard to the gospels that they are divine in origin, supernatural in essence, miraculous in evidence.

Theory of inspired Scripture no longer tenable.

If Jesus himself ever committed any of his sayings and doings to writing, not a line of it has come down to us or was ever known to have existed. If the Disciples ever wrote anything of the life of their Master, not a line of it has come down to our day. Not one of

No contemporaneous biography of Jesus.

the manuscripts of the four canonic gospels in our possession dates from a time earlier than three hundred years after the death of Christ. Not one of the early church-writings gives evidence that any of these gospels existed in their present form as early as a century after Christ. The very names of the authors of these gospels, with the possible exception of the third, are unknown; the names they bear are merely the names of the men whose oral traditions have been transmitted through a number of generations. With the probable exception of one, all were written far from Palestine, the scene of action,—two in Rome, the other in Ephesus in Asia Minor, or in Alexandria in Egypt. Final sanction is not given by Council decree to the New Testament as canonic Scripture until three hundred years after the death of Jesus. Within contemporaneous Jewish literature not a line is found of Jesus, nor a word of him prior to the fourth century. In Josephus, who wrote half a century after the death of Jesus, and whose writings have come down to us through the hands of Christian copyists, a reference to Jesus is contained, which has long since been proven even by Christian scholars as spurious.

The beginnings of the gospel stories were very unlike their present form. Founded on tradition, they started as brief and simple

memoranda of the life and teachings of a Jewish patriot, believed by a band of faithful followers to have been the long-expected Saviour of his nation, and they ended as a detailed and doctrinal biography of a composite hero-myth and man-God, Jew-enemy, and Roman-friend. The fate of Jesus has been that of all ancient-day heroes who have come down to historic times by the vehicle of tradition,—between the first and last stages of that journey stretch miles of unconscious fancy and leagues of deliberate invention. Ours are the days of exact science and of reliable historical data; and yet, if not a line had been written or published of the life of Washington to this day, if we had had to depend for our knowledge on tradition, the Washington of to-day would have been as unlike the Washington of 1776 as was Jesus, the carpenter's son, unlike the Jesus, the incarnate Son of God, of a century and a half later.

Started as brief memoranda of fact—ended as collectanea of fiction.

At first there was no thought of preserving in writing an account of the life and deeds of Christ. There was no need of it, since he might at any moment make his Second Advent and take his followers into the Kingdom of Heaven, in the interest of which he had suffered himself to die, and for the preparation of which he had but temporarily separated himself from them. But years rolled on, and there was no Second Advent. The delay

Written accounts of life of Christ deemed unnecessary at first.

could only be due, it was believed, to the fewness of Christians. They must send out missionaries and spread a knowledge of their Christ. They must found churches and supply them with literature. Thus arose the first need of a written account of the Master and of his work.

With rise and spread of missionary zeal commenced rise and spread of differing gospels.

Different men, differently endowed, penned different versions of different traditions. Different peoples required different renderings of the stories the missionaries had to tell. Different copyists incorporated different marginal comments of others, and opinions of their own into the texts. There gradually ensued combinations and supplementations and elaborations to such an extent that Papias, a Bishop of the middle of the second century, grew suspicious of them and expressed himself as preferring the old oral traditions to the new writings, the old simple reminiscences and logia of Christ to the mass of doctrinal and differing biography that had sprung up.

Life of Christ made to correspond with ecclesiasticism of the Church.

Time passed. The halo around the head of the now supernatural Christ widened. There was nothing, deemed ecclesiastically good or doctrinally right, which he was not believed to have thought or said, or which he might not have thought or said. And so it was an easy matter, in those days of elastic literary consciences and deficient historic

Oberammergau Passion Play

sense, to credit to Christ whatever they, of their time, thought worthy of a Christ.

Time passed. Contentions arose among the spreaders of the gospel; differences of opinions required textual corroborations—and the teachings of Christ had to be made to corroborate the opinions of the one and those of the other. Factions sprang up, one faction regarding Peter the head of the Church; another, Paul; another, John; another, James, the brother of Jesus—and each had to twist the story of Christ into confirming his supremacy and policy. Polemics sprang up between the missionaries of the new religion and the followers of the old faiths, and the story of Christ had to be made to meet the objections and requirements of the opposition.

With differing doctrines and claims of sects and factions.

With regard to the Jews, the story had to be made to meet the views of the ascetic Essenes, of the land- and law-devoted Pharisees, of the anti-Rabbinical and pro-Roman Sadducees, of the Neo-Platonic Alexandrians, of those who believed that the Mosaic dispensation was to remain intact for ever, of those who believed that the Messiah was promised to the Jew alone and not to the Gentile as well; that he had to be born of the Davidian family, and at Bethlehem, the seat of the royal dynasty; and that he had to fulfil all that the Prophets had foretold of him in the Old Testament.

With differing notions of Jews.

With differing
notions of
Pagans.

With regard to the Pagan, the story of Christ had to be made to suit the Heathen's notion of religion. The real had to be turned into a fiction, the man into a God, a matter that became all the easier the more converted Pagans entered upon missionary work. Like unto the Greek Jove, who, in the form of a swan, had become father of Helen, by Leda, wife of the Spartan King, the stern, incorporeal, invisible, incomprehensible Jewish Jehovah, had to be made, in the form of the Holy Ghost, or dove, Father of Jesus, by Mary, the wife of Joseph. The birth of Jesus, like unto that of the Pagan demi-gods, had to be announced by wondrous signs and visions. Like unto the Pagan mythical heroes, Jesus had to be shown to them as having performed wonders without number and as marvelous as numerous. Like unto the mythical heroes of the Pagans—even like unto some of their Emperors, who were honored with apotheosis after death, and made to ascend to Olympus to take their places alongside the gods—Jesus had to be made to resurrect after death, and to confer with his favorites as the poets had made the gods of the pantheons do, and to ascend to Heaven to take his seat as God, the Son, at the right hand of God, the Father.

Time passed. The early close and friendly relationship, between the Jews of the old

faith and the followers of the new, became strained. The nearer the story of Christ to the life-time of Jesus the friendlier the tone toward the Jew. The gospel of Mark—the oldest of the four extant—knows nothing of a miraculous or Bethlehem birth of Jesus, nor of many of the other miraculous deeds; in the main its doctrines are unitarian, its principles Jewish, its spirit friendly, containing none of the bitter harangues against the scribes and Pharisees. One of the early Church Fathers even tells us that a sect, in the middle of the second century, accepted the gospel of Mark only, because it separated the Jewish Jesus from the Pagan Christ.

The nearer story of Christ to life-time of Jesus the friendlier to Jews.

The further the story of Christ from the life-time of Jesus the more bitter its spirit toward the Jew. In the gospel of John—the latest of the four—the Jews are contemptuously spoken of as an alien, outcast people, as offspring of the Evil One. This growing hostility was due partly to the poor success of the missionaries among the Jews, and partly to their desire to escape being classed as Jews, as they had hitherto been, since the Emperor Hadrian had, after the Bar Cochban revolution, decreed the stamping out of all the Jews and their religion.

The further from life-time of Jesus the more hostile to Jew and the more friendly to Roman.

The friendliness toward Rome was by no means a mere pretext. The followers of

The end to be attained regarded a justification of the means.

the new faith were by this time far more of Pagan than of Jewish origin, and clearly they recognized that there, among the Græco-Romans, who at that time had little religion and less morality, lay the future of the new faith. What if it required paganization of the Jewish faith and of the Jewish hero? Was it not justified by the end to be attained? What if it necessitated the incrimination of the Jew, and the exculpation of the Roman from the guilt of the crucifixion of Christ? Did not the Jews deserve it for refusing to accept Him as their Saviour? And was it not a necessity, seeing that it would never do to tell the Romans that the new God they were asked to worship had been one of those Jews detested by them? What if it required the surrender of Mosaic laws and institutions? Did it not mean the conquest of an empire for the new faith? With such colossal ends to be attained, was it not worth recasting the story of Jesus so as to meet the necessities of the Pagan mind?

Jesus of Nazareth turned into a God of the Pantheon.

And recast it was. And when it emerged from the Roman mould, and displayed its hero in the new guise of a paganized deity, it required, indeed, a very skilled eye to trace any resemblance between this new God of the crumbling Pantheon and the gentle preacher and healer of Nazareth, the noble, self-sacri-

ficing would-be deliverer of his people from the cruel Roman yoke.

Thus it was that the character of Jesus was made to grow step by step, by accretions and recastings, from man to God, from a hater of Rome to a champion of it; from a condemned by Rome to a defended by it; from a patriot of Israel to an opponent of it; from a teacher of the Golden Rule and of the Beatitudes and of the precepts of Non-Resistance, to an announcer that he had but come to bring the sword and the fire, and to set brother and brother at variance with each other; from a strengthener of the family-bond, to a spurner of his own family, refusing to grant even his own mother's request to see him, saying that those who believed in him were dearer to him than his blood-relations, bidding all—if they desired to escape damnation—to forsake their nearest and dearest, to sever the most sacred home-ties, and follow him; from a commiserator with the sorrowing and suffering and fallen and ignorant, to a curser of those who do not believe in him, or who do not assist his disciples.

To such an extent can missionary zeal madden the human mind and pervert the human heart. To such an extent can propagandic policy transform one of the simplest and gentlest and most lovable of men, degree by degree, into a divinity that lacks even

And the gentle preacher is transformed by missionary zeal into a Divinity without Humanity.

humanity, into a God who is wanting even in the virtues of man.

This survey will make clear some of the many errors and contradictions.

After this brief survey of the simple and natural origin and forced artificial growth, through several centuries and in several continents, of the gospel stories of the life of Jesus, you will probably understand why they contain so many errors and contradictions and falsifications and paganizations; why some of these gospels know nothing of a miraculous birth of Jesus, and others trace him, by means of differing lines of ancestries, to King David, through Joseph as father, and yet assigning the fathership direct to God; why some know nothing of a *Sermon on the Mount*, or of the *Lord's Prayer*, or of such a stupendous miracle as that of Christ's restoring Lazarus from death to life; why, according to some, Jesus had come but for the benefit of the Jew, and *not to cast his pearls before the swine*, and according to others he had come for the Gentile as well as for the Jew, and later, for the Gentile altogether.

After this survey, you will probably understand why in one place the people are told to obey the Scribes and Pharisees, who teach and judge in Moses' stead, and in another place they are denounced in vilest terms, and the people openly incited to rebellion against them; or why Peter is now shown to be the discoverer and announcer of Jesus as *the*

Christ, and is rewarded for it by being told, by Jesus, that the new Church will be built upon him as upon a rock, and that unto him will be given the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven,—and then he is branded by Jesus as a Satan, as a thrice-denier of his Master.

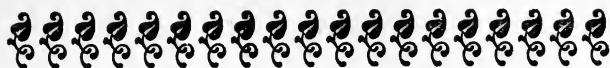
After this survey, you will probably understand why nothing is known of the end of Judas, the arch-enemy of Jesus, in three gospels, while the account of it in St. Matthew, that of his hanging himself, even before the crucifixion of Christ had taken place—the end represented in the Oberammergau Passion Play—differs entirely from that given in the *Acts of the Apostles*, that of falling headlong in a field, and bursting asunder in the midst, with all his bowels gushing out; and both of these differ from that given by Papias, Bishop of the Church a century and a half after the death of Jesus, that of his walking about in the world a great example of impiety, his body being afflicted with running sores and swollen to enormous size, so much so that, on one occasion, when a wagon was moving on its way, not being able to pass it, he was crushed by it, the stench of his mouldering remains making of that whole country a shunned and howling waste,—each account the more horrible the later the date of its authorship.

After this survey, the outrage perpetrated

against the Jews by foisting upon them a trial and condemnation of their brother and patriot, will reveal itself to you not less monstrous but probably a little more intelligible. After this survey you will probably understand the better what I shall have to say in my next discourse, on the additional trials of Jesus before Pilate and Herod, and on his Crucifixion, Resurrection, and Ascension.

After this survey you will probably know how much truth there is in the assertion that the gospel stories are divine in origin, supernatural in essence, miraculous in evidence. You will probably know how much reliance there is in "gospel truth." Reading the definition of the word "gospel," you will know how much of "good news" and of "happy tidings" it has brought to the Jew, and to countless millions of non-Christians. Fortunate it has been for many an one that, as the Old Testament teaches, "Jehovah is a God of Mercy," for it certainly required all of God's mercy to forgive those who, in the interest of policy and in the madness of fanaticism, outraged truth, falsified history, paganized the religion of Jesus, cleared the guilty Roman, and condemned the innocent Jew.

It required all of God's mercy to forgive all the wrong done to the Jew.



V

The End

“ Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest it, because I am a king. To this end have I been born, and to this end am I come into the world.”—*St. John* xviii, 37.

“ He shall bring forth justice unto truth. He shall not become fatigued and not be faint, till he have established justice on the earth.”—*Isaiah* xlii 2, 3.

THE sun is fast coursing toward the west. The day is waning. The Passion Play is nearing its end. The story of the most pathetic martyrdom in the history of human kind, so realistically rendered on the boards of Oberammergau, the story which in the early hours of the morning had presented to us the martyr-prophet of Nazareth at the head of an exultant procession, proclaimed and hailed as “ King of the Jews,” and which had then taken us, step by step, through all the devious ways of vengeful plottings, till it had harrowed our soul by the most unjust death-sentence ever pronounced, that story is now becoming an agonizing tragedy. Not a trace of humanity is left in the hearts of his persecutors. The

The Passion
Play nearing
its end.

priests of the people have turned into blood-thirsty hyenas, the judges of the nation into howling fiends.

A night
of mockery
and insult.

Even the guard, into whose safe-keeping the innocent victim of a nation's wrath is entrusted till the break of day, shortens the tedious hours of waiting by indulging in cruel sport with the prisoner. He is placed in a chair, which is to represent his throne. He is mockingly addressed as king. He is blindfolded and beaten and asked, being a prophet, to name the smiter. He is thrown from the chair amid exclamations: "The king has fallen from his throne!" "Israel is again without a king!"

A typical
Roman
pastime.

How genuinely Roman this scene is, seeing that it had been the acclamation of Jesus as king over a province tributary to Rome that had led to his seizure! How akin this scene to the insult offered, by the Roman mob at Alexandria, Egypt, about the same time, under the Roman Procurator Flaccus, to Agrippa, the grandson of Herod, the newly appointed sovereign over a portion of Palestine, when, as Philo, the contemporaneous writer, informs us, they placed a madman named Carabbas upon a pedestal, "flattened out a leaf of papyrus and put it on his head instead of a diadem, and clothed the rest of his body with a common door-mat instead of a cloak, and instead of a sceptre they put in his hand a

small stick . . . and when, like actors in theatrical spectacles, he had received all the insignia of royal authority, and had been dressed and adorned like a king, the young men bearing sticks on their shoulders, stood on each side of him instead of spear-bearers, in imitation of the body-guards of the king, and then others came up, some as if to salute him, and others making as though they wished to plead their causes before him, and others pretending to wish to consult with him about the affairs of the state.

“Then, from the multitude of those who were standing around, there arose a wonderful shout of men calling out Maris ; and this is the name by which it is said they called the kings among the Syrians ; for they knew that Agrippa was by birth a Syrian, and also that he was possessed of a great district of Syria of which he was the sovereign ; when Flaccus heard, or rather when he saw this, he would have done right if he had . . . chastised those who dressed him up for having dared both openly and disguisedly, both with words and actions, to insult a king . . . but he not only did not punish them, but he did not think even to check them, but gave complete license and impunity to all those who designed ill, and who were disposed to show their enmity and spite to the king,”—how akin that Roman

Historical
Roman mock-
ery of a
Jewish king.

mockery of a Jewish king at Alexandria to this Roman treatment of Jesus at Jerusalem! How natural for a Roman guard to mock and abuse a fettered would-be king of the hated and seditious Jews, who, like the mocked Alexandrian, had also been regarded by some at Jerusalem as a madman! And yet not a single Roman is represented among the persecutors. They are all Jews, cruel, fanatical Jews, wreaking vengeance on a helpless and innocent brother, whose only crime had been his having wished to free his people from the hand of cruel Rome.

Christ before
Pilate.

The morning hour breaks at last—but brings no relief to him condemned to death. That lamentable night, in which he had been basely betrayed and falsely tried and unjustly condemned and brutally abused, is to be crowned with a morning more execrable still. Oh, the fickleness of the mob, that to-day hails and to-morrow damns, that to-day sings *hosannahs* to its hero, and to-morrow shouts "*Crucify him!*" Haggard and worn, he is dragged along by that very rabble that but the day before had vociferously proclaimed him their king and Saviour, dragged through the streets of Jerusalem by the rabble headed by the two High Priests and a throng of other priests, and by the members of the Supreme Court of the nation, to the palace of Pontius Pilate, the Roman

Oberammergau Passion Play

Procurator. Oh, the hypocrisy of the priests, who all night long stain their souls with blackest crime, and in the morning display a mortal fear lest even but a spot of soot soil their sacerdotal garb! It is the morning of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and that most unscrupulous of hierarchies will not enter the heathen's palace lest they be polluted by contact with leaven. Pilate, the proud Roman, the governor, in Cæsar's stead, over the province of Judea, is obliged to come out doors to learn the rabble's wish—so, at least, it is enacted at Oberammergau.

It is little they want, only his order for the execution of a miscreant, whom their chief tribunal had found guilty of death. They are amazed at his impertinent question as to the nature of the crime committed by the condemned whose death-warrant he is to issue. They are dumbfounded at hearing the Roman declare that he sees no justification for ordering the prisoner's execution. They insist, and their bloodthirstiness increases with their insistence. They appeal to the governor's patriotism and passion. They, the Jews, accuse the prisoner of having attempted a revolution against Rome, of having set himself up as King of the Jews. But of all this Pilate has seen and heard nothing, and, therefore, will not order his execution. The clamor for the death of their brother grows louder

Pilate refuses
to execute
prisoner.

and louder, and more and more violent. Pilate examines the prisoner himself, sees no wrong in him, and will not issue the death-warrant. His wife, too, is troubled and begs him not to slay the innocent. His friends and counsellors applaud his decision, and brand the whole proceeding as a persecution of bigotry. There is pity in the heart of the Roman and the heathen, there is none in the heart of the Jew. So, at least, it is enacted at Oberammergau, and so it is taught in the gospels.

Sends him
to Herod
for judgment.

To rid himself of the mob, Pilate suggests that they lead the prisoner to Herod Antipas, who had come to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival, and who, as tetrarch of Galilee, had jurisdiction over the prisoner of his province. The suggestion is eagerly caught up, and again we see the Man of Sorrows dragged through the streets of Jerusalem, to the palace of the Galilean tetrarch. This Herod, as you will remember, is the very tetrarch who but a year before had executed John the Baptist, for no other offense than stirring up the people by his preaching, and for creating a fear of a possible uprising. So is he shown in history, but not so is he represented at Oberammergau. There even this cruel son of a cruel father, whose hands were red with the blood of innocence, even he sees no wrong in Jesus. He regards

him a deluded fool, and sees reason for sport, but not for punishment. There is pity in the heart of this murderous semi-heathen—there is none in the heart of the Jew. To the dismay of the mob, Herod sends him back to Pilate, whence he had come.

Once more we see Christ before Pilate, with a mob around him twice or thrice as large as before, and more desperate than ever for the blood of their victim. The stage rings with their cry: "Crucify him!" "Crucify him!" The very mountains echo back their shout "Crucify him!" "Crucify him!"

Christ a second time before Pilate.

Poor Pilate, the Roman Procurator, with Cæsar's power behind him, with the Roman legion near at hand, ready to obey his merest beck, is utterly powerless in the face of this fury. So at least it is enacted at Oberammergau, and taught in the gospels. He suggests as a compromise the scourging of Christ, and then letting him go. It is of no avail; even so cruel a punishment as the Roman scourge, under the tortures of which victims often succumbed, even this will not satisfy the blood-thirsty Jews. They will have his life, and nothing but his life. Pilate next tells of his custom of liberating a condemned on the annual Festival of Liberty, and offers them the choice between the murderer Barab-

Pilate forced to issue order for execution.

bas and the preacher Jesus. It was a capital stroke on the part of Pilate. What doubt could there be as to the outcome of that choice! But, one glance at both the condemned sufficed for a decision. On the one side, the villainous, dirty-looking, Shylock-gaberdined Barabbas, on the other side, the white-robed, majestic, awe-inspiring presence of Christ. And speedily the decision is made, and loudly it is proclaimed. Pilate is horror-stricken. Is it possible? Yea, it is. In vengeful hatred and fanatical bigotry—as taught at Oberammergau and in the gospels—all things are possible for Jews. “Give us Barabbas,” shout the people of Jerusalem. “Let Barabbas free!” shout the hierarchy, the Sanhedrin, the teachers and preachers of Israel. “Crucify Jesus! Death to the Impostor of Israel, to the King of the Jews!” “His blood be upon us, and upon our children after us!”—The order for the crucifixion is reluctantly given by the Roman. The Jews have triumphed over the Jew.

The way of
the cross.

Their fondest wish is soon gratified. They see the victim of their hatred drag himself along under the burden of the cross. They see him stumble and fall under its weight. They see him driven on mercilessly by the executioners. They witness the tearful parting-scene between mother and son, but there is no tear of sorrow in their eyes, no sigh of

Oberammergau Passion Play

sympathy in their bosoms. Are they not Jews? And can Jews have feeling? Can Jews be human? Such at least must the questions be at Oberammergau.

They hear the cruel blows of the executioner, and know that the nails are being driven through the hands of their victim into the wood of the cross. They strain their ears, but no welcome sound of a moan or groan can they catch. They are compensated, however, by at last catching sight of Jesus nailed upon the cross, bleeding sorely from his wounds, evidencing in his face and limbs the agonies of torture,—yet not a word of curse, censure, or complaint, passes his lips. He listens patiently to the sneers and taunts of the High Priests, and his only answer is his prayer: “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” His agonies increase; his strength grows weaker; his spirit becomes faint. One last and tearful exclamation: “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit,” and his soul wings its flight to Heaven.

The
Crucifixion.

The earth quakes; the thunders roar; the sun withdraws its light; God is in wrath at the wrongs done His Son. In the Temple the Holy Veil is rent in twain. In the streets of Jerusalem walk the dead of long ago, risen from the graves. Horror seizes upon the Romans; they flee in contrition and dis-

God's wrath
made manifest.

may. But the Jew is blind and relentless still. "These signs and portents are the work of Satan," says he, "the magic of Belzebub, the accursed ally of the impostor crucified."

Even though dead, the High Priests' hatred of their victim is not yet appeased. They begrudge his body decent burial. Since they cannot have it torn limb by limb, they would have it thrown into the burial-pit set aside for evil-doers. It is only through the aid of the Roman that honorable sepulture is secured for it.

But its early rest is of short duration. On the morning of the third day, there is an earthquake; the well-sealed tomb bursts open, and out of it steps the Christ crucified, dead and yet alive, human and yet divine, in the flesh and blood, and yet glorious in His transfiguration. Slowly He ascends heavenward, amid the wonderment of the awe-struck witnesses below, and gradually fades out of sight. Heaven has its God back again. God, the Father, and God, the Son, are reunited. Earth is robbed of its Saviour, but in His stead He has left behind,—so at least are we told at Oberammergau—peace and good-will among men, wherever His precepts are known, wherever His deeds are told, wherever His followers worship in His name. Glory, therefore, to the Jew, whose

The Resur-
rection.

Oberammergau Passion Play

hand, as teaches the Christian doctrine, performed, by Divine decree, the deed that has made it possible for man to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, that has made it possible for man to be saved from eternal doom to eternal bliss, through the blood and death of Him who died on the cross of Calvary.—But this is not taught at Oberammergau.

And there are other things that are not taught at Oberammergau, nor in the gospel stories whence the Passion Play derives its text and theme. There is as little truth in the scene of Christ before Pilate, as there is truth in the trial scene of Jesus before the Sanhedrin, of which we have told in our last discourse, and there is as little truth in the fiendish hatred with which the Jews persecute their victim to the last, to the death, and even after it, as there is in the love which Pilate and the other Romans display toward him who, according to Roman Law, had rendered himself guilty of a traitor's death upon the cross, because of his treasonable public entry as king in the capital of the province under Roman rule, and at that time in a state of sedition.

We have had of fancy and falsehood enough, let reason now have its way, and history its say. Of all the Roman procurators whose presence cursed the Jewish nation before and during and after the time of Christ,

No truth in trial scene before Pilate.

The Pilate of history cruel.

there was none whose cruelty was greater than that of Pilate. So cruel was he that even cruel Rome felt itself obliged to recall him from his Judean procuratorship, after fourteen years of tyranny and bloodshed. He outraged even the few rights that were left to the tributary people. He insulted their religion. He robbed the Temple of its treasure, and mercilessly slaughtered the people for objecting. Even the New Testament itself tells, in an unwary moment, of how the sword of Pilate had mingled the blood of the pilgrims with the blood of their sacrifices. Philo, the trustworthy contemporaneous writer, brands his administration as full of "continuous executions without even the form of a trial," an administration of "endless and intolerable cruelties." He appointed and deposed High Priests as suited his greed or fancy, and to have them completely in his power, he kept locked within the fortress of Antonia the pontifical robe, without which the High Priest could not officiate, and which he could not secure without special application to the Procurator. Tacitus, the chief of Roman historians, who wrote some fifty years after Christ, tells of Jesus suffering death under Pontius Pilate, without any mention of Jews sharing in the crime. We know that at the beginning of the Christian Church, and for more than a

century after, the Roman had as little love for the Christian as for the Jew, that, in fact he classed and despised and hated and persecuted both as one and the same.

Such was the character of Pilate and the Roman, and such their persecutions of Christian and Jew, as recorded in history. But such is not the portrayal of Pilate and the Roman in the Passion Play, nor in the gospels. There Pilate is well-nigh a saint. There the Roman fairly falls over himself in his eagerness to save from the fiendish hatred of the Jews that very Jesus, who had made himself guilty of the greatest crime in the eyes of Rome, who had made a revolutionary entry into the capital of the one province of all Palestine that was under the direct rule of Rome, and that, owing to its seditious spirit, had been rigorously entrusted to his special vigilance. There, there is absolute ignorance of the fact that one of the early Fathers of the Church, in his hatred of Pilate, writes of his having committed suicide, in remorse for his bloody deed, and of even the elements having refused to accept his body ; and another writes of Pilate having been condemned, by Cæsar, to a cruel death, because of his atrocious crime against Jesus, which stories, though not true, at least indicate that the responsibility for Christ's death was at that time charged to Pilate.

The Pilate of gospels well-nigh a saint.

The character
perverted
because of
policy and of
hatred
of Jew.

As long as Peter, John, and James, these devoted followers of Jesus and equally devoted lovers of their people and country—as long as these lived, and for some time after, there could never have been even the slightest thought that the Jews had any share in the crucifixion of Jesus. Not until missionary zeal felt the necessity of converting the Gentile world, as was pointed out in our last discourse; not until a brilliant future was recognized for the Church within the Roman Empire; not until the policy suggested itself, in the interests of the coveted ends to be attained, to Romanize as much as possible the monotheistic faith of the Jew, and to clear the Roman of the guilt of having crucified, as a traitor against Rome, the very God he was asked to worship; not until the hatred between Christians and Jews had grown intense, because of the latter's refusal to recognize the Messiahship of Jesus, and the former's paganization of the Jewish faith; not until those bitter disputations between the heads of both factions had sprung up, of which some have found their way into the gospel stories, where they are credited to Jesus and the Pharisees; not until a motive had to be found for the Jews having persecuted Christ, and caused his death; not until then, a century or two after the crucifixion, was the story of the real offense of Jesus—that of treason

against Rome in the interest of Jewish freedom—crowded into the background, and a new and Roman-pleasing story brought to the front: the story of the wicked Jews' profanation of even their Temple; Christ's lashing from the Temple the sacrilegious money-changers, and his public branding of the priests and scribes as vipers and hypocrites; the venomous accusations and vengeful plottings of the hierarchy against the Messiah, till with the aid of the treachery of Judas, and despite Pilate's most strenuous effort to save, they succeeded in bringing upon the cross the Son of God, the Saviour of mankind, and upon themselves God's and mankind's everlasting curse.

Thus was invented that cruel story, that has caused more misery, more innocent suffering, than any other work of fiction in the range of the whole world's literature. Thus was perverted, with venom in the heart and poison in the pen, the sad and simple, and at that time, alas, very common story of a Roman execution of a Jewish patriot, seized in the dead of night by a Roman guard, mocked and insulted and scourged till the early morning, condemned to a traitor's death by the Roman Procurator, nailed to the cross, with an inscription over his head of the letters I. N. R. I., the initials of the Roman words IESUS NAZARENUS REX IUDAEORUM,

Crucifixion a Roman cure for Messianic delusion.

“Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews,” as a lesson to Jerusalem, thronged with Pass-over pilgrims, of the Roman mode of curing deluded patriots of the madness of trying to deliver Israel from the power of Rome.

Jesus pos-
sessed by that
delusion to
the end.

That the intensely patriotic Jesus was unfortunately possessed by that delusion we saw clearly enough by his fatal processional entry into the city of Jerusalem as proclaimed King of the Jews. That a spark of it had glimmered to the last, we recognize in his expecting Divine intervention, even though upon the cross, and in his breathing forth as his last words on earth: *אלי אלי למה שבקתני* “My God! my God! Why hast thou forsaken me?”

Proven by his
last words.

That these words, so natural for a doomed, unsuccessful patriot, were his last words, and not those put into his mouth by a later hand, probably a century after his death, and for very obvious reasons—the words, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do!” prayed in behalf of the cruel Jews, needs scarcely any emphasis, considering the fact that the gospel stories neither of Matthew, nor of Mark, nor of John, know anything of them, which words, had they been the last uttered, could never have been forgotten, could never have escaped being recorded, especially when so sublimely magnanimous, seeing how the last words of even

far less significance, and of far less important personages are cherished among the most sacred treasures of memory.

But even if this were not sufficiently convincing, what better proof that these words quoted in the gospel of St. Luke—the gospel written by a Roman, in Rome,—as one of the last utterances of Jesus, what better proof could we want that these words were not spoken in behalf of persecuting Jews, than that the early manuscripts in our possession of even this gospel do not contain them—a fact which the latest Revised Version of the New Testament has been obliged to recognize and to publish as a note along the margin of them. To have eliminated these words altogether, seeing that they have no scriptural warrant at all, would have been an act of heroic truthfulness for which the editors of the Revised Edition had not yet sufficient moral courage. But we have in this another proof of the freedom with which interpolations have been made in the gospel stories, of the liberties that have been taken to add to Scriptures, or take from, as best suited policy or doctrine, or as best served to instil and to incite hatred against the Jew.

I shall not touch upon the miracles recorded as having accompanied or followed the death of Jesus. Much as might be said on that subject, it has no direct bearing on the pur-

The words cited in Luke an interpolation, and a thrust at Jews.

Gospel-miracles additional proof against veracity of much of gospel teaching.

pose for which this series of discourses on the Passion Play has been given. My only purpose has been the defense of the Jew against the infamous charges that are enacted against him at Oberammergau, and taught against him in the gospel stories. Indirectly, these miracles, that are proven scientifically impossible, historically unfounded, philosophically irrational, scripturally not only contradictory, but also, when not obvious invention, manifestly the hallucinations of emotional men and hysterical women, indirectly these miracles, that are but faithful copies of the kind credited to the saints and martyrs of the second century, the century during which the gospels grew, and during which the blending of Jewish credulity and Pagan superstition rendered the mind especially susceptible to belief in the supernatural, indirectly, I repeat, these miracles throw considerable side-light on the general reliability of the gospel stories, in which the Jew is so heinously villified.

More likely that miracles are untrue than that science is false.

The story, whether of the New Testament or of the Old Testament, or any other Testament, that needs a miracle to confirm it remains a story unconfirmed. When the science of to-day says that a suspension of the eternal laws of nature is impossible, and a self-interested literature of an unscientific and credulous age tells of laws of nature having been suspended, I will range myself

on the side of science, and take the consequences of my unbelief. When visions of a few hysterical men and women are cited in proof of happenings that are contrary to experience or at variance with immutable laws of nature, the most considerate statement that I can make is that it is more likely that the visions were untrue than that these teachings of science are false. When we are told of the dead arising from their graves, walking about, and talking in the flesh and blood; when we are told of the earth quaking, the sun eclipsed, the Temple-veil rended, as signs of God's wrath at the slaughter of His Son, yet the doctrine teaching that for this very slaughter had the Son been sent on earth by the Father; when we are told of an angel descending to open Christ's tomb, and of the latter's ascending into "*Heaven*," wherever that may be, to take His place at God's "*right hand*," whatever that may be; when of these wondrous miracles we read in the gospels, and search in vain for even but a trace of them in the contemporaneous Pagan and Jewish literature, although these marvelous events are said to have taken place in the light of day, in the sight of all; when we are referred for proofs of these miracles to a few interested men and women, and find doubts and contradictions even among these,—then the most charitable conclusion we can arrive

at is, that the death of the Master, and the idealization of his noble life and deeds, so affected the emotions and imaginations of some of his mourning and brooding friends, that they fancied seeing and hearing what eye never saw, what ear never heard.

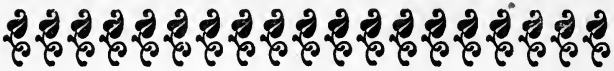
Eradication
of gospel-
falsehoods
demanded.

We have reached the end of the Passion Play. We have analyzed text and theme, plot and scheme, and we have found precious truths and infamous falsehoods,—blessed truths, the gift of the Jew, and falsehoods, the contribution of the anti-Jew, partly due to imagination and hallucination, partly to irrational dogma, partly to malice, mostly to policy and selfishness,—the accursed parents of most of the crime and misery on earth. We have dissected with the most approved instruments of history, logic, science, and we have found in the gospel stories much that is sound but more that is diseased, that is congested with a poison which has not only cursed the life of the Jew, eighteen hundred years long, but now also threatens the very life of the Christian. In the light of such pronouncement of such authorities as history, logic, science, it will not do, since the rack and stake and gallows can no longer be resorted to as in the good old days, to fling their decision aside with a contemptuous sneer, or with some such remark: "it is all bosh." There is a vast difference between

saying a decision is wrong and proving it wrong. When Lord Mountjoy of Cambridge asked Erasmus to prove Luther wrong, Erasmus replied: "My Lord, nothing is easier than to say Luther is wrong, and nothing more difficult than to prove him so." This life- and love-vitiating poison festers on the very surface of the gospel stories. The future of Christianity demands its eradication; justice to the Jew compels it.

There is a cure, and of this cure I shall speak to you a week from to-day. Next Sunday is the Passover, and the Easter Sunday, the Sunday dedicated in the Christian Church with gladsome hymns and beauteous flowers to the glorification of a Jewish teacher and preacher, patriot and martyr, who toiled and suffered and died for the emancipation of man from the bondage of political, mental, moral, and spiritual slavery. It will be a fitting time for a summary of the wrongs done to the Jew, and for an appeal for his vindication to that Church that has causelessly and mercilessly wronged him. On that day of glorification of the Jew of Nazareth by four hundred millions of Christians, it will be a fitting time for the Jew to ask the follower of Christ to be a Christian, Christian enough to be just, just enough to do justice to the Jew.

Christianity
must be Christian
enough to
do justice
to Jew.



VI

The Summary

“There is hope for thy future, saith the Lord.”—*Jeremiah xxxi, 17.*

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake : for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake.”—*St. Matthew v, 10, 11.*

Easter
formerly
a season of
Jewish
martyrdom.

ON my desk at home lies a Hebrew calendar. Its pages, chronicling the events of the month in which occur the Passover and the Easter, are written in letters of fire and in letters of blood, are encircled with the rainbow hues of golden promise, and bordered with the deep lines of black death. It is the month in which Israel walked by the light of the pillar of fire, and under the shadow of the pillar of cloud. It is the month that brought him freedom from Egyptian tyranny, and that made him writhe under a brutality worse than the one from which released. It is the month that gave him hope, and that whelmed him with despair; that gave him life, and that brought him death. In his synagogue, the Jew sang songs of freedom; in his ghetto, he wailed

the wail of bondage. In his synagogue, his heart swelled with pride at being a Jew; in the ghetto, he suffered humiliation, pillage, and massacre, for being a son of Israel. In the church, Christians sang exultant Easter hymns to the glory of the resurrected Jew of Nazareth; and in the wretched quarters in which they entombed the Jew, their cruelty called forth the lamentations of the brethren of him they glorified for having brought peace on earth and good will among men.

It is the month of the greatest martyrdoms in Israel. Turn the pages of Jewish history, and read, if you have the heart, the martyrology crowded annually, for centuries, between the days of Good Friday and Easter Monday, days which the Jew might well name *Black Friday* and *Easter Moanday*,—here a hundred tortured, there twice and thrice that number burnt and massacred; here a thousand driven out, there twice and thrice that number mobbed and pillaged; here a whole settlement wiped out, there helpless little ones torn from their parents and dragged to the baptismal font. Verily, the Christian's Easter worship of the Resurrected Prince of Peace has, throughout the Dark and Middle Ages, meant, for the Jew, riot and ruin, pillage and plunder, outrage and atrocity, torture and death.

This is Easter Sunday, and in the churches

Such martyrdom unknown in our country.

there is glorification of the Jew of Nazareth to-day as there was then; but there is no fear to-day in the Jewish quarter, as there was then, of insult or assault; there is no placing of special guards at ghetto gates; there is no barricading of doors and windows; there is no burying of special valuables in fear of plunder; there is no concealing of women behind mounds and tombstones of cemeteries; there is no hiding of helpless little ones and of helpless aged; our men are not assembled for an all-day service of fasting and mourning in the synagogue, attired in their funeral-shrouds, tremblingly awaiting the Christian's rushing from his church—tremblingly awaiting his merciless onslaught with club and pike and torch. There is no longer a compulsory Jewish quarter at all. Torn down are the ghetto walls. Destroyed are the external dividing lines between the Christian and the Jew. Yea, thanks to the spirit of the Reformation, to the work of the printing press, to the popularization of knowledge, to the teaching of science, thanks to the layman's throwing off the yoke of priests and monarchs, here, under Columbia's protective wing, we fear no Easter onslaught on Jews, have had no fear of it in the past, and shall have no fear of it in the future.

And this escape of ours from former-day Easter martyrdoms is also that of many

Oberammergau Passion Play

brethren of ours in other liberal and enlightened lands. But, for very many of our brethren in benighted and priest-ridden lands, this week still witnesses the Easter of the Dark and Middle Ages. This very day in Roumania or Russia, in Bohemia or Hungary, all the passions of fanatic hatred and of bigoted greed may be at work in riots and massacres in Jewish quarters. To-morrow morning we may read, if the reports succeed in passing the censor, cable dispatches of pillages and outrages, perpetrated by hands scarcely dry from the holy water with which they crossed themselves in church, because of vivid and passion-exciting Easter-preaching of the Jews' crucifixion of the Son of God, or because of the other charge, that of Jews slaughtering Christians to use their blood for the Passover bread.

Some still being suffered in European lands because of two cruel charges

Thank God, that we are delivered from this latter vicious accusation. Would that we had reason to thank God for our deliverance also from that other charge, that of Jews having crucified the Son of God! It is true, we suffer not from Easter riots, yet we suffer to-day, every day, all the year round, an injustice, an anguish, which, considering the humaner times in which we live, is quite as hard to bear as were the maltreatments to which our fathers were subjected during the Dark Ages. They at least had the solace

One of these charges made also in our country.

that the wrongs they suffered were the product of cruel and superstitious times, the perpetrations of ignorant, brutal, fanatical, priest-ridden people, who fled from contact with the Jew as if he were the fiend incarnate, who separated him from themselves by cruel laws, and who, in their complete ignorance of him, believed of him whatever malice, superstition, and bigotry, invented or fancied.

A cause of
much painful
injustice.

We, however, live in a different age, under a different spirit, and amidst a different humanity—an age that is enlightened, a spirit that is broad, a humanity that is tolerant. In the eyes of the Law, Jew and Christian are alike, and in worldly relationship we mingle freely with one another. And yet; even here, there are barriers between us; even here prejudices and hatreds separate us wide. We are known, and yet not understood; we come in contact, and yet are distant. We are branded, distrusted, ostracized,—and all because of that teaching against the Jew, that is implanted in the hearts of impressionable children in Sunday-schools (and, here in Philadelphia, contrary to the Constitution of the United States, also in the Public Schools), and, taking root there, grows and deepens and ripens an abundant harvest of prejudice, hatred, and dislike, and all because of that preaching that is uppermost in Christian pulpits this day, that in benighted lands is the

cause of cruel outrages, and in enlightened countries the cause of painful injustice. In thousands of churches and before crowded congregations, there is preached to-day, with fervent eloquence and with emotion-stirring and passion-arousing accessories, the story of the blood-thirsty Jews having cruelly persecuted, foully betrayed, unjustly condemned, brutally scourged, and inhumanly crucified, the heaven-descended Saviour of Mankind, the only-begotten incarnate Son of God.

Even if this story had been true, even if such a crime had been committed by Jews, nineteen hundred years ago, it would be very unlike the spirit of Christ to keep on preaching and enacting it, and thereby engendering prejudices and hatreds, and inciting assaults and outrages, against Jews of the present day, for a crime their ancestors are charged with having committed nearly two millenniums ago.

What if the case were reversed, what if the Jews were the overwhelming majority, and the Christians the small minority, and the Jews were constantly to preach and teach and enact stories of Christian crime,—the story of John Huss, the noble Christian, imprisoned, tortured, burnt at the stake, by most execrable of Christian ecclesiastics; the story of Savonarola, the Christian prophet, condemned without a hearing, tortured, strangled, burned for exposing the

To instil
hatred even
with true
charge
is wrong.

What if Jew
were to pursue
such course
against
Christian?

tyrannies and immoralities of the heads of the Christian Church ; the story of the aged Galileo imprisoned, for years, for teaching that the earth revolves around the sun, and, when broken in spirit, forced to recant to escape the tortures of the Inquisition ; the story of Michael Servetus, the distinguished physician and theologian, burnt at the stake by John Calvin, for disbelieving in the Trinity ; the stories of the massacres of the Saxons, Waldensians, and Albigenses, of the atrocities against Mohammedans and Jews during the Crusades, that cost the lives of five millions of human beings ; the story of the Inquisition, which, during the five hundred years of its accursed existence, gorged itself on the heart's blood of hundreds of thousands of Christians as well as Jews ; the story of the St. Bartholomew-night massacre, that cost the lives of fifty thousand human beings, and in honor of which Pope Gregory XIII went in solemn state to church to render thanksgiving, and had a coin struck, and proclaimed that year a Year of Jubilee ; the story of the imprisoning and scourging and torturing and drowning and hanging of innocent women as witches, and of harmless Quakers as devils, — what if the reverse were true ? What if the Christians were in the great minority, and the Jews, in overwhelming majority, were constantly to preach and teach and enact

Oberammergau Passion Play

these authenticated historical occurrences, and thereby engender hatred and prejudice against the helpless Christians and incite riots and outrages against them? Would the persecuted Christian, suffering for crimes committed by his ancestors, for which he is in no way responsible, regard it right? Would he think that course acceptable to God? Would he believe it promotive of peace on earth and of good will among men? I will leave this question for the Christian to answer.

It being un-Christian to preach and teach and enact even a true story, if by it passions are aroused and prejudices engendered, what shall we say when this is done, day after day, year after year, century after century, in church and in school, in the press and on the stage, with a story that is false, all false, and that leads to results most baneful to the Jew, and most injurious to the promotion of peace and good will?

It is a serious statement I make, when I say that the story of the Jews having persecuted, betrayed, condemned, and crucified Jesus, though told in the gospels, though supported by the beliefs of four hundred millions of Christians, though rooted by eighteen centuries of credence, though preached to-day in thousands of churches, is nevertheless historically untrue, is the inven-

How much more wrong to instil hatred with a charge that is false.

Charge of the Jews having crucified Christ false.

tion, partly of an excited imagination, partly of policy, and partly of malice.

The Jew's
story of Jesus
summarized.

I have built that statement on textual criticism and on historical fact. I have studied sources. I have searched motives. I have weighed arguments. I have balanced authorities. But to no other conclusion have I been able to arrive than that Jesus, the gentle preacher and healer of Nazareth, the enthusiastic lover of his country and people, felt himself called, as did many another unfortunate enthusiast, before him and after, to deliver the Holy Land from the hand of the cruel Roman, who at that time held Palestine as his tributary province. His enthusiasm was not only heartily seconded by a number of faithful disciples and a host of followers, over whom he exercised a powerful spiritual influence, but also begot in them the thought that their inspired Master was in truth their long-expected Messiah, the Deliverer of the people, the Saviour of the nation. Their delusion deluded him. He threw himself into the current of his people's delirious hope, and, like many another enthusiast and revolutionist, was swept by his ardor into destruction. They acclaimed him in public procession, in the capital of the tributary nation, "King of the Jews!" and he accepted their acclamation. It might have been a harmless delusion, had not Rome,

at that time of constant seditions among the people, been especially vigilant against would-be deliverers of the tributary province, and especially severe against agitators, prophets, and Messiahs. That acclamation was heard by the garrison in the fortress of Antonia, close to the Temple. It meant the doom of the acclaimed. He was seized in the dead of the night, and made to pay the penalty of his love for his country and people by a traitor's death upon the cross, at the hand of the cruel Roman.

This is the summary of one of the saddest lives of history, of one of the noblest sons of Israel, which I have told at greater length in the preceding discourses of this series. Thus stripped of mythical accretions and ecclesiastical falsifications, it is the Jew's story of the life and deeds of Jesus, the Rabbi and patriot of Nazareth.

I submit my argument to the world's Highest Court, the Supreme Judgment-seat of Reason.

I ask for disproof of this sad and simple story ; or for historic and scientific proof of the miracles told, of the myths narrated, of the contradictions disclosed in connection with the gospel-stories of the Virgin-born, miracle-working, vicariously-crucified, death-resurrected, heaven-ascended, only-begotten Son of God.

I ask for disproof of Jew's story of Jesus, or for proof of Christian's story of Christ.

I ask for disproof of Jesus having been a Jew, and a lover, and the beloved, of Jews ; or for proof of his having been a God, and a hater, and the hated, of Jews.

I ask for disproof of Jesus having suffered condemnation and death at the hand of the Roman ; or for proof of his having been the innocent victim of the vengeful persecutions of the Jews.

I ask for disproof of Jesus having died a traitor's death at the hands of the Roman because of his political offense against Rome ; or for proof of his having died a heretic's death, at the hands of the Jews, because of his religious offense against Israel.

I ask for disproof of any religious offense having constituted a capital crime, according to Jewish Law, excepting cursing God with the use of the ineffable name of *Jehovah* ; or for proof of Jesus having been condemned, in legal proceedings, for the crime of having cursed *Jehovah*.

I ask for disproof of the Jews having had no motive adequate to the bitterness of their persecution of Jesus, as portrayed in the gospels and as enacted in the Oberammergau Passion Play ; or for proof of the guilt charged against Jesus, constituting capital offense, according to the Law of Israel.

I ask for disproof of the impossibility, according to Jewish Law, of such a trial as

that of Jesus before the Sanhedrin ; or for proof that such a scene as that of Jesus before Pilate could have taken place in the light of history's record of that Procurator's cruelties in Judea.

I ask for disproof of Jesus never having preached a doctrine, performed a deed, advocated a reform, that was not strictly Jewish, of his never having had a thought of separating himself from his people and of founding a pagan-blended anti-Jewish creed ; or for proof of Jesus having ever declared himself an immaculately conceived, Virgin-born, David-descended, Son of God, and one of the Trinity of the threefold God.

I ask for disproof of the impossibility of such marvelous miracles as earthquake, eclipse, Temple-Veil rending, grave-resurrection, heaven-ascension of the dead, occurring at the moment of Christ's death, without the slightest trace of them to be found in contemporaneous Pagan and Jewish literature ; or for proof of such unprecedented and unequalled miracles as Christ's resurrection, his conference, after his death, with his disciples, and his ascension to heaven, taking place in the presence of witnesses, and yet of the four different gospel records of these greatest of all miracles, that have come down to us, no two of them agreeing, as may be seen from the following chart :

A Rabbi's Impressions of the

	<i>Number of Women to whom Jesus appeared after death.</i>	<i>Number of Angels seen in or at Sepulchre by Women.</i>	<i>Message sent to Disciples.</i>	<i>Later Happenings.</i>
According to the Gospel of <i>St. Matthew</i> . Chap. xxviii.	Two.	One.	Ordered to proceed at once to Galilee.	No mention of Ascension.
According to the Gospel of <i>St. Mark</i> . Chap. xvi.	Three.	One.	Ordered to proceed at once to Galilee.	Jesus received up into Heaven in Galilee.
According to the Gospel of <i>St. Luke</i> . Chap. xxiv.	None.	Two.	Ordered to remain in Jerusalem.	Jesus received up into Heaven in Judea.
According to the Gospel of <i>St. John</i> . Chaps. xx, xxi.	One.	Two.	No message at all.	No mention of Ascension.

I ask for disproof of the many other contradictions between the gospels, and the many other teachings at variance with facts of history, and with the eternal and immutable laws of nature; or for proof that the gospel stories existed, even as late as a century after the death of Jesus, in the form in which they have come down to us.

In the name of Truth, in the name of Justice, in the name of History and Science, in the name of our past and present sufferings, in the name of our descendants doomed

Oberammergau Passion Play

to insult and outrage, in the name of peace on earth and good will among men, I ask for disproof of the arguments advanced, or for the expurgation from the New Testament of so much of the story of Jesus as can not stand the test of reason, as cannot bear the analysis of historical inquiry and of scientific research.

I ask for disproof of Jewish argument advanced, or for Christian's expurgation from gospel of false charge against Jew.

Such an expurgation will not only be a much-belated *atonement* for the heinous wrongs done to the Jew, eighteen centuries long, but will also prove a most timely *salvation* for the Christian. The hand of Nemesis is at work. Myths and dogmas and fabrications of the credulous, hysterical, fanatical first and second centuries cannot be swallowed by the emancipated and rationalized twentieth century. The Church is permeated with unbelief. The pulpit is harassed by doubt; it revolts against preaching what it knows to be contrary to history and reason; it knows that mankind is not yet saved, despite the story of a Saviour having come; that mankind is sinful still, despite the story of a suffering Messiah having vicariously taken upon himself the transgressions of man; that there is not yet peace on earth nor good will among men, despite the story of a Son of God having paid for them with his life.

Such expurgation will be atonement and salvation of Christian.

With the unhistorical of the New Testa-

Will leave
world-
conquering
humanity
of Jesus
intact.

ment expurgated, nothing will be lost, but everything essential for godliness and humanity will be gained. It is the humanity of Jesus that has appealed to mankind, not his divinity. It is the religion of Jesus, the Jew, not the theology of Christ, the God, that has conquered the world. It is the Nazarene preacher of love of God and of love of man, not the Nicean teacher of incomprehensible dogmas, that rules civilization to-day. It is Jesus, the man, who descended to the lowly of the earth, to the sorrow-laden, to the sinful and fallen, that has conquered the hearts of men; not Christ, the God, who ascended in the sight of man, to take his seat at God's "*right hand*," whatever that may be, in a "*Heaven*," somewhere in interstellar space.

Will leave
biography of
inspired
teacher to
Jew and
Gentile.

With the unhistorical of the New Testament expurgated, there would remain an inspiring biography of a leader and teacher of whom both Jew and Christian might well be proud—the Jew for having reared him, the Christian for having given him to the world; the present deep-cloven enmity between brother and brother would gradually cease, and he, who is the product of both, and belongs to both, would become the means of uniting both into a religious and social fellowship, in which hatred and prejudice and ostracism would or could never again have place.

Oberammergau Passion Play

With the unhistorical of the New Testament expurgated, men will find it easier than they have hitherto, to shape their lives according to the example set, and precepts taught, by Jesus. There will no longer be the excuse that it is impossible for man to live the life of a God. It will then be seen that the noble life lived by one man may be lived by all men, if all will but try as Jesus tried, if all will but set moral duty and spiritual excellence as high as they were set by the teacher and preacher of Nazareth.

Will encourage man to imitate human Jesus.

As to the claim that, if Jesus be not a God, men will not be able to live up to the divine standard set by him, let this be said: Christianity has not as yet commenced to live up even to the purely *human* of the teachings of Jesus. It teaches doing to others as it would be done by, and yet treats others as it would not like to be treated. It speaks of the duty of loving the enemy, and does not even love the friend. It speaks of the duty of being of the persecuted rather than of the persecuting, and yet persecutes even them who do not persecute. It speaks of the duty of resisting no evil, and yet inflicts evil where there is not only no offense but even no resistance. It speaks of doing good to evil-doers, and yet does evil even to its benefactors, the Jews.

They who have lived noble lives will con-

Highest
moral excel-
lence attained
without a
Divinity of
Christ.

tinue living nobly, even though the unhistorical be expurgated from the gospel stories. Once upon a time there lived a young woman whose life was sweet and useful. She attributed the cause of the beautiful life she lived to a locket, a family heir-loom, that she wore next to her heart, which was believed, according to a family tradition, to contain something concealed within, that imparted to the wearer the power of right-living and right-thinking. Upon the locket being opened one day, it was found empty. She was disappointed, but only for awhile. She continued to live her sweet and useful life, as those had lived who had worn it before. It was they who had given to the locket a charm, not the locket a charm to them. Thus will it be when the gospel stories will reveal themselves empty of a Divine Christ. Many will be disappointed. But they who have lived good lives will continue to live nobly, proving that it was their excellence that imparted a divinity to Christ, not the divinity of Christ an excellence to them. And many will lead even better lives than they have lived hitherto, no longer relying on the vicariously-shed blood of Christ to wash away their sins. Our Emerson was no believer in the divinity of Jesus, and yet he lived a noble life, so noble that Father Taylor, the Boston missionary, said of him, "Mr. Emerson may

Oberammergau Passion Play

think this or that, but he is more like Jesus Christ than any one I have ever known. I have seen him when his religion was tested, and it bore the test."

My argument in behalf of the Jew and my plea to the Christian are at an end. I have spoken plainly, at times possibly harshly, but there was no malice in my heart. There could have been no conscious bitterness, for there has probably never been a Christian who has studied the life of the preacher and teacher of Nazareth with greater reverence than I have, or who values his real teachings more highly than I do. I do not promise myself speedy results, if any results at all. Even though this is Resurrection Day, Jesus has not yet risen. He is still buried under the mythology and ecclesiasticism of a primitive, credulous, and fanatical age. Even though on Friday last it was the theme, throughout Christendom, that Jesus *died* for man, it is my conviction that Jesus has not, as yet, begun to *live* for man. If Christians really believed the life of Jesus they would live it, and living it, the Jews would not be obliged to tell a story of martyrdom continuing even unto this day.

But the day of the Resurrection of Jesus from Divinity to Humanity, from a Pagan Christ to a Jewish Patriot, is drawing near. It has already dawned for the advance guard

Jesus
has not
yet *risen*,
nor has even
commenced
to *live*.

The Day of
Resurrection,
however,
dawning.

of the Christian Church, and gradually the light of the dawn is spreading deeper and wider.

It was a rainy day on which I witnessed the Oberammergau Passion Play. Down poured the rain upon the open stage, and upon the performers, all forenoon, and during the greater part of the afternoon. At the moment of the crucifixion, however, when, according to the gospels, the sun should have withdrawn its light, when there should have been an eclipse, the sun burst forth in all its afternoon glory, shedding a golden radiance over the thousands of spectators, and over the country around.

Jew will be
revealed as
Suffering
Messiah,
as *Saviour*
of *Man*.

To me that seeming protest of nature against the defamation of the Jews on the stage of Oberammergau, was a prophecy, a prophecy that the storm that has raged over the Jew eighteen centuries long, and that has deluged him with torrents of expatriation, expulsion, massacre, torture, degradation, prejudice, ostracism, will cease, that the sun of justice will burst forth at last, and, in the radiance of light, and in the beauty of truth, reveal the Jew to the world as having, eighteen centuries long, walked *the way of the cross*, as having been the real *Suffering Messiah*, as having been the real *Saviour of Man*.

Supplemental Chapters



What of the Old Testament Prophecies of Christ? ❧ ❧

“Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come and let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a Prophet was beforetime called a seer.”—*1 Samuel IX, 9.*

“And Moses said unto him, Art thou zealous for my sake? Would to God that all the Lord’s people were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them!”—*Numbers XI, 29.*

“Before me there was no God formed, and after me there will be none. I, I am the Lord, and beside me there is no saviour.”—*Isaiah XLIII, 10-11.*

“I am Jehovah. . . I will not give my glory to any other nor my praise to graven images.”—*Isaiah XLII, 8.*

“Search the Scriptures.”—*St. John v, 39.*

“Where are the signs fulfilled whereby all men

Should know the Christ? Where is the wide-winged peace?

Shielding the Lamb within the Lion’s den?

The freedom broadening with the wars that cease?

Do foes clasp hands in brotherhood again?”

—EMMA LAZARUS, *An Epistle*, xxv.

IT scarcely needed the word *peace* under the beautiful medallion over the entrance of this House of Worship. The master-hand of Ezekiel, the sculptor, has written it on every figure there portrayed, and the master-mind of Isaiah, the prophet, has stamped it upon every lineament of that peaceful group of lion and lamb lying side by side, and of little child toying unharmed with the asp. Upon mature reflection, how-

An emblem
of peace
made a cause
of war.

ever, we perceive that there was a good reason for hewing the word *peace*, in bold and legible letters, under this emblem of the white-winged daughter of God. The letters, aided by the sculptor, may possibly prevent a further misapprehension of the prophet's words. For, though meant to convey lessons of peace, they have hitherto been the cause of little else than discord; though uttered to imbue the hearts of men with love for their fellow men, they have filled them instead with cruel hatred; though set up as a goal of man's striving after universal peace, man increased the distance between it and himself by making this picture of the prophet the cause of one of the bitterest strifes that has ever separated two peoples. One people saw in this picture the foreshadowing of a Messianic Age that some day is to dawn; the other people saw therein a prophecy of the very labors wrought, and the very blessings inaugurated, by the Messiah who had come.

Messianic prophecies differently interpreted by Christian and Jew.

It needs not my telling which of these two peoples believed that the Messiah had come, and which believed that the Messianic Age had not yet dawned; which believed that universal peace, as pictured in the eleventh chapter of Isaiah, came with the Messiah, and which believed that it is still far distant,

and is still to be striven for ; which of the two persecuted, and which suffered persecution because of its inability to believe in a Saviour who had not saved, in a Redeemer who had not redeemed, in a Messenger of Peace and Good Will, who had innocently become the cause of more suffering than it had ever experienced prior to his coming.

It is true the Jews rejected the Messiahship claimed for the Nazarene Rabbi, but not for the reason generally assigned by Christians. It was not blindness that prevented their seeing the "Light of the World," it was their clear-sightedness that rendered it impossible for them to regard the Galilean teacher in any other light than that of a pious Rabbi, than that of a noble patriot and martyr.

It was not a lack of faith that made them spurn the "Son of God," it was their abundant faith in their monotheism that forbade them to believe in, and to pay reverence to, any other but the God Jehovah. It was not ignorance that prevented their seeing in the life and deeds of Jesus the fulfilment of the prophets' predictions, it was their scholarly acquaintance with the Scriptures, their intimate knowledge of the genius of their language, of the idiom and style and poetic flights and figurative rhapsodies of their bards and prophets, that made them interpret Old Testament passages differently from the New

Testament writers of the early centuries of our present era. The latter's knowledge of the Hebrew Scriptures was either derived from faulty Greek translations or from Gentile missionaries, who had a very imperfect or a very perverted knowledge of the Hebrew tongue and of Jewish history and institutions.

Let the
Scriptures
decide.

This defense of the Jew is liable to a serious charge. It casts a doubt upon the scholarship of the founders of Christianity. We find ourselves in a peculiar dilemma. A defense of the Christian involves an attack on the Jew. A defense of the Jew involves an attack on the Christian. Our love for our cause makes us eager to see our name cleared of a false accusation. Our love of justice makes it a sacred duty not to say or do aught that might reflect discredit on the name and faith of the Christian.

There is but one way out of the difficulty, and that is to let the Scriptures speak for themselves, to analyze the so-called Old Testament Messianic predictions of Christ, to investigate the history of the times, the state of society, and the modes of thought, during the periods in which their authors wrote or spoke, and then, in the light of the result of these researches, examine the Messiahship claimed for Jesus.

Since there is quite a number of such so-

called Messianic predictions in the Old Testament, and since our time is limited, we can devote ourselves to an analysis of but a few. We shall therefore take up, first of all, the generally claimed richest source of Christology—the prophet Isaiah. We shall investigate a few of his strongest Messianic predictions to see whether he speaks of things that had happened or were happening, or were about to happen in his own time, or whether he predicts a state of affairs to be fulfilled, about eight hundred years later, in the days of Jesus' sojourn on earth.

We turn to the *King James Version* of the Book of Isaiah, and from among the chapters indicated by their headings as foretelling the coming of Christ we select the following :

I.—ISAIAH 7 : 14–16. . . . 14. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. 15. Butter and honey shall he eat, that he may know to refuse the evil, and choose the good. 16. For before the child shall know to refuse the evil, and choose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings.

II.—ISAIAH 9 : 6, 7. 6. For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given : and the government shall be upon his shoulder : and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. 7. Of the increase of *his* government and peace *there shall be* no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.

III.—ISAIAH 11 : 1–9. 1. And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots. 2. And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD. 3. And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD : and he shall

not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. 4. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth : and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. 6. The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid ; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together ; and a little child shall lead them. 7. And the cow and the bear shall feed ; their young ones shall lie down together : and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. 8. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cocatrice's den. 9. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain : for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.

IV.—ISAIAH 42 : 1-7. 1. Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, *in whom* my soul delighteth ; I have put my Spirit upon him : he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. 2. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street. 3. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench : he shall bring forth judgment unto truth. 4. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the earth : and the isles shall wait for his law. 5. Thus saith God the LORD, he that created the heavens and stretched them out ; he that spread forth the earth, and that which cometh out of it ; he that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk therein. 6. I the LORD have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. 7. To open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, *and* them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.

V.—ISAIAH 53 : 1-12. 1. Who hath believed our report ? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed ? 2. For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground ; he hath no form nor comeliness ; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. 3. He is despised and rejected of men ; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief ; and we hid as it were *our* faces from him ; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. 4. Surely he has borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows ; yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. 5. But he *was* wounded for our transgressions, *he was* bruised for our iniquities : the chastisement of our peace *was* upon him ; and with his stripes we are healed. 6. All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 7. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth : he is brought as a lamb to

Prophecies of Christ?

the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 8. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. 9. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. 10. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put *him* to grief; when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see *his* seed, and he shall prolong *his* days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. 11. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. 12. Therefore will I divide him a *portion* with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death; and was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.

You are puzzled at the striking applicableness of these texts to the life of Jesus, as portrayed in the gospels. You wonder whether they are not really prophecies, which found their fulfilment, several hundred years later, in the Nazarene preacher. You wonder also how, in the face of such remarkable utterances, the Jews, as a body, could refuse, and can still refuse, to accept him for their Messiah to whom the foretold signs and characteristics apply so faithfully.

There is good reason for such surprise and for such thoughts. The Messiah of the Evangelists certainly answers in many respects the language of Isaiah. But enter with me into an inquiry as to when the cited texts were written, and by whom, and with what end in view, into an investigation as to the kind of Messiah the Jews expected, and

Remarkable
resemblance
between
Isaiah
and gospels.

Resemblance
invites ex-
amination.

as to what they understood under the terms *prophet* and *prophecy*, and the words of Isaiah will lose much of their mystery, and you will see the reason for the Jews' rejection of Jesus as their Messiah.

True
meaning
of word
Prophet
given.

At the very outset, we must bear in mind that at the time of Isaiah the terms *prophet* and *prophecy* and *prophesying* had a different meaning from what they have since acquired. Etymologically, the verb in Hebrew simply means *to bubble, to pour forth, to utter fluent speech*, and, hence, the noun designates the *speaker, the preacher, the pleader, the interpreter, the counselor, the admonisher, the poet, the rhapsodist*. The English meaning of these terms kept tolerably close to their Biblical use, for we have it on the authority of Dean Stanley, that, as far down as the seventeenth century, they were used in the sense of *preaching* or *speaking*. From that time on they acquired the Greek meaning, that of "foreseeing or foretelling future events." In Biblical times, however, that meaning was foreign. Aaron, Miriam, Deborah, were named respectively prophet and prophetesses because of their power of speech and song. Moses, Elijah, Elisha, were named prophets, yet foretelling of events to happen hundreds of years after their death is not mentioned among their accomplishments. The ancient Chaldean paraphrases (Targu-

Prophecies of Christ?

mim) of the Old Testament books, adhere to the original meaning of these terms, as do many of the Jewish mediæval commentators. Moses even cautions his people against following "foretelling" prophets, as the Heathens do, and warns them against believing in them, even if their signs and wonders come to pass.

The functions of the Biblical prophets were plainly those of preachers and scribes, of reformers and exhorters, of statesmen and patriots. They were the counselors of kings when these governed justly, and their bitterest opponents when these tyrannized the people. They were the coadjutors of the priests when these ministered righteously, and their relentless foes when these degraded their calling. When their services were not needed, they generally withdrew from the world, and, in their seclusions, surrendered themselves to profound meditations and ecstatic reveries on thoughts and matters uppermost in their own or in the people's minds. But, when there was work for them to do, they were on hand, and the suddenness of their appearance, the strangeness of their attire, the fervor of their speech, the depth of their emotions, the profundity of their thought, the clearness of their vision, the boldness of their denunciations, the grandeur of their tropes and allegories, awed

Prophet only
deals with
present.

the people, and inclined many to look upon them as beings divinely endowed, and to accept their messages as oracles.

Foretelling
not function
of prophet.

This then is clear, that the "foreseeing and foretelling of future events" was not a characteristic of the Biblical prophets. We have, therefore, no historical and no logical right to torture the words of Isaiah into a prophecy of something to happen hundreds of years after his death, when, by the very limitations of human finiteness, they could not possibly have applied to any other events save such as took place during or prior to his time, or were expected soon to follow as logical consequences of existing states of affairs, or were cherished as sweet dreams, as fond ideals.

To whom
or to what
does Isaiah
refer?

What the events may have been to which he refers is naturally the next question that suggests itself. A proper answer to this question necessitates a proper knowledge of the times in which Isaiah lived. But which Isaiah? "Ay, there's the rub." Even but a superficial study of the book of Isaiah suffices to show that it had no less than two authors, and very likely many more; that about a century and a half stretch between the first thirty-nine chapters, known as the *Assyrian period*, and the last twenty-seven chapters, known as the *Babylonian period*; that chapters of the first part belong to the second part,

Prophecies of Christ?

and vice versa ; that the first part is fragmentary, and the second part largely an anthology of different sacred writings by different men, during and after the Babylonian captivity, and which, according to the custom of those days, were attributed to Isaiah, as other writings of that period were credited to Moses and David and Solomon.

The time of the first Isaiah was about the middle of the eighth century before our present era. Judea was his country, and Jerusalem was his home. His labors covered the reigns of kings Ahaz and Hezekiah; the former, one of the wickedest kings who ever ruled over Judea ; the latter, one of the best. The kingdom of Judah was then beset by dangerous enemies. To the north lay Samaria and Syria, leagued against their southern neighbor. To the north of these stretched all-conquering Assyria. Ahaz, terror-stricken by the advance of the united Samaritan and Syrian forces, is about to invite the Assyrian conqueror to his aid. Isaiah fears the invited Assyrian more than the threatening enemy. The latter may be repelled, but the invited helper will find Judea a goodly land, and Jerusalem a powerful fortification, that will prove very serviceable in his campaign against Egypt, and he will therefore have no scruples about making himself master of it. Isaiah, deeming it his duty to warn his king against

Time of
the first
Isaiah.

the proposed alliance, appears before him, points out the danger, assures him of Judea's ability to cope with the enemy, without any other help except that of God. Ahaz is distrustful. The weaker the king's faith, the stronger becomes the faith of the prophet. He must save his people from their pending doom. He must convince the cowardly king. He must make him see that victory is nigh. Waxing enthusiastic in his exhortation, he points to a young expectant woman present at the audience, probably his own wife, the prophetess, and says, that before the child, soon to be born, and to be named "*Immanuel*" (God with us), "shall know to refuse the evil and chose the good, the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings."

Explanation
of the
"Virgin-
child."

This is the simple explanation of the first of the Messianic prophecies quoted above, and which is claimed to foretell the birth of Jesus to happen some eight hundred years later, and to accomplish this feat the Hebrew word עלמה meaning *young woman* is erroneously translated as *virgin*, and the fact that the child is to be named *Immanuel* is altogether ignored, since Jesus was never known by the name of *Immanuel*.

Returning to King Ahaz, we find him spurning Isaiah's counsel. He makes an alliance with Assyria, brings trouble upon his

Prophecies of Christ?

people, continues in his wickedness. Isaiah is disappointed, but not disheartened. His hope is in the royal son Hezekiah, probably his pupil, then about twelve years of age, and who gives promise of becoming a man of piety and wisdom and goodness and courage, which promise he fully confirmed as king. It is to this heir to the throne that the second of our cited Messianic prophecies plainly points, both historically and grammatically, and not to a child to be born some eight centuries later, as the King James Version of Isaiah declares, and to give its declaration a semblance of truth, permits itself to translate the Hebrew words *אֵל גִּבּוֹר* which mean "hero of God," into *The mighty God*.

Explanation
of the
"Righteous
child."

Continuing with the history of that time, we find the alliance of Ahaz with Assyria working out its destructive course, as Isaiah had feared. Assyria had conquered Syria, had destroyed the kingdom of Israel, had led the ten tribes into captivity, and was now at the gates of Jerusalem to deal similarly with the kingdom of Judah. The people are terror-stricken. Isaiah inspires them with hope and courage. He has faith in the strength of his people. God will be with them for the righteous Hezekiah's sake, their young prince and leader. Victory will be theirs. The prince will mount the throne in his wicked father's stead, and under him the

Explanation
of the
"lion and
lamb
symbol."

royal house of David will blazon forth again in all its pristine glory. The scattered tribes of the kingdom of Israel will reunite with their brethren of the kingdom of Judah. All jealousies will cease. Peace will reign supreme. The lion and the lamb will lie down together. None will hurt and none will destroy, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord.

This is the meaning of the third of our above cited so-called Messianic passages of Isaiah. Much of this came to pass. The Assyrian was defeated at the gates of Jerusalem. Hezekiah mounted the throne, and fulfilled many of the expectancies of the Prophet. The people hailed him as their *Messiah*. He instituted needed reforms, fostered literature, purified and strengthened religion, inaugurated an era of peace and prosperity, such as was perhaps never again witnessed in Judah, such as to induce a Rabbi, many hundred years later, to declare, in the Talmud, that Israel need not look for a Messiah, that he had already come in the time and in the person of King Hezekiah.

Turning to the last two of our cited so-called Messianic passages of Isaiah, we find ourselves in a different age, and within a different literature. We are in the Babylonian period, about a century and a half later than the Assyrian period. In the twenty-seven

Explanation
of the
"faithful
servant."

chapters, which embrace this second division, Chapters XL–LXVI, we trace the story of Judah's overthrow by the Babylonian conqueror; her being led into captivity; her longing to return to her native land; her hoping and praying for a redeemer; his coming at last in the person of the Persian king Cyrus, the conqueror of Babylon; his permitting the Judean captives to return; their hailing him, notwithstanding his Persian belief, as their *Messiah*; their restoration of Jerusalem, and the commencement of their Second Commonwealth. But in and between, we encounter passages and fragments of chapters that are of Palestinian origin,—that refer to times preceding and succeeding the Babylonian captivity, and which, by different styles and teachings, prove themselves compositions of different authors and of different times.

Nevertheless, while the meaning of some of the passages is obscure, that of others is quite clear. Among such we may class the forty-second chapter, which we have cited above as the fourth of the so-called Messianic passages of Isaiah. It occurs in the midst of the joyful expectancy of speedy redemption from Babylonian captivity, and of their glorification of the Persian deliverer. The personage referred to in that chapter strongly points to Cyrus. He brings the Gentile

captor to terms. He favors Israel ; he does not break the bruised reed, he releases the prisoners from their prison, and leads those that sit in darkness forth into the light. Applied to Cyrus, this passage has an historical and natural meaning ; applied to Jesus, six hundred years later, the text has to be tortured into meaning things that never could have been meant. It cannot be truthfully said of the Nazarene preacher that he never caused his voice to be heard in public, that he did not fail, and was not discouraged, before he had established judgment on the earth. The closely following eighth verse positively prohibits such an application of the text, since it makes God declare, that He alone is God, that He will not share His glory with another.

Explanation
of the
Suffering
Martyr.

Turning to the last of our cited so-called Messianic prophecies of Isaiah, we encounter the most famous of them all, the celebrated fifty-third chapter (including the last three verses of the preceding chapter). Here the suffering and the crucifixion of Jesus, it is claimed, are more than foreshadowed, they are literally described. Without considering, for the present, how the likeness between this Old Testament chapter and chapters of the New Testament, written eight or ten centuries later, came about ; without stopping to show how in the interest of the

Prophecies of Christ?

missionary success among Jews, New Testament stories were frequently written with the manifest purpose to harmonize with, or to serve as fulfilments of, the supposed Messianic requirements of the Old Testament, let it suffice, at present, that a comparison between the earlier and later narratives shows, first, considerable of contrast between the two, and, secondly, that since the earlier narrative is not even told or written as a prophecy, the later narrative cannot very well be a fulfilment thereof.

The fifty-third chapter of Isaiah (including the last three verses of the preceding chapter) is no prophecy. *It speaks in the past tense, and narrates a past event.* Its author is unknown. It is evidently a dirge or eulogy or lamentation over some martyr. If the author is of the Babylonian period, it may refer to Jeremiah; if of the Assyrian period, it may refer to some prophet persecuted by King Menasseh, who, upon ascending to the throne, after the death of his father, the good Hezekiah, imitated the wickedness of his grandfather Ahaz. It may have referred to the sufferings of *Israel Personified, the Servant of God.* It may not apply to any of those that have been named, but there cannot be the slightest doubt that it could ever have meant the martyrdom of Jesus, which occurred centuries later. If the

gospel stories of Jesus are true, no eulogy could apply to the attractive, popular, and winning Nazarene martyr, that says that he was not only unattractive but also positively repulsive, that people ran from him as if he were a leper, and hid their faces from him as if afflicted with foul disease.

Other portions of Scriptures examined.

Let us turn to some of the other Old Testament writings, and examine a few of the passages that have been claimed by Christological writers as prophecies of Christ. In the Book of Judges, in connection with the infancy of Samson, the giant, we read: "For, lo, thou shalt . . . bear a son; and no razor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a *Nazarite* unto God from his infancy, and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." Turning to St. Matthew we read, in connection with the infancy of Jesus: "And he (Joseph) came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a *Nazarene*."

Though born at Nazareth, Bethlehem is assigned as birthplace to satisfy prophets.

The birthplace of Jesus was manifestly Nazareth. Neither he nor his disciples denied his Nazarene birth when his Messiahship was opposed on the ground that the Messiah of the Jews was to be born at Bethlehem. St. Luke, however, satisfies the Bethlehem requirement by having him born at that place during a temporary stay of his

parents in the city of David ; while St. Matthew leads us to believe that Bethlehem was the original home of Joseph, and that after the birth of his child he moved to Nazareth " that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets: He shall be called a Nazarene." To fulfill this prophecy, however, he is obliged to apply to Jesus a phrase that is spoken of Samson, the giant, twelve hundred years before, and to misquote it, and to commit the blunder of giving identical meanings to the two totally different words *Nazarene* and *Nazarite*, the one meaning an inhabitant of the city of Nazareth, the other meaning a member of a religious order.

St. Matthew, having thus satisfied, as he believed, the requirements of the Jews, St. Luke, who is a thorough Roman, is now necessitated to satisfy those of the Gentiles. These were in the habit of celebrating, amidst great festivities, the fourth December week, in which the winter-solstice occurred, as the Festival of the Birth of the Sun, of the Dawn of the New Year. Probably recognizing that the Gentiles could not be weaned from it, the Apostle retained it, but with a different significance. He made it stand for the Feast of the Birth of the Son of God, of the Dawn of the New Light. Unfortunately, however, this involved him in a new blunder. December being a winter-month,

Christmas assigned as time of birth to satisfy Gentiles.

and the very height of the rainy season of Judea, the shepherds, to whom the angel brought the message of the birth of the Saviour, could not have been out in the fields all night with their flocks. Nor is it likely that, at such an inclement season of the year, the people would have been summoned to Bethlehem from all parts of Palestine, as St. Luke informs us in the second chapter of his gospel, for the purpose of paying their taxes (not to speak of the historical inaccuracy of this tax-collection in the time of Herod the Great, by order of the Roman Emperor, when Judea did not become a Roman province till after this Herod's death); moreover, it is highly improbable that Joseph would have obliged his wife to accompany him, in her condition, and at such a time, on so long and so difficult a journey as that which lay between Nazareth and Bethlehem. It is not an insignificant fact that the other two gospels contain nothing of these narratives of St. Matthew and St. Luke, and that the former of these two seems ignorant of the tax-collecting story of the latter.

A misuse
of text to
give cause
for flight to
Egypt.

St. Matthew then proceeds to tell us that King Herod, hearing of the birth of Jesus, and fearing to be supplanted by him, resolves to destroy him; an angel, however, advises the Holy Family to flee to Egypt and not to return till after Herod's death, "that it might

be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my son." He, moreover, informs us that Herod, unable to find the Divine child, institutes a massacre of all children of two years old and under, found at Bethlehem and along the sea coast, thereby fulfilling Jeremiah's prophecy: "In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not."

Of all this, however, the other gospels say nothing. And as to the two references to the prophets, they are most flagrant misapplications, as a perusal of the text readily proves. The son to be called out of Egypt, of which Hosea speaks, refers to the children of Israel, the whole sentence reading: "When Israel was a child then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." The weeping for the children, of which Jeremiah speaks, refers to their going into captivity, about six hundred years before the time of Christ. The following verse speaks comfortingly of their returning again to their own land, which did occur, but which comforting assurance as to a return could not apply to the children massacred by Herod, to whom this prophecy is supposed to refer. Besides, Rama was not Bethlehem, one was a city in Benjamin, the

other in Judea; and Rachel was the mother of the Benjamites, and not of the Judeans. Furthermore, if a massacre, such as St. Matthew speaks of, bereaving hundreds of families, had occurred, so cruel an event would surely have been chronicled in Jewish literature alongside the other cruelties of Herod that are mentioned and described in detail. But no mention is made, not even a hint is given us, of such a cruelty in the entire Jewish literature of that period.

Misuse of
text to fulfil
entry into
Jerusalem.

Passing over, for the want of time, a number of other supposed fulfilments of ancient prophecies, we reach the description of our hero's triumphal entry into Jerusalem. We are told that he sent two of his disciples to fetch him an ass and a young colt in order "that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, saying: Tell ye the daughter of Zion, Behold thy king cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." The fulfiller of this supposed prophecy displays both grammatical and historical ignorance. Ignorant of the parallelism of Hebrew poetry—the same thought or figure repeated, in slightly altered language, in the line immediately following—he introduces two asses where but one is meant, and he applies to Jesus a passage descriptive of the noble Hezekiah's entry into Jerusalem, and which gave basis to the belief

Prophecies of Christ?

generally held by the prophets of that time, that the Messianic age had dawned with Hezekiah's ascent to the throne of David, as the following correct rendition of the text clearly indicates :

“ Exult greatly, O Daughter of Zion ;
Shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem :
Lo, thy King cometh to thee :
Righteous and victorious is he ;
Lowly, and riding upon an ass,
Even upon a colt, the foal of an ass.
And I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim,
And the horse from Jerusalem,
And the battle bow will be cut off ;
And he will speak peace to the nations ;
And his rule will be from sea to sea,
And from the river unto the ends of earth.”—*Zech.* ix, 9.

Reaching the story of Judas' betrayal, St. Matthew tells us that the price of his treachery was thirty pieces of silver, that he afterwards repented of his deed, threw the money into the Temple, and hanged himself; that the chief priests bought a potter's field with the money, not thinking it lawful to put such money into the treasury; that all this was in fulfilment of “that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me.” There is much confusion here, and all originating from a mistranslation and misapplication of the original text. In the

Misuse of
text to make
Judas a
betrayed.

first place, St. Matthew has in his mind a passage in Zechariah, which he erroneously credits to Jeremiah, and which he misquotes. The original text, which reads: "And I (Zachariah) said unto them: If it be good in your eyes, give me my reward; and if not, forbear. So they weighed out as my reward thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me: Cast it into the treasury, the precious price which I am prized at by them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them into the House of the Lord, into the treasury;" this original text tells of the prophet representing himself as a shepherd of Israel, and receiving as his hire thirty pieces of silver, and casting that sum into the treasury of the Temple. This simple account is turned into a prophecy, and in its fulfilment, language is violated, and agreement with the other gospels is sacrificed, the word meaning *treasury* is translated into *potter* (a meaning which this word in Hebrew sometimes has, but not when used as in this verse), and Judas is made to betray his Master for thirty pieces of silver, and repenting, to hang himself, though the *Acts of the Apostles* assures us that, after purchasing the potter's field himself, he met his death by falling headlong, and bursting in the middle.

In the account of the crucifixion we are told that they "parted his garments, casting

lots: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet: "They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots." The prophet here referred to is the Psalmist, and a perusal of the twenty-second psalm, from which this quotation is taken, shows that it is the supplication of one in despair, possibly of David in a time of great distress, but more probably of Jeremiah, during the captivity, crying out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," and enumerating the wrongs done him by the enemy, among which he mentions the parting of his garments among them, and the casting lots for his vesture, and the piercing of his hands and feet. The narrative speaks of something that has already come to pass, and it could not, therefore, be a prophecy of what is to take place a thousand or five hundred years later, without doing violence to the language and history of the Old Testament.

Misuse of text in connection with crucifixion.

Here we shall cease. Though much more testimony might be adduced, we believe enough has been advanced to enable us fully to answer our question whether the prophets of Israel prophesied Jesus. With the mass of proof before us we have no other alternative than to answer *No*. To answer otherwise would necessitate obliterating from our minds all knowledge of Hebrew and Jewish

The prophets did not prophesy Jesus.

history. On our side we have, *first*, the original language of the Bible; *secondly*, the transmitted expounding of it by the learned schools of Palestine, Babylon, and Alexandria; *thirdly*, our Rabbis' repudiation of the false interpretations of these cited Old Testament passages from the time they were foisted upon a credulous world; *fourthly*, the Jewish and non-Jewish critical scholarship of the present age.

The Jew
cannot regard
Jesus as a
God.

Let no one think that, in the rejection of the Divinity of Jesus, the Jew is animated by stubbornness. Why should he be? Why should he reject what might forever free him from prejudice and persecution? No one has yet accused the Jew of being indifferent to respectful consideration by his fellow men, or of being insensible to adversity and suffering. Why should he voluntarily bring disgrace and misery upon himself, when, by acknowledging Jesus as his Saviour, he might even become the pet of nations? He would if he could. But he cannot. He has proven by eighteen hundred years of suffering that he values truth above earthly gain. He cannot believe that his incorporeal, invisible, inconceivable God became human, simply to preach and teach sermons and lessons such as were preached and taught every day, in the synagogues and schools of Palestine and Babylon, at the time of Jesus. He cannot

Prophecies of Christ?

believe that his God became human to be slain, so that the world might be saved through His blood. He cannot believe that his God became human to save the world—and make such a failure of it as is witnessed by the wars between Christian nations, by the strifes between Christian sects.

The Jew is proud of Jesus as he is of the other illustrious men of his race. He believes that he honors him more by denying his divinity than he would by affirming it. By denying it, he rescues his noble manliness; by affirming it, he would aid in burying it under the rubbish of myth. He believes he renders humanity a noble service by denying that a Saviour has come. He believes that he hastens the coming of the Messianic Age, of which the prophets had dreamed, by placing such noble men as Jesus before the people for inspiration and imitation. He believes that salvation lies before us, not behind. With Tennyson he still looks for "the Christ that is to be." And he will continue to look for him until every man will be that Christ. Then, and not till then, will Israel's Messianic hope be realized. Then, and not till then, will there be peace on earth, and good will among all men.

But he is
proud of him
as a man.



*Talmudic Parallels to New
Testament Teachings* ❧ ❧

TALMUDIC literature may be said to have commenced with Ezra's redaction of the Pentateuch, about five hundred years before the common era. Its main object was the interpretation and codification of *The Law*. It covers a vast field, embraces almost the whole range of religion and law of some eight hundred years, and engages almost every prominent Babylonian and Palestinian Jewish teacher of that entire period.

Its greatest creative activity was during the life-time of Jesus, and during a century or so after. Its subject-matter for the most part deals with the religious, ceremonial, civil, and criminal law, but it abounds also in ethical teachings, of which quite a number have found their way into the New Testament—somewhat altered in their expression by reason of the latter's use of the Greek tongue. Many an aphorism and parable of Jesus is in

the very form and spirit of Talmud writings. The well known Golden Rule is a paraphrase of that of the famous President of the Sanhedrin, and head of the most celebrated academy of all Palestine, Rabbi Hillel, a forerunner of Jesus. The *Lord's Prayer* has the phrasing as well as the spirit of the prayers of the Talmudic Rabbis. The justly celebrated *Sermon on the Mount* of the New Testament contains many a parallel to the teachings of the Talmud. The following selections may serve as illustrations :

NEW TESTAMENT.

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit.
2. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.
3. Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.
4. Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake ; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
5. For verily I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, not one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled.
6. Whosoever, therefore, shall break one of these least

TALMUD.

1. More acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice is the humble spirit.
2. Whoso maketh peace among his fellow-men enjoyeth the fruit thereof here, and shall reap his reward also in the world to come.
3. Whoso is merciful toward his fellow-creatures will be mercifully dealt with by his Father in Heaven.
4. Be rather of the persecuted than of the persecutors.
Whoso is persecuted and reviled and does not persecute and revile in return will meet with his reward.
5. Even heaven and earth shall pass away, but the word of the Lord shall endure forever.
6. The least of the commandments demands as much

NEW TESTAMENT.

commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven.

7. Whosoever is angry with his brother without cause shall be in danger of the Judgment.
8. Leave thy guilt before the altar and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.
9. Neither shalt thou swear by thy head, because thou canst not make one hair white or black.
10. Let your communication be Yea, yea; Nay, nay.
11. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not away.
12. If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.
13. Bless them that curse you.
14. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven, for he mak-

TALMUD.

of thy observance as the greatest.

7. Whoso lifts his hand against his neighbor, even though he strike him not, is guilty of an offense, and is adjudged a sinner.
8. Sins of man against God the Atonement Day expiates, but sins of man against man the Atonement Day does not expiate till he has become reconciled with his neighbor.
9. Even if all the people of the earth were to try to make the wing of a raven white, they would try in vain.
10. Let your Yea be yea, and your Nay nay.
Say not one thing with thy mouth and mean another thing with thine heart.
11. Let thy house be open to the needy, and let the poor be inmates of thy house.
More righteous than he who gives what is asked is he who gives twice the amount asked.
It is more praiseworthy to lend to the poor than to give alms.
12. If any one take thy ass give him the saddle also.
13. Be rather of the accursed than of those that curse.
14. The day on which it rains is preferable even to the day of resurrection, for this

New Testament Teachings

NEW TESTAMENT.

eth his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.

15. Take heed that you do not your alms before men to be seen of them.
16. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
17. But when ye pray use not vain repetitions as the heathen do, for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
18. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.
19. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
20. Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth where moth and rust doth corrupt and where thieves break through and steal, but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven.
21. Behold the fowls of the air,

TALMUD.

latter is profitable for the godly only; the rainy day, however, is profitable to the ungodly as well as to the godly.

15. Whoso gives alms in public had rather not give alms at all than shame his fellow-man.
16. "Whoso studies the Law in the secrecy of his home," saith the Lord, "I shall cause his goodly deeds to be known in public."
17. Let thy words be few when thou offerest them in prayer to God.
18. Let this be thy short form of prayer: Thy will be done in heaven, and may peace of heart be the reward of them that reverence Thee on earth.
19. Lead me not into sin, even from its temptations deliver Thou me.
20. My fathers had their treasures below, and I lay them up above. My fathers had their treasures where the hands of men may lay hold of them, I where no hand can reach them. My fathers' treasures yield no fruit, but I gather what bears harvest. My fathers gathered for others, I for myself. My fathers gathered them for this life; I for the world to come.
21. Neither beast nor bird fol-

NEW TESTAMENT.

for they sow not neither do they reap.

22. Therefore, take no thought, saying: What shall we eat? or what shall we drink?
23. Take therefore no thought of the morrow; for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.
24. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged.
25. With what measure ye mete it shall be measured to you again.
26. How wilt thou say to thy brother, let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and behold a beam is in thine own eye.
27. Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye.
28. All things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do you even so to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets.
29. Whoso heareth these sayings of mine and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock.

And the rain descended and the floods came and the winds blew and beat upon that house; and it fell and great was the fall of it.

TALMUD.

low a trade, and yet they are fed without toil.

22. Whoso has bread in his basket, and yet asks: What shall I eat to-morrow? belongs to those of little faith.
23. Sufficient unto the hour is the sorrow thereof. Thou shalt find it heavy enough even then.
24. Whoso judges his neighbor charitably, shall himself be charitably judged.
25. With what measure man metes, it shall be measured to him in heaven.
26. Do they say: Take the splinter out of thine eye? He will answer: Remove the beam out of thine own eye.
27. Whoso would reprove others must himself be spotless.
28. What is hateful unto thee, that do not unto another. This is the whole Law, all the rest is commentary.
29. He whose knowledge exceeds his good deeds may be likened to a tree with many branches and a scanty root—every wind shakes and uproots it. But he whose good deeds excel his knowledge may be likened to a tree with few branches and a strong root; even if all the hurricanes

New Testament Teachings

NEW TESTAMENT.

30. The harvest truly is plentiful, but the laborers are few.
31. Freely ye have received, freely give.
32. Whoso shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.
33. For unto every one that hath shall be given and he shall have abundance, but from him that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath.
34. Then shall the kingdom of

TALMUD.

of the world were to come and rage against it, they would be powerless to move it from its place.

Whoso studies the Law and acts in accordance with its commandments is likened unto a man who builds a house, the foundation of which is made of stone and the superstructure of bricks. Neither storm nor flood can injure it. But whoso studies the Law, and yet is wanting in good deeds, is likened unto the man who builds the foundation of his house of brick and the superstructure of stone. The flood comes, and undermines and destroys the house.

30. The day is short and the task is great, and the workmen are sluggish, and the reward is great, and the Master of the house is urgent.
31. As freely as God has taught you so freely shall ye teach.
32. Whoso humbles himself in this world shall be exalted in the next. Whoso makes himself like unto a slave, for the Law, in this world, shall be made free in the world to come.
33. To him that hath shall be given; from him that hath not shall be taken away.
34. A king invited his servants

NEW TESTAMENT.

heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom.

And five of them were wise, and five *were* foolish.

They that *were* foolish took their lamps, and took no oil with them :

But the wise took oil in their vessels with their lamps.

While the bridegroom tarried, they all slumbered and slept.

And at midnight there was a cry made, Behold, the bridegroom cometh ; go ye out to meet him.

Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lamps.

And the foolish said unto the wise, Give us of your oil ; for our lamps are gone out.

But the wise answered, saying, *Not so* ; lest there be not enough for us and you : but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.

And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came ; and they that were ready went in with him to the marriage : and the door was shut.

Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us.

But he answered and said, Verily I say unto you, I know you not.

35. The Sabbath was made for

TALMUD.

to a banquet, but did not appoint the time. The wise among them adorned themselves, and waited at the entrance of the king's palace, saying : Can there be anything wanting at a king's house to delay a banquet ? But the foolish among them continued at their labor, saying : Can there be a banquet without preparation ? Suddenly the king's summons came. The wise, being ready and adorned, entered. But the foolish, hurrying from their work, entered with the soil of their labor upon them. The king welcomed the wise, and bade them to partake of the feast. But he was angry at the foolish, and bade them to stand and look on.

35. The Sabbath has been de-

New Testament Teachings

NEW TESTAMENT.

- man, not man for the Sabbath.
36. When thou art bidden of any man to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room, lest a more honorable man than thou be bidden of him.
37. But when thou makest a feast call the poor, the maimed, the lame and the blind.
38. And the Lord saith unto the servant, go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled.
39. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master.
40. Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father.
41. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered.
42. At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of

TALMUD.

- livered into your power, not you into the power of the Sabbath.
36. When thou art bidden as a guest seat thyself in a place lower than that of which thou art deserving. Let others assign to thee the higher place, not thyself. Never strive after the highest place lest they say unto thee: "Descend!" Better that they say unto thee: "Ascend to the higher place," than that thou shouldst be obliged to descend to the lower.
37. So build thy house that its entrance be toward the street and that the poor have free admission, and let them be welcome guests within.
38. Three things there are that bear fruit in this world and yield reward in the world to come: First, honor of parents and fellowmen; second, hospitality to strangers and wayfarers; third, the making of peace between contending parties.
39. It is enough for the servant that he be as his master.
40. Unless God wills it, not even a bird falls from the sky. Unless God wills it, no evil can fall upon man.
41. "Do I not number the very hairs of your head?" saith the Lord.
42. With the destruction of the Temple the power of prophecy departed from the

NEW TESTAMENT.

heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.

43. Whoso, therefore, shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

44. For the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man who is a householder, which went out early in the morning to hire laborers into his vineyard. And when he had agreed with the laborers for a penny a day, he sent them into his vineyard. And he went out about the third hour and saw others standing idle in the marketplace. And said unto them, Go ye also into the vineyard, and whatsoever is right that shall ye receive. So when even was come, the lord of the vineyard saith unto his steward, Call the laborers and give them their hire, beginning from the last unto the first. And when they came that were hired about the eleventh hour they received every man a penny. And when they had received it they murmured against the good man of the house. Saying, these last have wrought but one hour, and thou hast made them equal unto us, which have borne the burden and heat of the day.

TALMUD.

prophets and entered the hearts of babes and simpletons.

43. Whoso humbles himself in this life in love for the Law of God shall be counted among the exalted in the world to come.

44. A king hired a number of laborers to work in his garden. Among them there was one whose labor was greatly pleasing in the eyes of the king. After observing him a while, he called him to his side, walked up and down with him, engaged in pleasant converse. In the evening the laborers came for their pay, and the king gave to each his day's wage. To him, whom he had called from his labor early in the day, he gave as much as to them who had toiled all the day. These were displeased, and complained of unfair treatment, inasmuch as they had labored all day long, and had received no more than he who had toiled but little.

When the king learned of their displeasure, he said, This laborer has labored in but a few hours as much as ye have accomplished in all the day.

New Testament Teachings

NEW TESTAMENT.

But he answered one of them and said, Friend, I do thee no wrong, didst thou not agree with me for a penny? Take that thine is and go thy way, I will give unto this last even as unto thee.

Is it not lawful for me to do what I will with mine own? Is thine eye evil because I am good?

So the last shall be first and the first shall be last.

45. For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

TALMUD.

45. In the life to come there will be neither eating nor drinking, neither marrying nor following a trade, neither envy nor hatred. The heads of the pious will be adorned with crowns, and the godly will rejoice in the presence of the Lord.



*Paul—The Founder and
Spreader of Christology*

OF all the countless millions who have professed themselves followers of Jesus, the truest was that little band of Nazarenes that survived the martyrdom of its Master. Never, in all the eighteen centuries that have since passed by, existed a Christian community that patterned its life as faithfully after that which its Master lived, or moulded its beliefs as truly after those which he believed and taught, as did that little community at Jerusalem.

Early
Nazarenes
truest
followers
of their
Master.

Doctrines that have since become the very foundation-stones of the creeds of some of the Christian sects, were then unknown. That little band knew nothing of a Trinity, of an Immaculate Conception, of Original Sin, of Vicarious Atonement, of Salvation by Faith, of Eternal Damnation, nothing of religious rites and ceremonies and observances differing from those of their Jewish brethren. It had added but another Jewish

sect to the many already existing in its day. To the Essenes and Sadducees and Pharisees it had added the Nazarenes, and the difference between its religious beliefs and those of any of the other three sects was not even as great as that which existed between the Sadducees and Pharisees, or between the Pharisees and the Essenes.

The members of this little band would have indignantly hurled back the accusation of having founded a new religion. Nothing was further from their mind than a separation from Judaism, nothing was less thought of by them than their severance from God's *Chosen People*. They had no new dogmas and no new ritual. To Israel's Temple they betook themselves, daily, for worship and sacrifice with their fellow Israelites, as they had done during and before their Master's sojourn among them. The Jewish Sabbath and holidays they observed in the same manner and spirit in which they had always observed them. They complied with all the requirements of the *Torah* (the Mosaic Code) as scrupulously as the most Pharisaic in Israel.

The whole difference between them and the other Jewish sects lay in their Messiah-belief. The others expected daily the advent of a political saviour, who would come, sword in hand, and deliver them from the tyrannous

Differ from
other Jews
only in
Messiah-
belief.

rule of the Roman, cleanse their land, their Holy City, and their people, from the heathen pollutions, and re-establish their glorious kingdom at Jerusalem ; these expected daily the Second Advent of their crucified Saviour, who would reappear on earth in all His glory, cleanse the people from their transgressions, and raise them all, the quick and the dead, into the Kingdom of Heaven.

Expected
hourly Second
Advent of
their Master.

Their expectancy of the Second Advent of Jesus was a necessary conclusion from their belief in his first advent. His crucifixion, at first, had perplexed them sorely, had led some of his most devoted followers to deny and to doubt him. They had expected a ruling Ruler, a saving Saviour, a delivering Deliverer, an emancipating Emancipator. He had come, such had been their firm belief, with the divine mission of preparing Israel for the Kingdom of Heaven, and was put to death before he had scarcely begun his work, before he had succeeded in gathering around himself more than a handful of followers, or in making his mission known and felt among the leaders of his people.

But gradually their faith in the martyred Master returned. The more they brooded over his tragic death, over his noble and unselfish aim, his pure and wise precepts, his illustrious example, the more convinced were they that he, who had lived and taught so di-

Spreader of Christology

vinely, could not have shared the common fate of common mortals. He cannot be dead. He lives. How natural such a faith is, those of us, who have stood at the coffin, or at the grave, of some one loved but lost, know only too well. Among the many thoughts that then crowd into our minds, there is one stronger and more persistent than all, it is the thought that he, who was so good, so true, so self-sacrificing, can not be dead, nay, nay, he lives. Such was the thought that stormed their minds; and of that thought their loving hearts soon made a firm conviction. Their Master is not dead. He has been snatched up into the skies, to His Father in Heaven, to get His promised kingdom in readiness, soon to reappear in all His glory to lead His followers into the New Jerusalem in Heaven. His Second Advent might occur at any moment, and so they, His first and faithful and personal followers, held themselves in readiness amidst constant prayer and goodly deeds.

Their mode of life was similar to that of the Essenes. They formed a communistic body with monastic regulations. Whatever they possessed they shared and enjoyed alike. They ate at a common table, and contributed to, and spent from, a common purse. Whoever joined them sold all he possessed, and contributed the proceeds to the common

Led life
of a com-
munic
brotherhood.

fund. They were ascetic in their habits, withdrew from public affairs and from worldly pursuits, and in obedience to their Master's instructions — not to provide themselves either with money or with superfluous raiment — they surrendered themselves to voluntary poverty. What need was there for wealth, or even for forming marital unions, when the Kingdom of Heaven might dawn at any moment, and wealth lose its value, and earthly unions dissolve. Holiness and peace dwelled in their hearts, and good will and concord reigned among them. The envies and discords that wealth, station, and passions beget, the strifes and hatreds which religious and political differences arouse, obtained no foothold in their midst. Theirs was an ideal state, a *Utopia* that had a *Somewhere*, and that *somewhere*, for about three years, in one of the quarters of Jerusalem, and if such a mode of life be impossible for large and progressive communities, it has at least this in its favor: it enabled the first followers of Jesus to do what the later followers have never done as a body since, it enabled them not only to profess admiration for the life and deeds and doctrines of their Master, but also to live as he had bid them, and as he himself had lived.

Ideal as this mode of life was, it could not have endured much longer than it did. The

Spreader of Christology

long-deferred non-appearance of their Master would have gradually checked their enthusiasm and their piety. The vividness with which their leader was remembered would have gradually faded. The laws of nature and of society would have asserted their rights. Their disregard of worldly affairs and of worldly pursuits, their ascetic and celibate habits, their voluntary poverty, their neglect of the present for the sake of the future, would have hastened their decay. The nation's subsequent mighty struggle against Rome, which involved especially the people of Jerusalem, would either have scattered them, or their refusal to take up arms, in obedience to their Master's instruction, might have completely routed them, and with their death the life and mission of Jesus—not having found a place in the contemporaneous literature of his or of any other people—might also have passed out of the memory of man, as did the memory of the life and deeds of many of the other aspirants to the Messiahship, of many of the other claimants to the vacant throne of David.

Would have been doomed to dissolution.

But fortunately the Second Advent came in time to prevent the memory of the first advent to pass out of the mind of man. The saviour appeared. He did not indeed descend from Heaven, amidst a blaze of glory, accompanied by a host of angels, as the faithful had

Had there not been a Second Advent.

pictured to themselves the Second Advent of their Master. It was not even he whom they had expected. And yet one it was who, for Christianity, has been of far greater importance than was even he who came before him. One it was who, though his name was *Paul*, meaning *the little*, was in reality by far *the greatest* power of all who labored in the founding and spreading and up-building of the Christian Faith.

In the
person of
Paul.

With the advent of Paul, a new character steps upon the stage of the world's history, a character that has perhaps never had its equal before or since. *Little* as he is, he represents more than an individual *great* man. He is a composite of a number of great men. He reflects, and he foreshadows the most distinguished characteristics of some of the greatest religious leaders who have preceded or succeeded him. He has of the enterprising spirit of Moses, of the fire of Isaiah, of the patience of Hillel, of the temper of Shamai, of the zeal of Savonarola, of the daring of Luther. Here is indeed a fascinating character. This kaleidoscopic greatness allures our eye. We must take a closer look at this wonderful man, who, despite his littleness, looms from out the hoary past, and from the great distance that parts him from us, in colossal dimensions, and with fascinating attractiveness.

Spreader of Christology

We look for an authentic biography of him, and to our surprise and disappointment we find none. Contemporaneous literature knows nothing of him. The first attempt at a biography is contained in the "*Acts of the Apostles*," one of the New Testament books, immediately following the gospels. The historical value of this book is exceedingly untrustworthy. Its date is probably half or probably as much as a century after the death of Paul. Its author is an unknown partisan whose language, style, and spirit, lead to the conjecture that he was probably a Gentile, a Roman, one who lived far away from Judea, who had an imperfect knowledge of the character, religion, and political condition of the Jews, who found it to his interest carefully to conceal Rome's frightful cruelties against the early Christians, who seldom neglected an opportunity to paint the Jew in darkest colors and to present the Roman in as beautiful a light as possible.

No authentic biography of Paul.

This in itself is enough seriously to damage the historic worth of this book, but it suffers even more from a mass of legends, which fairly bury out of sight, whatever historical fact it contains. The "*Legends of the Apostles*" would have been a more appropriate title for this book than its present name: the "*Acts of the Apostles*." It is a collection of myths and legends obviously

Accounts of Peter and Paul in *Acts of the Apostles* legendary.

compiled to glorify the early apostles, chiefly Peter and Paul, and I shall briefly cite a few of these legends that you may convince yourselves of the historic worth of the "*Acts of the Apostles.*"

Illustration
of legendary
account of
Peter.

On the Pentecost succeeding the crucifixion of Jesus, "cloven tongues, like as fire," suddenly descended from heaven upon the apostles, and, instantly, they began to speak and preach to a multitude of their Jewish brethren from foreign countries, in different foreign tongues, and with the help of this miracle, and through the convincing argument of Peter, they added about three thousand souls to their ranks. To a man forty years old, who had been lame from his birth, and who had to be carried about, Peter said: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk," and instantly the man was cured of his lameness, "and entered with them into the Temple, walking and leaping and praising God." Using this miraculous cure as a text, Peter delivered a forcible sermon on it, to the Jews gathered in the Temple for worship, upbraided them for their murder of Jesus, exhorted them to acknowledge Him as their Messiah, and this miracle and sermon added about five thousand men to their number. Peter rebuked Ananias and his wife Sapphira for their hypocrisy, and they fell down dead before him; which mira-

cle increased the numbers of the followers of the new faith by many more. So great was this miracle-working power of Peter that the people brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that the shadow of Peter passing by might fall upon some of them, and these, as well as many others that came from abroad, were healed by him; even the dead were restored by him to life. Peter was imprisoned, and an angel appeared, broke his chains and set him free. It is thus, and through yet other miracles, that the greatness and glory of Peter was made manifest.

Paul is introduced to the reader about three years after the death of Jesus, and, in his first appearance, is represented as one of the most blood-thirsty persecutors of the Nazarenes—although it is historically established that at that time the Nazarenes and the other Jewish sects lived and worshipped side by side, and in peace, with no other difference between them, except that of the Messiah-belief. While on his way to Damascus to persecute the Nazarenes, “suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” Instead of a per-

Illustration
of legendary
account
of Paul.

secutor he entered the city of Damascus as a converted follower of Jesus, cast his lot with the Nazarenes, and to the amazement of all the Jews "straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that He is the Son of God."

Somewhat later, while he and Barnabas were at Lystra, they encountered a cripple that had been lame from his birth, to him Paul spake: "Stand upright on thy feet!" And he leaped and walked. When the people saw this they exclaimed: "The gods are come down to us in the likeness of men," and they called Barnabas, *Jupiter*; and Paul, *Mercurius*, because he was the chief speaker, and with difficulty restrained the people from bringing sacrifices to them. In Lydia, Paul and Silas met a maiden possessed with a spirit of divination, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying. Paul commanded the spirit to come out of her, which command was obeyed. The masters, deprived of a profitable source of income, had them publicly flogged, cast into prison, their feet fastened in the stocks, and special watch placed over them. At midnight, in answer to their songs of praise, "suddenly there was a great earthquake," . . . "immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's hands were loosed:" The jailer fell down before them, and said: "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said; Be-

lieve on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." Whereupon the jailer and all his house were baptized, and in the morning the magistrates themselves "besought them, and brought them out, and desired them to depart out of the city."

These few illustrations must suffice to convince us of the legendary nature of the book on the "*Acts of the Apostles*" in which the life and deeds of Paul are supposed to be sketched. It is evident, that if truth we want, and not legend, we must look elsewhere, and, fortunately for us, we have not far to go to find what we need. There have been preserved, in the New Testament, a number of *Epistles*, which Paul addressed to different cities, where he had organized Christian congregations, or where he desired to do so, and these *Epistles*, fragmentary though they be, are of priceless value. In them the occurrences are, with but the slightest exception, natural and real. They afford us not only an intelligent insight into the rise and growth of the new religion, but they also enable us to disentangle, in the "*Acts of the Apostles*," the historical from the mythical, and together they furnish an outline to a fairly satisfactory biography of Paul.

He was born at Tarsus, a Greek town in Asia Minor, under Roman rule, of Jewish parents. The influences of three powerful

Better results
obtained from
study of
Epistles of
Paul.

Psychological
pen-picture
of Paul.

nationalities worked upon him, even from his cradle. He describes his appearance and his speech as unattractive. In stature he was small. Physically, he was weak, and yet he possessed an indomitable will-power, and an amazing energy. He was a frequent victim of ill-health, subject to occasional trances, and to spells of strange maladies, of which he speaks as the *thorn in his flesh*. He was restless, irritable, passionate, ascetic, celibate, ambitious, zealous for the cause espoused. His appearance and temperament offer a fairly reliable psychological pen-picture of the religious enthusiast, of the speculative mystic, of the fearless propagandist, of the man who believes himself entrusted from on high with a special mission, and goes forth into the world to discharge his divinely-commissioned duty—lovingly and peacefully, when unobstructed, but with all the bitterness of the fanatic, when opposed.

His
education
Græco-
Judaic.

Of the extent of his education it is difficult to tell. Opportunities he had, and the very best. According to Strabo, the schools of Tarsus, at the time of Paul, were equal to those of Alexandria and Athens; according to his own statement, he studied at Jerusalem under the illustrious Rabban Gamaliel, the honored and peace-loving President of the Sanhedrin. The style and the reasoning displayed in the *Epistles*, incline one to the

belief that he acquired more of what was faulty, in both systems of education, than of what constituted their chief merits. His reasoning is generally obscure and frequently illogical. His style is argumentative, yet he seldom convinces. He is not often the ethical teacher, but he is the theologian always, and sometimes the dogmatist. In censuring the Galatians for forsaking his doctrines for those of a rival apostle, he says that if any man preach any other gospel than that which he preached, even if an angel from heaven should preach to them otherwise than he had preached, let that one be accursed.

From the Jewish school he adopted the controversial and casuistical method of reasoning; and from the Grecian school he borrowed the absurdest notions of *Philonic Gnosticism*, its mystical amalgamation of Greek philosophy with Jewish theosophy, its allegorical interpretations of the *Divine Reason* as the "Logos," the "Eternal Word," the "Legate of the Most High," the "High Priest," "Eternal Bread from Heaven," "Guide to God," "Substitute for God," "Image of God," "Second God," "Creator of the Worlds," "Mediator between God and Man," "Intercessor," "Son of God." These titles, which were merely the poetic Grecian mode of expressing mental concepts in allegorical form, his prosaic Jewish mind trans-

ferred upon Jesus, enveloped him with a maze of mystical doctrines, and both of these, the titles and the doctrines, have since become almost hopelessly interwoven with Christianity.

Joins
Nazarene
sect.

What the immediate cause may have been that led to his connection with the Nazarenes cannot now be discerned. Contact with the pious Nazarenes and their pure life may have fascinated a temperament like his. Their affectionate devotion to their martyred Master, their hourly expectation of His Second Advent, may have afforded abundant fuel for the Philonic-Gnostic flame that burned within. The Master, of whom this faithful band spoke so enthusiastically, and with such affection, the Master, who manifested such divine wisdom, could be none other than the incarnation of the *Divine Reason*, the "Logos," of which the Jewish philosopher Philo had taught and written, and from which it was but a step to the "Guide to God," the "Substitute for God," the "Image of God," the "Second God," the "Intercessor," the "Son of God." Here was the Grecian poetry translated into Hebrew prose. The allegorical concepts of Athens and Alexandria and Tarsus had turned into flesh and blood in Jerusalem. Here was a new theology. Here was a working theology. Here was a world-conquering theology. Here was a theology

Spreader of Christology

that contained the elements to satisfy Jew and Gentile, to reconcile Oriental with Occidental thought and belief. The Judaic Jesus must become the World's Christ; Jew and Gentile must unite in Christ; Paul, the Jew, the Grecian-born, the Roman citizen, must become the *Apostle to the Gentiles*.

It was a bold thought and bolder yet was his resolve. That moment in which Paul, the Jew, resolved to be the "*Apostle to the Gentiles*" was one of the most eventful in the history of civilization. What the prophets of Israel had long dreamed and hoped took living form in that moment. What millions of Jews had professed for centuries, this one man proposed to execute single-handed. He would open the way for the realization of the prophets' dream of a federation of all people into a brotherhood, under the Fatherhood of God, and under the sway of universal peace and good-will. He would spread his new theology to the ends of the vast Roman empire, and preach it, till it received the homage of every tongue and knee. In that moment the Nazarenes ceased to be a sect, and Judaism a tribal religion. In that moment a cosmopolitan religion was born. In that moment the ethical teachings of Judaism crossed the border of their birthplace, under the spiritual leadership of Jesus, the Jew, in the guise of a mystical Christ. In that mo-

A decisive
moment in
history of
civilization.

ment a spiritual alliance was formed between Jew and Gentile that has endured to this day. That moment opened a new epoch in the world's history.

Determines to
become the
Apostle to the
Gentiles.

Bold as was the thought and resolve, bolder still was its execution. Paul dared what no other dared before, and what but very few have dared since. To succeed he could have no obstacles to obstruct success. If the Gentile world was to accept his new theology, he had to present it to them in an acceptable form. Jewish ceremonies, rites and observances he unfalteringly cast aside. He swept away every barrier between Jew and Gentile. Where the fate of his world-conquering theology was concerned, the authority, with which centuries of observance had vested these rites and ceremonies, could have no weight. Had not the prophets taught that God looks to deed, not to form, and that a pure heart and devout mind are more acceptable than sacrifice? Seeing that the prophets were with him, what had he to fear in resolving to inaugurate what the prophets of Israel had advocated before him?

He was not the man to delay long after once determining upon a line of action. Forth he went as the *Apostle to the Gentiles* upon his missionary work. With the rigorous Jewish ceremonial removed, with a Philonic-Gnostic doctrine,—which, in its main outlines, was

familiar to the Gentile world and to the Jews who dwelled among them,—and with the proselytizing carried on with exceptional zeal and energy, he gained many converts to his new belief.

He met with strong opposition from Jew and Gentile, and also from a source from which, perhaps, he had least expected it, from those very Nazarenes for whom he had forsaken his former sect, and on whose support he had perhaps counted most. They understood neither him nor his doctrine; neither did he seem to understand them. They knew not what he meant by a “Son of God,” by an “Intercessor,” by a “Mediator,” by a “Second God,” and by some of his other novel doctrines. They had been in personal contact with Jesus, had listened to his teachings, knew his aim, knew him to have been human, they had heard him proclaim as the first commandment the great Jewish monotheistic doctrine: “*Hear, O Israel, Jehovah is our God, Jehovah is One,*” and they could not recognize their Master in this novel attire of a *Grecian Christ*. They knew not what Paul meant by titling himself the “*Apostle to the Gentiles,*” to preach Christ to the heathen nations. Their Master had come of the Jews, and had labored among the Jews, and for the Jews only. Jesus himself had declared: “I am not sent but unto the lost

Opposed
by the
Nazarenes.

sheep of the house of Israel," and he himself had bid his disciples: "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." They were horrified at Paul's doing away with the ceremonials and rites of the Law. Had not their own Master declared that he had not come to abrogate the Law or the prophets, and that whosoever would break even one of the least commandments, and should teach men so, shall be called the least in the Kingdom of Heaven? Their Master had opposed the ceremonial excesses, narrow interpretations, unreasonable deductions, but not the Mosaic Laws. They themselves had remained scrupulously faithful to every detail of *The Law*; Peter had even found it necessary publicly to defend himself against a suspicion of having violated some of the forms and rites. They worshipped and sacrificed in the Temple as before, and observed all the ceremonies and rites and festivals as Jesus himself had done. And who was he, they asked, who arrogated to himself the right of abrogating the Law of Moses? Who appointed him to the Apostleship? Who dared rise and speak in the name of Jesus, and as his messenger and interpreter, while those still lived, who had walked and talked and counselled with him?

Spreader of Christology

The feud between them and Paul grew bitter. He was publicly censured by them at a conference in Jerusalem. Peter broke with him. Barnabas deserted him. James sent missionaries to follow upon his track, and to undo his errors. The charges and counter-charges between them reveal little of the forgiving and peaceful spirit which their Master had taught. They, who were not yet fully converted themselves, were quarreling about the mode of converting others. Paul castigated them in very severe language. He insisted upon his right to the apostleship, and to the rightfulness of his work among the Gentiles. His was one of those spirits that thrives best under opposition. His work prospered best when to the "thorn in the flesh" that worried him within, there was added the *thorn from without*.

Bitter feud ensues.

He turned his back upon the Nazarene community, and forth he went among the Gentiles, and pursued his mission with a zeal, with a heroism, with a self-sacrifice, that is as amazing as it is eventful in the history of Christianity. When he suddenly disappears from the scenes of history, after about thirty years of missionary labor, Christianity had taken root in Asia and in Europe. In the very strongholds of Paganism, in Antioch, in Athens, and in Rome, in Cyprus, in Ephesus, and in Corinth, in Cilicia, in Phrygia, and in

Macedonia, and in yet other cities and other provinces, he had organized little Christian communities, that were destined soon to grow to such power and number as to crowd out almost every other form of belief. Despite the opposition of the Nazarenes, the Grecian-Gnostic Christ had conquered the Galilean Jesus. Christianity was established, in the name of a Jew, and by a Jew.

Regrettable
that com-
promise
was not
effected.

It is much to be regretted that a compromise between the Nazarenes and Paul could not have been effected, that the former could not have been persuaded to surrender their fondness for ceremonialism, and their spirit of exclusiveness, and the latter, his mythical and mystical Christology. Had they but compromised their differences, they might have labored together, and in unison, and converted, not only Gentiles, but also the Jews. They would, in time, have given up hoping for the Second Advent of their Master. They would have concentrated their attention upon the pure ethical precepts which he had taught, would have recognized in them the pure Judaism of old, and their pure life, aided by Paul's zeal, would have cemented the different Jewish sects into a close brotherhood, and prevented the breach which Paul's Christology introduced. Such a compromise would not have interfered with Paul's success among the Gentiles. It was

Spreader of Christology

not as much his mystical and mythical Grecian Christ that conquered the Gentiles, as it was the preaching of the pure-hearted and noble-minded Judaic Jesus. It was not so much the Gnostic theosophy, as it was the ethics of Judaism, that found a ready echo in Gentile hearts, especially in those days of corruption, of tyrannous rule by madmen and monsters like Caligula and Nero, under whom the Roman empire groaned, and at which time many, even of the most cultured classes, had sought refuge in Judaism, despite its rigorous and forbidding initiation ceremonialism. If Judaism could attract converts, even with an uninviting ceremonialism, how much more, and how much easier, could it have won Gentile followers with such ceremonialism removed, and with a man like Paul to preach the ethics of Moses and of the Prophets and Rabbis, and to illustrate the possibilities of such ethics by holding up to the world the noble life of the Galilean Rabbi.

Such a compromise might have brought the prophets' dream of One God over all, One Brotherhood of all, peace and good will among all, nearer realization than it is to-day, and Paul might have ranked as one of the greatest of the great men of Israel.

Compromise would have meant realization of Prophets' dream.

Such a compromise would have spared Christianity those mystical and mythical doctrines of a Trinity, of a Virgin-born and

Would have prevented infusion of Christology in religion of the Master.

Holy Ghost-conceived God, of a Suffering and Resurrected Son of God, of a Vicarious Atonement, of Original Sin, Eternal Damnation, Salvation by Faith, and yet other doctrines, that have been to Christianity what the "thorn in the flesh" was to their inventor Paul, that have plunged the Christian Church, for centuries, into profitless theological speculations, that have led to painful dismemberments, and often to the settlement of mooted theological points with the aid of fire and sword and rack, that have retarded the world's progress for centuries, that have frozen the life-giving, life-sustaining stream of religion, which had poured forth from the warm heart of Jesus, into a deadening dogmatic theology, that even to-day perplex and vex Christianity sorely, and array reason and science and philosophy against it.

Jewish philosopher partly responsible for Christology.

Perhaps it was not to have been. A mind like Paul's, to be true to itself, could not have acted otherwise than it did. Moreover, it was Philo, the Jewish philosopher, who flourished at that time, who was much to blame. He it was who had sought to reconcile Semitic theology and Asiatic mysticism with Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, and, by his allegorizing and Hellenizing the Jewish Scriptures, had greatly confused the religious thought of the Grecian Jews.

With all Paul's faults, with all the injuries

Spreader of Christology

his Christology has wrought, we have more reason to be grateful to him than we have cause for censure. As Jews, we are indebted to him for spreading the ethics of Judaism among a Gentile world, for doing for the cause of Israel what never was done by Jew before or since, for showing us how, by the removal of obsolete, meaningless and repellant ceremonies, rites, and observances, Judaism, pure and simple, might be made a world-conquering religion. As members of civilized society, we owe him unstinted praise for coming to the rescue of Gentile peoples, at a time when they most needed his aid, and for showing countless successors the way in which light, cheer, and comfort, faith, hope, and charity, may be introduced in a benighted and a cruel world.

And each of us may draw from Paul's epoch-making life and deeds the inspiration of independent thought and courageous daring, fearless of the consequences that may ensue. Each of us may draw from the results of his labors the hope that the compromise, that could not be effected eighteen centuries ago, may yet be brought about. The spirit of our age greatly favors such a compromise. What the Christian world needs is another Jew, to complete the Trinity of Jewish Reformers, one who shall combine within himself the moral and religious purity of

Yet grateful
for Paul's
spread of
Judaic Jesus.

A new Paul
needed to
unite Jew and
Gentile.

Jesus, and the zeal and energy of Paul. He will be the long-expected Messiah. His coming will constitute the Second Advent of the Nazarene Master. The time for his coming is drawing nigh. Obsolete forms and meaningless rites are crumbling away. Offensive doctrines are disappearing. The Judaic Jesus is slowly regaining his lost ground. The Ethics of Judaism are gradually supplanting the Gnosticism of Paul. When the Jew shall have completely cast away his obstructive exclusiveness and ceremonialism, and the Christian his Christology, Jew and Gentile will be one.





Index

- Actors, *see* *Passion Play*
Acts of the Apostles, end of Judas in the, 178; historically unreliable, 199, 203
Agrippa, mocked by Alexandrians, 114
Ahaz, king of Judea, 165, 166
Alexandria, Roman mob in, 114
Alexandrians, alluded to, 105
Annas, High Priest, 92, 98
Ascension, the, 122; disagreement on the, in Gospels, 146
Assyrian period of Isaiah, 164
Augustine, St., legend concerning, 58
Author's attitude toward the *Passion Play*, 18, 31-33
- Babylonian period of Isaiah, 164-168
Barabbas, 119
Bar Cochba, leader of Jewish rebellion, 53
Benedictine Convent at Ettal, 87
Biblical knowledge requisite for criticism of *Passion Play*, 18
Biography, of Jesus, 148; of St. Paul, 203-214
Birth of Jesus, time of the, 173
Blasphemy, according to Jewish law, defined, 99
Blue Grotto, near Oberammergau, 96
Brotherhood of Man, as conceived in the Pauline theology, 207
Bruno, alluded to, 94
- Caiaphas, High Priest, 92, 98
Calvin, alluded to, 140
Carabbas, mock king, throned at Alexandria, 114
Choragus, of *Passion Play*, 30; part created for Mayr, 24
Chorus of guardian angels, in *Passion Play*, 29, 30
Christ, *see* *Jesus*
Christian credulity, 59
Christian faith, happiness of believers in, 41; sustained at cost of Jewish honor, 42
Christian, interpretation of Messiah's prophecies, 156; story of Jesus,

Index

- proof demanded of the, 143; teachings, forgiveness inculcated by, 139; vindication of the Jew, 133
- Christianity, as a world religion, 207; doctrines of, 214; according to St. Paul, 206; detrimental to its increase, 213; early, pagan tendencies of, 106; Roman tendencies of, 108; established by a Jew, 212; in Asia and Europe at the death of St. Paul, 211; scholarly foundations of, imperfect, 158
- Christians, persecutions by the, 139
- Christmas, origin of, 173
- Christology, Isaiah the richest source of, 159
- Communitic brotherhood of the Nazarenes, 192, 195; its permanence impossible, 196
- Compromise, between Jew and Gentile impending, 215; between St. Paul and the Nazarenes, what it might have effected, 212-214
- Concord, New Hampshire, alluded to, 40
- Converts, Paul's new theology attracted many, 209
- Credulity, of early ages, 59, 88; strengthened by the Passion Play, 34
- Critical research demanded in the present age, 59
- Cross, the omnipresence of the, at Oberammergau, 38; story of the, 39
- Crucifixion, the, 121; a Roman cure for Jewish patriotism, 127; held to be foreshadowed in Isaiah, 170; Jewish responsibility for the, historically groundless, 141; prophecies applied to the, 178
- Crusades, the, 140
- Cyrus, believed to have been the Messiah, 169
- Davidian descent of Jesus denied, 12
- Delusions, religious, see Religious delusions
- Devoutness of the Jewish nation in the time of Christ, 67
- Disproof of the Jewish story of Jesus demanded, 143
- Divine reason, allegorical interpretations of the, 205; Jesus the incarnation of the, 206
- Divinity of Jesus, 150; rejected, 180
- Doctrines of Christianity hinder its increase, 213, 214
- Doubt in the pulpit, 147
- Early Christian Church, factions in the, 105
- Early Christian fathers, comments of the, on Pilate, 125
- Easter, 153; a season for persecution of the Jews, 134-137
- Eddas, alluded to, 88
- Egypt, flight of Jesus into, 174
- Eliot, George, alluded to, 44

Index

- Emerson, noble life of, 150; alluded to, 40
Enlightenment of the present age, 138
Epistles of St. Paul, value to students of Christianity, 203
Erasmus, on Luther, quoted, 133
Essenes, a communistic sect, 195; alluded to, 99, 105
Eternal damnation, doctrine of, unknown to early Nazarenes, 192
Ettal, legend of, 86; alluded to, 97
Ezekiel, alluded to, 155
- Factions in the early Christian Church, 105
Festival of the Birth of the Sun, 173
Flaccus, Roman procurator, 114, 115
Flunger, Anna, 23
Foretelling not a prophetic function, 164
- Galileans, seditions of the, 50
Galileo, alluded to, 140
Gamaliel, teacher of St. Paul, 204; alluded to, 64, 95
Genealogy of Davidian House, 72
Germanic myth, 87
Gethsemane, agony of Jesus in, 84; arrest of Jesus in, 83
Golden Rule, paraphrase of the Talmud, 183
Gospel, accounts of Jesus, 100; falsehoods, eradication demanded, 132; miracles, 130
Gospels, character of Pilate as depicted in the, 125; contradictions in the, 110; date of the, 102; development of the, 102; differences in the, concerning the birth of Christ, 174; differing versions of the, 104; paganized, 105; resemblance of Isaiah to the, 161
Gregory XIII, pope, 140
- Hale, Sir Matthew, alluded to, 55
Helpfulness of Christian faith, 41
Herod Antipas, Jesus before, 118; slays John the Baptist, 65
Herod Archelaus, 65
Herod the Great, massacre of infants by, 175; theatre of, in Jerusalem, 68; alluded to, 174
Hero myth of the Gospels, 42, 103, 106
Hezekiah, 166; Messianic prophecies referring to, 167, 168, 176
Hiawatha play, alluded to, 31
High Priests, demand the punishment of Jesus, 117; relations of Pilate with the, 124; see also Annas, Caiaphas
Hillel, Rabbi, Golden Rule of, 183; alluded to, 64

Index

- Hosea, quoted, 175
Humanity of Jesus, 148
Hunding, hut of, 87, 97
Huss, alluded to, 94, 139
Huxley, Professor, on definition of a lobster, quoted, 97
- Imitation of Christ, 149
Immaculate Conception, doctrine of the, unknown to the early Nazarenes, 192
Immanuel, Jesus not known as, 166
Ingersoll, Robert, alluded to, 100
Inspiration of Scripture denied, 101
Isaiah, Assyrian period of, 164, 171; authorship of, 164; Babylonian period of, 164, 171; chronology of, 165; fifty-third chapter of, 170; Messianic predictions of, 166-172; quoted, 159; resemblance to Gospels of, 161; alluded to, 155, 156
- James, St., loyal to Jews, 126
Jehovah, a God of mercy, 112
Jeremiah, quoted, 175
Jerusalem, irresponsive to announcement of a Messiah, 52-54; represented as plotting against Jesus, 69
Jesus, agony of, 84; a Grecian Christ, 209; a Jewish patriot, 91, 102, 128, 142, 157; a man of peace, 63; arrest of: 83, preparation for the, 76; before Herod, 113; before Pilate, 116, 119; before the High Priest, 92; birthplace of, 172; character of, paganized by the early Church, 109; condemned to death, 120; contemporaneous records of, wanting, 101; deluded into belief in his Messiahship, 51, 128, 142; desire of, to save his followers, 55, 76; disillusioned, 55; driving money changers from the Temple, 62-66; entrance on stage of, 33; entry into Jerusalem of, 44, 61; prophecy concerning, 176; flight into Egypt of, 174; his early doubt of his Messiahship, 51; humanity of, 148; imitation of, 149; impersonation of, influence on spectators, 45; influence of, upon civilization, 43; Jewish pride in, 181; Jewish responsibility for the death of, 141; last words of, 128, 129; life of: 148, earlier versions friendly to Jews, 106; miracles of, 74; mission of, 133, 142, 209; mocked by the Roman guard, 114; monotheism of, 44, 73, 209; motive for hatred of, lacking, 71-75; mystical doctrines connected with, by St. Paul, 206; not an offender before Jewish law, 99; not foretold by prophets, 179; not received as the Messiah in Jerusalem, 52-54; not yet arisen, 151; offense against Roman law of, 127; prepares

Index

- for his arrest, 76; proclaimed King of the Jews, 48; respect of, for Jewish law: 210, for Rabbis, 64; second advent of, expected by his followers, 194; teachings of: endorsed by Rabbis, 73, in harmony with the Talmud, 182, not followed, 149, reverence for the, 151; the Jew transmuted into a mythical Christ, 207; the Judean teacher not the Nicean dogmatist, 148; Thorwaldsen's statue of, 44; time of birth of, 173; trial of, before Pilate, a fabrication, 123; trial of, before the Sanhedrin: 94, a fabrication, 96, 98, 123; written life of, deemed unnecessary at first, 103, developed to suit ideas of differing sects, 104
- Jew and Gentile, compromise between, 215; St. Paul demolishes barriers between, 208
- Jew, Christianity established by a, 212; defense of the, 130; sculptor of Christianity, 20; the suffering Messiah, 152
- Jewish ceremonials discarded by St. Paul, 208, 210; contemporaneous mention of Jesus wanting, 102; desire for the death of Jesus 117; expectation of a political Saviour, 103; gifts to civilization, 19; hatred of Jesus denied, 75; history of the time of Isaiah, 165-172; hope for a Messiah, 49, 51; interpretation of Messianic prophecies, 156; law: contained in the Talmud, 182, punishes blasphemy alone with death, 99, observed by Jesus, 210; monotheism, 32, 36, 40, 157; officials devise plans to arrest Jesus, 70; pride in Jesus, 181; reasons for rejecting the Messiah, 157; responsibility for death of Jesus historically groundless, 141; revolts, 65; story of Jesus, disproof demanded, 143; trials, regulations concerning, 82, 99
- Jews, alleged use of Christian blood for Passover bread by the, 137; critical attitude toward their faith of the, 60; defense of the, 34, 36; falsely charged with the death of Jesus, 50, 75; favorably regarded in early versions of the life of Jesus, 106; high character of the, 40; hostility of the Gospel of John toward the, 107; injustice toward the, 138; intimate knowledge of Scripture of the, 157; misrepresentation of the: 19, 27, 42, in the Gospels, 43, 119, 123; how affected by the Passion Play, 34; influence of play against the, 33; made salvation through Christ possible, 122; persecutions of the: 32, 35, 134-137, 156, under Pilate, 124, alluded to, 151, 157; rejection of Jesus as a Messiah by the, 161; sinfulness of continued enmity toward the, 139; story of the, summarized, 142; unchristian sentiments toward the, 141; vindication of the, 57
- Jochanan ben Saccai, alluded to, 64, 95
- John, Gospel of, hostile to Jews, 107; last words of Jesus in the, 128
- John, St., loyal to Jews, 126

Index

- John the Baptist, 65, 118
Josephus, cited, 98; spurious reference to Jesus in the writings of, 102
Judaism, developed into a world religion by St. Paul, 207, 215; ethics of, supplanting Paul's gnosticism, 216; Gentiles impressed by the ethics of, 213; refuge of cultured classes, 213
Judas, bishop of the early Christian Church, 81
Judas of Kariyoth, description of, 77; falsity of Gospel history of, 79-83; final history of, 111; prejudice against the impersonator of, 26; prophecies applied to, 177; origin of name of, 83
Judges, prophecies of the Book of, 172
- King James version of the Bible used for quotation, 159
Kofelberg, cross on the summit of the, 38, 39
Kremlin, 69
- Lang, Anton, 23; description of, 46-47
Lang, Sebastian, 93
Law, Jewish, contained in the Talmud, 182
Lechner, Gregor, prejudice against, 26
Leda, myth of, 106
Lion and lamb symbol of Isaiah explained, 167
Locket, story of a, 150
Logos, the, Jesus identified by Paul as, 206
Lord's Prayer, paralleled in the Talmud, 183
Ludwig, founder of Ettal, 87
Luke, Gospel of, on birthplace of Jesus, 172
Luke, early MS. of the Gospel of, last words of Jesus in, 129
Luther, Erasmus on, 133; alluded to, 55, 94
- Mark, Gospel of, friendly to Jews, 107; last words of Jesus in the, 128
Matthew, Gospel of, Judas' betrayal of Christ in the, 177; last words of Jesus in the, 128; on birth of Jesus, 172; massacre of infants in the, 175
Mayr, Josef, 24, 46
Messiah, belief in the, distinguishing mark of Nazarenes, 193; Cyrus hailed as the, 169; Hezekiah believed to be the, 167, 168, 176; Old and New Testament references to, compared, 161; reasons for Jewish rejection of the, 157
Messianic prophecies, differently interpreted by Jew and Christian, 156; examined, 158, 172; of Isaiah explained, 166-172
Micah, quoted, 42

Index

- Midnight reverie at Oberammergau, 37-42
Miracle of the mediæval age, 87
Miracles of Scripture, 89; of the Gospels, 130; of the second century, 130
Missionaries of the early Christian Church, 104, 126
Monotheism, of Jesus, 209; of Jews, 32, 36, 40; of Jews forbade belief in Christ's divinity, 157
Moral excellence without belief in Divinity of Christ, 150
Moscow, 69
Motive for attributing the persecution of Jesus to Jews, 126
- Natural laws, immutability of, 130
Nazarenes, communistic brotherhood of the, 192, 195; desirability of compromise between St. Paul and the, 212; differed from other Jews only in Messiah belief, 193, 201; extension of their tenets, 207; observers of Jewish law, 210; opposed the theology of St. Paul, 209; truest followers of their Master, 192
Nazareth, birthplace of Jesus, 172
Nazarite, 172, 173
New Testament, canons of the, 101; expurgation of false statements from the, 147; last words of Jesus in Revised Version of, 129; mention of Pilate's cruelty in the, 124; narratives of, written to harmonize with Old Testament prophecies, 170; quoted, 183-191; story of Jesus' arrest untrue, 56; teachings against Jews, 60; writers of the, 158
Nibelungenlied, alluded to, 88
- Oberammergau, arrival at, 21; few Protestants in, 26; no Jews in, 25; statuary in, 20; scenery of, suggestive of Palestine, 23; religious character of villagers in, 23, 41; visitors in, 37
Original sin, doctrine of, unknown to early Nazarenes, 192
- Pagan ideas, incorporated in the Gospels, 105
Papias, bishop, Gospels questioned by, 104; alluded to, 111
Paschal, see Passover
Passion's Esel, 39
Passover, belief in a Messiah at time of the, 50; alluded to, 66, 133, 134
Passover night, no sessions of the Sanhedrin on the, 82
Paul, St., account of, in Acts of the Apostles, 201-203; biography of, 203-214; Christianity as a world religion conceived by,

Index

- 207; determines to become an Apostle to the Gentiles, 208; description of, 198; education of, 204; Epistles of: reasoning in the, 204, value to students of Christianity, 203; joined the Nazarene sect, 206; psychological pen-picture of, 204; responsible for doctrines of the Christian Church, 214; theology of, opposed by Nazarenes, 209-211
- Peace, Keneseth Israel Temple medallion illustrative of, 155
- Pentecost, Day of, 200
- Peter, Saint, alleged miraculous works of, 200
- Pharisees, 105, 193
- Philo, on Pilate's cruelty, quoted, 124; on Roman mob, in Alexandria, quoted, 114; propounder of the Logos, 206; alluded to, 64, 214
- Philonic-Gnostic, doctrines of St. Paul, 205, 206, 208
- Pilate, as depicted in the Gospels, 125; cruelty of, toward Jews, 123; endeavors to save Jesus, 117, 119; Jesus before, 116; alluded to, 50, 61, 95
- Passion Play, actors in the: characteristics of, 22, occupation of, 22, 25; audience at the, 28; hours for performance of the, 28; influence on spectators of the, 23; origin of the, 22; prelude to the, 29-31; prologue to the, 30; scenery of the, 30
- Pontius Pilate, see Pilate
- Popes of Rome, 93
- Proof demanded of Christian story of Jesus, 143
- Prophet, meaning of the word, 162
- Prophets, did not foretell Jesus, 179; foretelling not a function of, 164; functions of the Biblical, 163
- Psalm XXIII, applied to the Crucifixion, 179
- Public schools, teachings against Jews in the, 138
-
- Quakers, persecuted by Christians, 140
-
- Rabbis, endorse the teachings of Jesus, 73; visit with Andreas Lang, 23
- Rachel, alluded to, 176
- Rain, during performance of Passion Play, 27, 152
- Rama, city of, 175
- Rationalistic tendencies of present century, 147
- Reason, supreme arbiter, 143; the foe of credulity, 59
- Reformation, the, 40, 136
- Religious delusions, 55
- Renan, alluded to, 36
- Rendl, Peter, alluded to, 47
- Resurrection, the, 122

Index

- Resurrection Day, dawning, 151
Revised Version of New Testament, last words of Jesus in the, 129
"Righteous Child," of Isaiah, explained, 167
Roman: Empire, a field for propagation of Christianity, 56, 126;
hatred of Christians, 124; mob in Alexandria, 114; mockery
of Jesus, 113; popes, see Popes of Rome; punishment, of
treason, 54; responsibility for death of Jesus, 75, 125; rule,
in Palestine, 49; suppression, of Jewish agitators, 65, 127;
tax collection at time of Jesus' birth, 174; tendencies of early
Christianity, 108, 126
- Sadducees, 99, 105, 193
St. Bartholomew, Massacre of, 93, 140
Salvation by faith, doctrine of, unknown to early Nazarenes, 192
Samson the giant, alluded to, 172
Sanhedrin, Jesus brought before the, 62; no sessions of the, on
Passover night, 82, 99; alluded to, 57, 71, 86, 120
Savonarola, alluded to, 55, 94, 139
Scriptures, the inspiration of, denied, 101; invoked to decide Messi-
anic claims, 158
Second Advent, in the person of Paul, 197; of Jesus expected by
his followers, 194, 195; alluded to, 103, 212
Sermon on the Mount, paralleled in the Talmud, 183
Servetus, alluded to, 140
Stage of Passion Play, description of the, 30
Statuary at Oberammergau, 20
Strabo, on schools of Tarsus, cited, 204
Strauss, "Life of Jesus," alluded to, 44
Summary, of arguments drawn from Passion Play, 132; of argu-
ments against Old Testament prophecies of Christ, 180
Supernatural, belief in the, 88, 130; double standard of belief
regarding the, 89
Supernatural Christ, 40; a mythological fiction, 42; effect of unbel-
ief in a, 40; Jews calumniated in the name of the, 42
- Tacitus, death of Jesus mentioned by, 124
Talmud, dates of the, 182; declares Hezekiah to have been the
Messiah, 168; ethical teachings of, in the New Testament,
182; purpose of the, 182; quoted, 183-191
Tarsus, schools of, 204
Taylor, Father, on Emerson, quoted, 150
Temple, infamous charge of corruption of the, 67; sale of sacrificial
offerings allowed in the, 64; robbed by Pilate, 124
Theatre, 21; covered, 27

Index

- Thorwaldsen's Christ, alluded to, 44
Treason, Roman punishment for, 54
Trial : scene before Pilate declared untrue, 123; of Jesus inconsistent with Jewish criminal procedure, 82
Transcendental philosophers, 40
Trinity, doctrine of the, unknown to early Nazarenes, 192; legend of the, 58
- Unbelief, among students, 41; in the Church, 147
Unitarian denial of supernatural Christ, 40
- Vicarious Atonement, 76; doctrine of, unknown to early Nazarenes, 192
Virgin, legend of the, 86; alluded to, 97
"Virgin Child," of Isaiah, explained, 166
Volsung-saga, alluded to, 88
- Wagner, alluded to, 88
Way of the cross, 120, 152
Wars of Christian nations, 32
William Tell, play, 31
- Zechariah, prophecies of, applied to Judas, 178
Zwink, Johann, 93; impersonator of Judas, 78



14 DAY USE
RETURN TO DESK FROM WHICH BORROWED
LOAN DEPT.

This book is due on the last date stamped below,
or on the date to which renewed. Renewals only:
Tel. No. 642-3405
Renewals may be made 4 days prior to date due.
Renewed books are subject to immediate recall.

Due end of WINTER Quarter
subject to recall after — FEB 8'71 27

REC'D LD FEB 27 11AM

NOV 4 1983

REC. CIR. OCT 27 '83

JUL 09 2001

LD21A-60m-8,'70
(N8837s10)476-A-32

General Library
University of California
Berkeley

150
net

411334

Krauskopf

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

