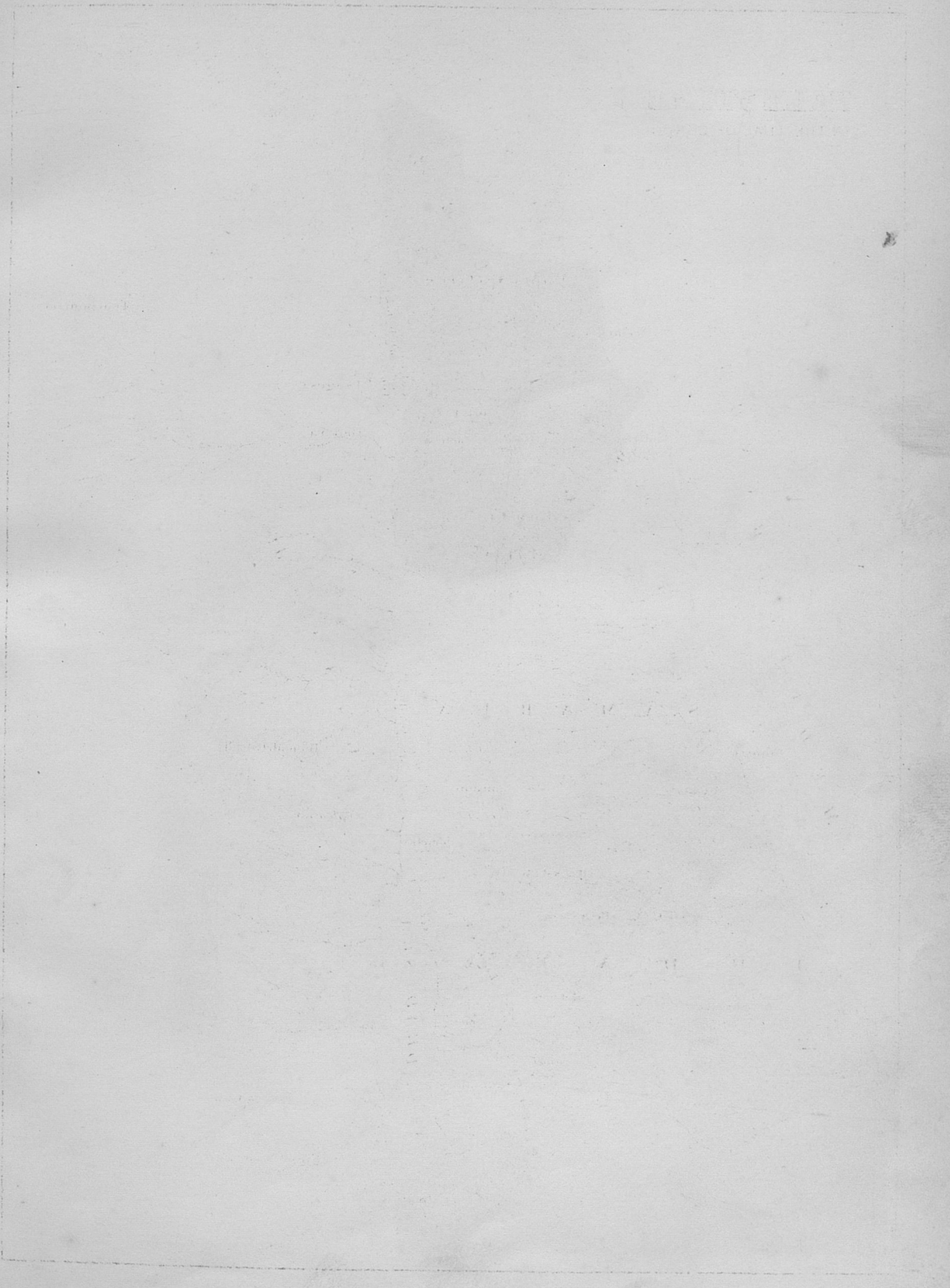


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THE
LIFE OF CHRIST.

BY

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LATE FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE; ARCHDEACON AND CANON OF
WESTMINSTER; AND CHAPLAIN IN ORDINARY TO THE QUEEN.

MANET IMMOTA FIDES.

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LIFE OF CHRIST

FREDERIC W. TAPPAN, D.D., EDITOR

THE HISTORY OF THE LIFE OF CHRIST, FROM THE NATIVITY TO THE ASCENSION, WITH A HISTORY OF THE EARLY CHURCH, FROM THE APOSTLES TO THE GREAT MARTYRS.

NEW YORK

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THE END OF THE WORLD

PREFACE.

IN fulfilling a task so difficult and so important as that of writing the Life of Christ, I feel it to be a duty to state the causes which led me to undertake it, and the principles which have guided me in carrying it to a conclusion.

1. It has long been the desire and aim of the publishers of this work to spread as widely as possible the blessings of knowledge; and, in special furtherance of this design, they wished to place in the hands of their readers such a sketch of the Life of Christ on earth as should enable them to realise it more clearly, and to enter more thoroughly into the details and sequence of the Gospel narratives. They therefore applied originally to an eminent theologian, who accepted the proposal, but whose elevation to the Episcopate prevented him from carrying it out.

Under these circumstances application was made to me, and I could not at first but shrink from a labour for which I felt that the amplest leisure of a lifetime would be insufficient, and powers incomparably greater than my own would still be utterly inadequate. But the considerations that were urged upon me came no doubt with additional force from the deep interest with which, from the first, I contemplated the design. I consented to make the effort, knowing that I could at least promise to do my best, and believing that he who does the best he can, and also seeks the blessing of God upon his labours, cannot finally and wholly fail.

And I have reason to be thankful that I originally entered upon the task, and, in spite of all obstacles, have still persevered in it. If the following pages in *any* measure fulfil the objects with which such a Life ought to be written, they should fill the minds of those who read them with solemn and not ignoble thoughts; they should "add sunlight to daylight by making the happy happier;" they should encourage the toiler; they should console the sorrowful; they should point the weak to the one true source of moral strength. But whether this book be thus blessed to high ends, or whether it be received with harshness and indifference, nothing at least can rob me of the deep and constant happiness which I have felt during almost every hour that has been spent upon it. Though, owing to serious and absorbing duties, months have often passed without my finding an opportunity to write a single line, yet, even in the midst

of incessant labour at other things, nothing forbade that the subject on which I was engaged should be often in my thoughts, or that I should find in it a source of peace and happiness different, alike in kind and in degree, from any which other interests could either give or take away.

2. After I had in some small measure prepared myself for the task, I seized, in the year 1870, the earliest possible opportunity to visit Palestine, and especially those parts of it which will be for ever identified with the work of Christ on earth. Amid those scenes wherein He moved—in the

————— “holy fields
Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
Which, eighteen hundred years ago, were nailed
For our advantage, on the bitter cross”——

in the midst of those immemorial customs which recalled at every turn the manner of life He lived—at Jerusalem, on the Mount of Olives, at Bethlehem, by Jacob's Well, in the Valley of Nazareth, along the bright strand of the Sea of Galilee, and in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon—many things came home to me, for the first time, with a reality and vividness unknown before. I returned more than ever confirmed in the wish to tell the full story of the Gospels in such a manner and with such illustrations as—with the aid of all that was within my reach of that knowledge which has been accumulating for centuries—might serve to enable at least the simple and the unlearned to understand and enter into the human surroundings of the life of the Son of God.

3. But, while I say this to save the book from being judged by a false standard, and with reference to ends which it was never intended to accomplish, it would be mere affectation to deny that I have hoped to furnish much which even learned readers may value. Though the following pages do not pretend to be exhaustive or specially erudite, they yet contain much that men of the highest learning have thought or ascertained. The books which I have consulted include the researches of divines who have had the privilege of devoting to this subject, and often to some small fragment of it, the best years of laborious and uninterrupted lives. No one, I hope, could have reaped, however feebly, among such harvests, without garnering at least something, which must have its value for the professed theologian as well as for the unlearned. And because I believed—and indeed most earnestly hoped—that this book might be acceptable to many of my brother-clergymen, I have admitted into the notes some quotations and references which will be comparatively valueless to the ordinary reader. But, with this double aim in view, I have tried to avoid “moving as in a strange diagonal,” and have never wholly lost sight of the fact that I had to work with no

higher object than that thousands, who have even fewer opportunities than myself, might be the better enabled to read that one Book, beside which even the best and profoundest treatises are nothing better than poor and stammering fragments of imperfect commentary.

4. It is perhaps yet more important to add that this Life of Christ is avowedly and unconditionally the work of a believer. Those who expect to find in it new theories about the divine personality of Jesus, or brilliant combinations of mythic cloud tinged by the sunset imagination of some decadent belief, will look in vain. It has not been written with any *direct* and *special* reference to the attacks of sceptical criticism. It is not even intended to deal otherwise than indirectly with the serious doubts of those who, almost against their will, think themselves forced to lapse into a state of honest disbelief. I may indeed venture to hope that such readers, if they follow me with no unkindly spirit through these pages, may here and there find considerations of real weight and importance, which will solve imaginary difficulties and supply an answer to real objections. Although this book is not mainly controversial, and would, had it been intended as a contribution to polemical literature, have been written in a very different manner, I do not believe that it will prove wholly valueless to any honest doubter who reads it in a candid and uncontentious spirit. Hundreds of critics, for instance, have impugned the authority of the Gospels on the score of the real or supposed contradictions to be found in them. I am, of course, familiar with such objections, which may be found in all sorts of books, from Strauss's *Leben Jesu* and Renan's *Vie de Jésus*, down to Sir R. Hanson's *Jesus of History*, and the English *Life of Jesus*, by Mr. Thomas Scott. But, while I have never consciously evaded a distinct and formidable difficulty, I have constantly endeavoured to show by the mere silent course of the narrative itself that many of these objections are by no means insuperable, and that many more are unfairly captious or altogether fantastic.

5. If there are questions wider and deeper than the minutiae of criticism, into which I have not fully and directly entered, it is not either from having neglected to weigh the arguments respecting them, or from any unwillingness to state the reasons why, in common with tens of thousands who are abler and wiser than myself, I can still say respecting every fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, MANET IMMOTA FIDES.¹ Writing as a believer to believers, as a Christian to Christians, surely, after nearly nineteen centuries of Christianity, any one may be allowed to rest a fact of the Life of Jesus on the testimony of St. John without stopping to write a volume on the authenticity of the Fourth Gospel; or may narrate one of the Gospel miracles without deeming it necessary to answer all the arguments

¹ "Faith remains unmoved."

which have been urged against the possibility of the supernatural. After the long labours, the powerful reasoning, and the perfect historical candour with which this subject has been treated by a host of apologists, it is surely as needless as it is impossible to lay again, on every possible occasion, the very lowest foundations of our faith. As regards St. John, therefore, I have contented myself with the merest and briefest summary of some of the evidence which to me still seems adequate to prove that he was the author of the Gospel which passes by his name,¹ and minuter indications tending to strengthen that conviction will be found scattered throughout the book. It would indeed be hypocrisy in me to say with Ewald that "*every argument, from every quarter to which we can look, every trace and record, combine together to render any serious doubt upon the question absolutely impossible;*" but I do say that, after the fairest and fullest consideration which I have been able to give to a question beset with difficulties, the arguments in favour of the Johannine authorship seem to me to be immensely preponderant.

Nor have I left the subject of the credibility of miracles and the general authenticity of the Gospel narratives entirely untouched, although there was the less need for my entering fully upon those questions in the following pages from my having already stated elsewhere, to the best of my ability, the grounds of my belief. The same remark applies to the yet more solemn truth of the Divinity of Christ. That—not indeed as surrounded with all the recondite enquiries about the *περιχώρησις* or *communicatio idiomatum*, the hypostatic union, the abstract impeccability, and such scholastic formulæ, but in its broad scriptural simplicity—was the subject of the Hulsean Lectures before the University of Cambridge in the year 1870. In those lectures I endeavoured to sketch what has ever seemed to my mind the most convincing external evidence of our faith, namely, "*The Witness of History to Christ.*" Those who have rejected the creed of the Church in this particular, approach the subject from a totally opposite point to our own. They read the earlier chapters of St. Luke and St. Matthew, and openly marvel that any mind can believe what to them appears to be palpable mythology; or they hear the story of one of Christ's miracles of power—the walking on the Sea of Galilee, or turning the water into wine—and scarcely conceal their insinuated misgiving as to the honesty of those who can accept such narratives as true. Doubtless we should share their convictions in these respects, if we approached the subject in the same spirit and by the same avenues. To show that we *do not* and *why* we do not so approach it, is—incidentally at least—one of the objects of this book.

The sceptic—and let me here say at once that I hope to use no single word

¹ See pp. 109, 110.

of anger or denunciation against a scepticism which I know to be in many cases perfectly honest and self-sacrificingly noble—approaches the examination of the question from a point of view the very opposite to that of the believer. He looks at the majestic order and apparently unbroken uniformity of Law, until the Universe becomes to him but the result mechanically evolved from tendencies at once irreversible and self-originated. To us such a conception is wholly inconceivable. Law to us involves the necessity of postulating a Law-giver, and “Nature,” which we only use as an unscientific and imaginative synonym for the sum-total of observed phenomena, involves in our conceptions the Divine Power of whose energy it is but the visible translucence. We believe that the God and Creator of “Nature” has made Himself known to us, if not by a primitive intuition, at any rate by immediate revelation to our hearts and consciences. And therefore such narratives as those to which I have alluded are not nakedly and singly presented to us in all their unsupported and startling difficulty. To us they are but incidental items in a faith which lies at the very bases of our being—they are but fragments of that great whole which comprises all that is divine and mysterious and supernatural in the two great words, Christianity and Christendom. And hence, though we no longer prominently urge the miracles of Christ as the proofs of our religion, yet, on the other hand, we cannot regard them as stumbling-blocks in the path of an historical belief. We study the sacred books of all the great religions of the world; we see the effect exercised by those religions on the mind of their votaries; and in spite of all the truths which even the worst of them enshrined, we watch the failure of them all to produce the inestimable blessings which we have ourselves enjoyed from infancy, which we treasure as dearly as our life, and which we regard as solely due to the spread and establishment of the faith we hold. We read the systems and treatises of ancient philosophy, and in spite of all the great and noble elements in which they abound, we see their total incapacity to console, or support, or deliver, or regenerate the world. Then we see the light of Christianity dawning like a tender day-spring amid the universal and intolerable darkness. From the first, that new religion allies itself with the world’s utter feeblenesses, and those feeblenesses it shares; yet without wealth, without learning, without genius, without arms, without anything to dazzle and attract—the religion of outcasts and exiles, of fugitives and prisoners—numbering among its earliest converts not many wise, not many noble, not many mighty, but such as the gaoler of Philippi, and the runaway slave of Colossæ—with no blessing apparently upon it save such as cometh from above—with no light whatever about it save the light that comes from heaven—it puts to flight kings and their armies; it breathes a new life, and a new hope, and a new and unknown holiness into a guilty and decrepit world. This we see; and we see the work grow, and increase,

and become more and more irresistible, and spread "with the gentleness of a sea that caresses the shore it covers." And seeing this we recall the faithful principle of the wise and tolerant Rabbi, uttered more than 1,800 years ago—"If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, lest haply ye be found to fight against God."

And when we have thus been led to see and to believe that the only religion in the world which has established the ideal of a perfect holiness, and rendered common the attainment of that ideal, has received in conspicuous measure the blessing of God, we examine its truths with a deeper reverence. The record of these truths—the record of that teaching which made them familiar to the world—we find in the Gospel narrative. And that narrative reveals to us much more. It not only furnishes us with an adequate reason for the existence and for the triumphs of the faith we hold, but it also brings home to us truths which affect our hearts and intellects no less powerfully than "the starry heavens above and the moral law within." Taught to regard ourselves as children of God, and common brothers in His great family of man, we find in the Gospels a revelation of God in His Son which enables us to know Him more, and to trust Him more absolutely, and to serve Him more faithfully, than all which we can find in all the other books of God, whether in Scripture, or history, or the experience of life, or those unseen messages which God has written on every individual heart. And finding that this revelation has been recorded by honest men in narratives which, however fragmentary, appear to stand the test of history, and to bear on the face of them every mark of transparent simplicity and perfect truthfulness—prepared for the reception of these glad tidings of God's love in man's redemption by the facts of the world without, and the experiences of the heart within—we thus cease to find any overwhelming difficulty in the record that He whom we believe to have been the Son of God—He who alone has displayed on earth the transcendent miracle of a sinless life—should have walked on the Sea of Galilee or turned the water into wine.

And when we thus accept the truth of the miracles they become to us moral lessons of the profoundest value. In considering the miracles of Jesus we stand in a wholly different position to the earlier disciples. To them the evidence of the miracles lent an overwhelming force to the teachings of the Lord; they were as the seal of God to the proclamation of the new kingdom. But to us who, for nineteen centuries, have been children of that kingdom, such evidence is needless. To the Apostles they were the credentials of Christ's mission; to us they are but fresh revelations of His will. To us they are works rather than signs, revelations rather than portents. Their historical importance lies for us in the fact that without them it would be impossible to account for the origin and spread of Christianity. We appeal

to them not to prove the truth of Christianity, but to illustrate its dissemination. But though to us Christianity rests on the basis of a Divine approval far more convincing than the display of supernatural power—though to us the providence which for these two millenniums has ruled the destinies of Christendom is a miracle far more stupendous in its evidential force than the raising of the dead or the enlightenment of the blind—yet a belief in these miracles enables us to solve problems which would otherwise be insolvable, as well as to embrace moral conceptions which would otherwise have found no illustration. To one who rejects them—to one who believes that the loftiest morals and the divinest piety which mankind has ever seen were evoked by a religion which rested on errors or on lies—the world's history must remain, it seems to me, a hopeless enigma or a revolting fraud.¹

6. Referring to another part of the subject, I ought to say I do not regard as possible any final harmony of the Gospels. Against *any* harmony which can be devised some plausible objection could be urged. On this subject no two writers have ever been exactly agreed, and this alone is sufficient to prove that the Gospel notices of chronology are too incomplete to render certainty attainable. I have, of course, touched directly, as well as indirectly, on such questions as the length of the ministry; and wherever the narrative required some clear and strong reason for adopting one view rather than another on some highly disputed point—such, for instance, as the Feast alluded to in John v. 1—I have treated the question as fully as was consistent with brevity, and endeavoured to put the reader in possession of the main facts and arguments on which the decision rests. But it would have been equally unprofitable and idle to encumber my pages with endless controversy on collateral topics which, besides being dreary and needless, are such as admit of no final settlement. In deciding upon a particular sequence of events, we can only say that such a sequence appears to us a *probable* one, not by any means that we regard it as *certain*. In every instance I have

¹ “Que la philosophie est ingénieuse et profonde dans ses conjectures!” writes De Lamennais in his scornful style. “Comme les événemens qui paraissaient les plus extraordinaires, deviennent simple dès qu'elle daigne les expliquer! Vous ne concevez pas que le christianisme se soit propagé naturellement: elle va vous le faire comprendre. Les Apôtres ont dit, ‘Nous vous annonçons l'Evangile au nom de l'Éternel, et vous devez nous croire, car nous sommes doués du pouvoir miraculeux. Nous rendons la santé aux malades, aux perclus l'usage de leurs membres, la vue aux aveugles, l'ouïe aux sourds, la vie aux morts.’ A ce discours le peuple est accouru de toutes parts, pour être témoin des miracles promis avec tant de confiance. Les malades n'ont point été guéris, les perclus n'ont point marché, les aveugles n'ont point vu, les sourds n'ont point entendu, les morts n'ont point ressuscité. Alors, transporté d'admiration, le peuple est tombé aux pieds des Apôtres, et s'est écrié, ‘Ceux-ci sont manifestement les envoyés de Dieu, les ministres de sa puissance!’ et sur le champ brisant ses idoles, il a quitté le culte des plaisirs pour le culte de la croix; il a renoncé à ses habitudes, à ses préjugés, à ses passions; il a réformé ses mœurs et embrassé la pénitence; les riches ont vendu leurs biens, pour en distribuer le prix aux indigens, et tous ont préféré les plus horribles tortures et une mort infâme aux remords d'abandonner une religion qui leur était si solidement prouvée.” (*Ess. sur l'Indifférence*, iv. 458.)

carefully examined the evidence for myself, often compressing into a few lines, or even into an incidental allusion, the results of a long enquiry. To some extent I agree with Stier and Lange in the order of events which they have adopted, and in this respect, as well as for my first insight into the character of several scenes (acknowledged in their place), I am perhaps more indebted to the elaborate work of Lange than to any others who have written on the same subject. When an author is writing from the results of independent thought on the sum-total of impressions formed during a course of study, it is not always possible to acknowledge specific obligations; but whenever I was consciously indebted to others, I have, throughout the book, referred—especially to Ewald, Neander, Schenkel, Strauss, Hase, Sepp, Stier, Ebrard, Wieseler, Hofmann, Keim, Caspari, Ullmann, Delitzsch, De Pressensé, Wallon, Dupanloup, Capecelatro, Ellicott, Young, Andrews, Wordsworth, Alford, and many others; as well as to older writers like Bonaventura and Jeremy Taylor. I have also to acknowledge the assistance which I have gained from the writings of Dean Stanley, Canons Lightfoot and Westcott, Professor Plumptre, Dr. Ginsburg, Mr. Grove, and the authors of articles in the *Encyclopædias* of Ersch and Grube, Herzog, Zeller, Winer, and Dr. W. Smith. Incidental lights have of course been caught from various archæological treatises, as well as works of geography and travel, from the old Itineraries and Reland down to Dr. Thomson's *Land and Book*, and Mr. Hepworth Dixon's *Holy Land*.

7. It is needless to add that this book is almost wholly founded on an independent study of the four Gospels side by side. In quoting from them I have constantly and intentionally diverged from the English version, because my main object has been to bring out and explain the scenes as they are described by the original witnesses. The minuter details of those scenes, and therewith the accuracy of our reproduction of them, depend in no small degree upon the discovery of the true reading, and the delicate observance of the true usage of words, particles, and tenses. It must not be supposed for a moment that I offer these translations—which are not unfrequently paraphrases—as preferable to those of the English version, but only that, consistently with the objects which I had in view, I have aimed at representing with more rigid accuracy the force and meaning of the true text in the original Greek. It will be seen too that I have endeavoured to glean in illustration all that is valuable or trustworthy in Josephus, in the Apocryphal Gospels, and in traditional particulars derived from the writings of the Fathers.

8. Some readers will perhaps be surprised by the frequency of the allusions to Jewish literature. Without embarking on “the sea of the Talmud” (as the Rabbis themselves call it)—a task which would require a lifetime—a modern reader may find not only the amplest materials, but probably *all* the

materials it can offer for the illustration of the Gospel history, in the writings not of Christians only, but also of learned and candid Rabbis. Not only in the well-known treatises of Lightfoot, Schöttgen, Surenhuys, Wagenseil, Buxtorf, Otho, Reland, Budæus, Gfrörer, Herzfeld, McCaul, Etheridge, but also in those of Jews by birth or religion, or both, like Geiger, Jost, Grätz, Derenbourg, Munk, Frankl, Deutsch, Raphall, Schwab, Cohen, any one may find large quotations from the original authorities collected as well by adversaries as by reverent and admiring students. Further, he may read the entire Mishna (if he have the time and patience to do so) in the Latin version of Surenhusius, and may now form his judgment respecting large and important treatises even of the Gemara, from such translations as the French one of the Berachôth by M. Moïse Schwab. I have myself consulted all the authorities here named, and have gained from them much information which seems to me eminently useful. Their researches have thrown a flood of light on some parts of the Gospels, and have led me to some conclusions which, so far as I am aware, are new. I have, indeed, in the second Excursus of the Appendix, shown that nothing of the slightest importance can be gleaned from the Talmudists about our Lord Himself. The real value of the Rabbinic writings in illustrating the Gospels is indirect, not direct—archæological, not controversial. The light which they throw on the fidelity of the Evangelists is all the more valuable because it is derived from a source so unsuspected and so hostile.¹

9. If in any part of this book I have appeared to sin against the divine law of charity, I must here ask pardon for it. But at least I may say that whatever trace of asperity may be found in any page of it, has never been directed against men, but against principles, or only against those men or classes of men in long-past ages whom we solely regard as the representatives of principles. It is possible that this book may fall into the hands of some Jewish readers, and to these particularly I would wish this remark to be addressed. I have reason to believe that the Jewish race have long since learnt to look with love and reverence on Him whom their fathers rejected; nay, more, that many of them, convinced by the irrefragable logic of history, have openly acknowledged that He was indeed their promised Messiah, although

¹ I take this opportunity of saying that the reader will not find in the following pages any one rigid or uniform system of *transliteration* of Hebrew words into English. This is due to the fact that, in most instances, my references to the Talmud have been derived from the numerous sources mentioned in the above paragraphs, and in referring such passages to the author who is responsible for their accuracy, I have generally adopted his mode of spelling. Scripture names I have mostly left in the form in which they occur in our English version; and in many terms that have acquired a common currency, like Mishna, Gemara, Talmud, &c., I have left the words in the shape most usually adopted. Besides these sources of difference there may doubtless be others “*quas aut incuria fudit aut humana parum cavit natura.*” For these errors, where they occur, as well as for all others, I must ask the indulgence of the candid reader, who will appreciate the difficulties of a task accomplished under conditions far from favourable.

they still reject the belief in His divinity. I see, in the writings of many Jews, a clear conviction that Jesus, to whom they have quite ceased to apply the terms of hatred found in the Talmud, was at any rate the greatest religious Teacher, the highest and noblest Prophet whom their race produced. They, therefore, would be the last to defend that greatest crime in history—the Crucifixion of the Son of God. And while no Christian ever dreams of visiting upon them the horror due to the sin of their ancestors, so no Jew will charge the Christians of to-day with looking with any feeling but that of simple abhorrence on the long, cruel, and infamous persecutions to which the ignorance and brutality of past ages have subjected their great and noble race. We may humbly believe that the day is fast approaching when He whom the Jews crucified, and whose divine revelations the Christians have so often and so grievously disgraced, will break down the middle wall of partition between them, and make both races one in religion, in heart, and life—Semite and Aryan, Jew and Gentile, united to bless and to evangelise the world.

10. One task alone remains—the pleasant task of thanking those friends to whose ready aid and sympathy I owe so much, and who have surrounded with happy memories and obligations the completion of my work. First and foremost, my heartiest and sincerest thanks are due to my friends, Mr. C. J. Monro, late Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, and Mr. R. Garnett, of the British Museum. They have given me an amount of time and attention which leaves me most largely indebted to their unselfish generosity; and I have made claims on their indulgence more extensive than I can adequately repay. To my old pupil, Mr. H. J. Boyd, late scholar of Brasenose College, Oxford, I am indebted for the table of Contents. I have also to thank the Rev. Professor Plumtre and Mr. George Grove not only for the warm interest which they have taken in my work, but also for some valuable suggestions. There are many others, not here named, who will believe, without any assurance from me, that I am not ungrateful for the help which they have rendered; and I must especially offer my best acknowledgments to the Rev. T. Teignmouth Shore—but for whose kind encouragement the book would not have been undertaken—and to those who with so much care and patience have conducted it through the press.

And now I send these pages forth not knowing what shall befall them, but with the earnest prayer that they may be blessed to aid the cause of truth and righteousness, and that He in whose name they are written may, of His mercy,

“Forgive them where they fail in truth,
And in His wisdom make me wise.”

F. W. F.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATIVITY.

	PAGE
The Fields of the Shepherds.—An Eastern Khan.—The Cave of Bethlehem.—The Enrolment.—Joseph and Mary.—“No room for them in the inn.”—The Manger and the Palace.—The Nativity.—Adoration of the Shepherds.—Fancy and Reality.—Contrast of the Gospels and the Apocrypha	1

CHAPTER II.

THE PRESENTATION IN THE TEMPLE.

Four Circumstances of the Infancy.—Order of Events.—The Circumcision.—The name Jesus.—The Presentation in the Temple.—Simeon.—Anna	14
--	----

CHAPTER III.

THE VISIT OF THE MAGI.

Importance of the Epiphany.—Herod the Great.—“Magi.”—Traditions.—Causes of their Journey.—General Expectation of the World.—The Star in the East.—Astronomical Conjectures of Kepler, &c.—Evanescent Stars.—Gifts of the Magi	19
---	----

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, AND MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

Departure of the Magi.—Legends of the Flight into Egypt.—Massacre of the Innocents.—Its Historical Credibility.—Character of Herod the Great.—Silence of Josephus.—Death and Burial of Herod the Great.—The Spell of the Herodian Dominion broken.—Accession of Archelaus.—Settlement in Galilee	28
--	----

CHAPTER V.

THE BOYHOOD OF JESUS.

Geography of Palestine.—Galilee.—Nazareth.—Reticence of the Evangelists.—Truthfulness of the Gospels. Contrasted with Apocryphal Legends.—Life of Galilean Peasants.—Imagination and Fact.—“He shall be called a Nazarene”	39
--	----

CHAPTER VI.

JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

Jesus Twelve Years old.—Journey from Nazareth to Jerusalem.—Scenes by the Way.—Numbers of Passover Pilgrims.—Jesus missing from the Caravan.—The Search.—Rabbis in the Temple.—“Hearing them and asking them questions.”—“Why did ye seek Me?”—“They understood not.”—Submissiveness	51
--	----

CHAPTER VII.

THE HOME AT NAZARETH.

“The Carpenter.”—Dignity of Poverty.—Dignity of Toil.—The Common Lot.—Wisdom better than Knowledge.—Originality.—The Language spoken by Jesus.—The Books of God.—Jesus in His Home.—Work and Example of those Years.—Peacefulness.—“The brethren of the Lord.”—Solitude.—The Hill-top at Nazareth.—Plain of Esdraelon.—Centrality of Palestine	62
--	----

CHAPTER VIII.

THE BAPTISM OF JOHN.

Characteristics of the Age.—Darkness deepest before Dawn.—Asceticism.—John the Baptist.—His Character.—His Teaching.—His Audience.—Scene of his Teaching.—His Message.—Bearing of John in the Presence of Jesus.—Why Jesus was baptised.—Recognition as the Messiah	81
---	----

CHAPTER IX.

THE TEMPTATION.

Quarantania.—“With the wild beasts.”—“Forty days.”—The Moment of Exhaustion.—Reality of the Temptation.—“Tempted like as we are.”—Fasting.— <i>Lapides Judaici</i> .—The First Temptation.—Subtlety of it.—“Not by bread alone.”—The Suggested Doubt.—The Order of the Temptations.—The Temple Pinnacle.—The Tempter’s Quotation.—The Splendid Offer.—The Roman Emperor.—The Victory	92
--	----

CHAPTER X.	
THE FIRST APOSTLES.	
St. John's Gospel.—"The Lamb of God."—Andrew and John.—Simoa.—Appearance and Personal Ascendency of Jesus.—Philip.—Nathanael.—"Come and see."—"Under the fig-tree."—"Angels ascending and descending"	PAGE 108
CHAPTER XI.	
THE FIRST MIRACLE.	
"On the third day."—An Eastern Bridal.—"They have no wine."—The Answer to the Virgin.—The Miracle.—Characteristics of this and other Miracles	122
CHAPTER XII.	
THE SCENE OF THE MINISTRY.	
Contrast between the Sea of Galilee and the Jordan Valley.—Beauty of Gennesareth. Character of the Scenery.—Its present Desolation and Past Populousness.—Prophecy of Isaiah.—Centrality.—Christ's Teaching there.—Site of Capernaum	132
CHAPTER XIII.	
JESUS AT THE PASSOVER.	
Visit to Jerusalem.—Purification of the Temple.—State of the Court of the Gentiles.—Crowd of Traders.—Indignation of Jesus.—Why they did not dare to resist.—Question of the Rulers.—"Destroy this temple."—Impression made by the Words.—Their deep Significance.—Extent to which they were understood	140
CHAPTER XIV.	
NICODEMUS.	
Talmudic Allusions to Nicodemus.—His Character.—Indirectness of his Questions.—Discourse of Jesus.—His Disciples baptise.—Continued Baptism of John.—Ænon, near Salim.—Complaint of John's Disciples.—Noble and sad Reply	151
CHAPTER XV.	
THE WOMAN OF SAMARIA.	
Retirement of Jesus to Galilee.—Sychar.—Noontide at the Well.—The Scene.—Conversation with the Woman.—Jerusalem and Gerizim.—Revelation of Messiahship.—Return of Disciples.—The Fields White unto Harvest.—Believing Samaritans	157
CHAPTER XVI.	
REJECTED BY THE NAZARENES.	
Sequence of Events.—A perfect "Harmony" impossible.—A Prophet in his own Country.—A Jewish Synagogue.—Nature of the Service.—Sermon of Jesus.—Change of Feeling in the Audience.—Their Fury.—Escape of Jesus.—Finally leaves Nazareth	167
CHAPTER XVII.	
THE BEGINNING OF THE GALILEAN MINISTRY.	
The Courtier's Entreaty.—His Faith.—Sequence of Events.—St. John and the Synoptists.—Jesus stays at Capernaum.—His First Sabbath there.—Preaches in the Synagogue.—The Demoniac.—Peter's Mother-in-law.—The Evening.—Eagerness of the Multitude.—His Privacy invaded.—Preaches from the Boat.—Call of Peter, James, and John.—"Depart from me."—Publicans.—The Publican Apostle	176
CHAPTER XVIII.	
THE TWELVE, AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.	
A Night of Prayer.—Selection of the Twelve.—Conjectures respecting them.—James and John.—Peter.—Kûrn Hattin.—Contrast with Moses on Sinai.—Beatitudes.—Sketch of the Sermon on the Mount.—"Not as the Scribes."—Authority.—Christ and other Masters.—Perfection.—Beauty and Simplicity	189
CHAPTER XIX.	
FURTHER MIRACLES.	
A Man full of Leprosy.—Violation of the Letter.—Why was Publicity forbidden?—Deputation of Batlanim. Message of the Centurion.—Pressure of the Ministry.—The Interfering Kinsmen	206
CHAPTER XX.	
JESUS AT NAIN.	
Nain.—A Funeral.—The Widow's Son raised.—Message from John the Baptist.—Overclouding of his Faith.—How accounted for.—Machærus.—God's Trial of His Servants.—Answer of Jesus.—Splendid Eulogy of John.—"The least in the Kingdom of Heaven"	214

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SINNER AND THE PHARISEE.

PAGE

Simon the Pharisee.—Jewish Customs at Meals.—The Weeping Woman.—Simon's Disgust.—Answer of Jesus.—Parable of the Debtors.—Cold Courtesy of Simon.—Pardoning of Sins.—Was it Mary of Magdala? 225

CHAPTER XXII.

JESUS AS HE LIVED IN GALILEE.

A Scene in Galilee.—Jesus and His Followers.—His Aspect.—A Life of Poverty—of Toil—of Health—of Sorrow—and yet of Holy Joy 233

CHAPTER XXIII.

A GREAT DAY IN THE LIFE OF JESUS.

Order of Events.—Teaching from the Boat.—Parables.—Parable of the Sower.—Other Parables.—Effect produced.—Urgent Desire for Rest.—The Eastern Shore.—The Three Aspirants.—The Storm.—“What manner of Man is this?”—Miracles.—Gergesa.—The Naked Demoniac from the Tombs.—“Thy name.”—Loss of the Swine.—Alarm of the Gadarenes.—Their Request.—Request of the Demoniac 243

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE DAY OF MATTHEW'S FEAST.

Return to Capernaum.—The Paralytic let through the Roof.—“Thy sins be forgiven thee.”—Feast in Matthew's House.—Scorn of the Pharisees.—Question about Fasting.—The New Wine and the Old 261

CHAPTER XXV.

THE DAY OF MATTHEW'S FEAST (*continued*).

Jairus.—The Woman with the Issue.—The Touch of Faith.—Message to Jairus.—The Hired Mourners.—Raising of Jairus's Daughter.—The Blind Men.—They disobey Christ's Injunction 268

CHAPTER XXVI.

A VISIT TO JERUSALEM.

Phases of the Ministry.—Mission of the Twelve.—Their Instructions.—A Feast of the Jews.—Arrangement of St. John.—Days of Jewish Feasts.—Nature of the Purim Feast.—Reason for Christ's Presence 274

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE MIRACLE AT BETHESDA.

Pool of Bethesda.—Interpolated Verse.—Healing of the Impotent Man.—Jealous Questioning.—Sabbath-breaking.—The Man's Meanness.—Anger of the Rulers.—Answer of Jesus.—Dangerous Results 282

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MURDER OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Return to Galilee.—Herod Antipas.—Herodias.—Consequences of the Adulterous Marriage.—Credulity and Unbelief.—The Banquet.—Salome.—Her Request.—Murder of the Baptist.—Herod's Remorse.—He inquires about Jesus.—Ultimate Fate of Herodias 294

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE FEEDING OF THE FIVE THOUSAND, AND WALKING ON THE SEA.

Bethsaida Julias.—Hungry Multitude.—Miracle of the Loaves.—Excitement of the Multitude.—Dismissal of the Disciples.—Jesus alone on the Mountain.—The Disciples alone in the Storm.—“It is I.”—Peter's Boldness and Failure.—Nature of the Miracle 306

CHAPTER XXX.

THE DISCOURSE AT CAPERNAUM.

Astonished Query of the Multitude.—Reproof of Jesus.—They ask for a Sign.—His Answer.—The Bread of Life.—Their Dull Materialism.—Their Displeasure.—Abandonment of Jesus.—Sad Question to the Disciples.—Answer of Peter.—Warning to Judas 315

CHAPTER XXXI.

GATHERING OPPOSITION.

Gathering Clouds.—1. “Thy sins be forgiven thee.”—2. “A gluttonous man and a winebibber.”—3. “Thy disciples fast not.”—4. “With publicans and sinners.”—“Mercy, not sacrifice.”—The Prodigal Son.—Religionism and Religion.—5. Charges of violating the Sabbath.—Jewish Traditions.—Abhôth and Toldôth.—i. In the Corn-fields.—Analogy of David's Conduct.—“No Sabbatism in the Temple.”—Incident in the *Codex Bezae*.—ii. The Stonemason with the Withered Hand.—Good or Evil on the Sabbath?—The Objectors foiled.—Unwashed Hands.—Jewish Ablutions.—“Your Tradition.”—The Oral Law.—Hagadôth and Halachôth —“That which cometh from within.”—Evil Thoughts 324

CHAPTER XXXII.

DEEPENING OPPOSITION.

PAGE

- Agitations of the Life of Jesus.—Prayer at Dawn.—The Lord's Prayer.—Parable of the Importunate Friend.—Lights and Shadows of the Life of Jesus.—The Blind and Dumb Demoniac.—Exorcism.—Slander of the Scribes.—Beelzebub.—Answer of Jesus.—Warning against Light Words.—Who are truly blessed?—"Master, we would see a sign."—Sign of the Prophet Jonah.—Interference of His Kinsmen 347

CHAPTER XXXIII.

THE DAY OF CONFLICT.

- Alone with Pharisees at the Midday Meal.—Unwashen Hands.—Reproof of Jesus.—The Lawyers included in the Reproof.—Spurious Civility.—Open Rupture.—Danger of Jesus.—He goes out to the Multitude.—Denunciation of Hypocrisy.—Foolish Appeal.—The Parable of the Rich Fool.—Peter's Question.—Jesus troubled in Spirit 357

CHAPTER XXXIV.

AMONG THE HEATHEN.

- The Regions of Tyre and Sidon.—The Syro-phœnician Woman.—Her Petition apparently Rejected.—Her Exalted Faith.—Her Faith rewarded.—Heathen Lands.—Return to Decapolis.—Deaf and Dumb Man.—"Ephphatha!"—Reception by the Multitudes.—Feeding of the Four Thousand 364

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE GREAT CONFESSION.

- Reception of Jesus on His Return to Galilee.—An ill-omened Conjunction.—Demand of a Sign.—Reproof and Refusal.—Sadness of Jesus.—He sails away.—The Prophetic Woe.—Leaven of the Pharisees and of Herod.—Literal Misinterpretation of the Apostles.—Healing of a Blind Man at Bethsaida Julias.—On the road to Cæsarea Philippi.—The momentous Questions.—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God."—The Rock.—Foundation of the Church.—Misinterpretations.—Warnings about His Death.—Rash Presumption of Peter.—"Get thee behind me, Satan."—The Worth of the Human Soul.—"The Son of Man coming in His Kingdom" 374

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE TRANSFIGURATION.

- The Mountain.—Not Tabor, but Hermon.—The Vision.—Moses and Elias.—Bewildered Words of Peter.—The Voice from Heaven.—Fading of the Vision.—The New Elias 391

CHAPTER XXXVII.

THE DEMONIAK BOY.

- The Contrast.—The Disciples and the Scribes.—Arrival of Jesus.—The Demoniac Boy.—Emotion of Jesus.—Anguish of the Father.—"If thou canst."—The Deliverance.—Power of Faith to remove Mountains.—Secluded Return of Jesus.—Sad Warnings.—Dispute which should be the Greatest.—The Little Child. John's Question.—Offending Christ's Little Ones.—The Unforgiving Debtor 398

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

A BRIEF REST IN CAPERNAUM.

- The Temple Tax.—The Collectors come to Peter.—His rash Answer.—Jesus puts the Question in its True Light.—The Stater in the Fish's Mouth.—Peculiar Characteristics of this Miracle 404

CHAPTER XXXIX.

JESUS AT THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

- Observances of the Feast of Tabernacles.—Presumption of the Brethren of Jesus.—"I go not up yet unto this feast."—Eager Questions of the Multitude.—Their differing Opinions.—Jesus appears in the Temple.—His reproachful Question.—"Thou hast a devil."—Appeal to His Works.—Indignation of the Sanhedrin.—Observances of the Last Day of the Feast.—"The joy of the drawing of water."—"Rivers of Living Water."—Divided Opinions.—"Never man spake like this Man."—Timid Interpellation of Nicodemus.—Answering Taunt of the Pharisees 409

CHAPTER XL.

THE WOMAN TAKEN IN ADULTERY.

- Question as to the Genuineness of the Narrative.—The Evidence on both sides.—Jesus at the Mount of Olives.—Returns at Dawn to the Temple.—Hilarity of the Feast.—Immorality of the Age.—The Water of Jealousy.—Base Cruelty of the Pharisees.—The Woman dragged into the Temple.—What sayest *Thou*?—Subtlety of the Assault.—Writing on the Floor.—"Him that is without sin among you."—Conscience-stricken.—Misery left alone with Mercy.—"Go, and sin no more."—Absolute Calmness of Jesus under all Attacks.—Eighth Day of the Feast.—The great Candelabra.—The Light of the World.—Agitating Discussions with the Jews—A Burst of Fury.—Jesus leaves the Temple 422

CHAPTER XLI.

THE MAN BORN BLIND.

	PAGE
Jewish Notion of Nemesis.—“Which did sin?”—“Go wash in the Pool of Siloam.”—On the Sabbath Day.—The Man examined by the Sanhedrin.—A Sturdy Nature.—Perplexity of the Sanhedrists.—“We know that this man is a sinner.”—Blandishments and Threats.—The Man Excommunicated.—Jesus and the Outcast.—True and False Shepherds.	436

CHAPTER XLII.

FAREWELL TO GALILEE.

The Interval between the Feasts of Tabernacles and Dedication.—Great Episode in St. Luke.—Character of the Episode.—Mission of the Seventy.—News of the Galileans massacred by Pilate.—Teachings founded on the Event.—Stern Warnings.—The Barren Fig-tree.—The Pharisees' Plot to hasten His Departure.—“Go and tell this fox.”—Herod Antipas.—Jesus sets forth.—Farewell to the Scene of His Ministry.—Fate that fell on the Galileans.—Jesus exults in Spirit.—“Come unto me all ye that labour.”—Noble Joy	443
--	-----

CHAPTER XLIII.

INCIDENTS OF THE JOURNEY.

Possible Routes.—The Village of En-gannim.—Churlishness of the Samaritans.—Passion of the Sons of Thunder.—Gentle Rebuke of Jesus.—Counting the Cost.—Peræa.—The Ten Lepers.—Thanklessness.—“Where are the nine?”	458
---	-----

CHAPTER XLIV.

TEACHINGS OF THE JOURNEY.

Sabbatical Disputes.—Foolish Ruler of the Synagogue.—Healing of the Bowed Woman.— <i>Argumentum ad hominem</i> .—Ignorant Sabbatarianism.—Religious Espionage.—The Man with the Dropsy.—Question of Jesus. Silence of Obstinacy.—The Man Healed.—Self-sufficiency of the Pharisees.—Struggles for Precedence.—A vague Platitude.—Parable of the King's Marriage-feast.—The Unjust Steward.—Avarice of the Pharisees.—Their Sycophancy to Herod.—The Rich Man and Lazarus.—“Are there few that be saved?”—“What must I do to obtain Eternal Life?”—The Good Samaritan.—Return of the Seventy.—The Love of Publicans and Sinners.—The Parable of the Prodigal Son.—Solemn Warnings.—“Where, Lord?”—The Eagles and the Carcass	465
---	-----

CHAPTER XLV.

THE FEAST OF DEDICATION.

The House at Bethany.—Martha and Mary.—“The one thing needful.”—The Chanùkkah.—Solomon's Porch.—Reminiscence of the Feast.—Jesus suddenly surrounded.—“How long dost thou hold us in suspense?”—No Political Messiah.—“I and My Father are one.”—They seek to stone Him.—Appeal of Jesus to His Life and Works.—He retires to Bethany beyond Jordan	486
---	-----

CHAPTER XLVI.

THE LAST STAY IN PERÆA.

Question about Divorce.—Importance of the Question.—Hillel and Shammai.—Dispute as to the Meaning of <i>Ervath Dabhar</i> .—Lax Interpretations.—Both Schools wrong.—Simple Solution of the Question.—Permission of Divorce by Moses only temporary.—Corruption of the Age.—Teachings of Jesus about Moral Purity.—Celibacy and Marriage.—Jesus blesses Little Children.—The eager Young Kuler.—“Good Master.”—“What must I do?”—An heroic Mandate.—“The Great Refusal.”—Discouragement of the Disciples.—Hundredfold Rewards.—The Labourers in the Vineyard	495
--	-----

CHAPTER XLVII.

THE RAISING OF LAZARUS.

Message to Jesus.—Two Days' Delay.—“Let us also go that we may die with Him.”—He approaches Bethany.—Martha Meets Him.—“The Resurrection and the Life.”—Mary's Agony.—Deep Emotion of Jesus.—Scene at the Grave.—“Lazarus, come forth.”—Silence of the Synoptists.—Meeting at the House of Caiaphas.—His wicked Policy.—The Fiat of Death.—Retirement to Ephraim	505
--	-----

CHAPTER XLVIII.

JERICHO AND BETHANY.

Pilgrim Caravans.—Jesus on His Way.—Revelation of the Crowning Horror.—The Sons of Zebedee.—The Cup and the Baptism.—Humility before Honour.—Jericho.—Bartimæus.—Zacchæus.—His Repentance. Parable of the Pounds.—Events which suggested it.—Arrival at Bethany.—“Simon the Leper.”—Intentional Reticence of the Synoptists.—Mary's Offering.—Inward Rage of Judas.—Blessing of Mary by Jesus.—“For my burying.”—Interview of the Traitor with the Priests	516
--	-----

CHAPTER XLIX.

PALM SUNDAY.

Excitement of Expectation.—Three Roads to Bethany.—Bethphage.—The Ass's Colt.—A humble Triumph.—Hosanna!—Turn of the Road.—The Jerusalem of that day.—Jesus weeps over the City.—Terrible Fulfilment of the Woe.—The Two Processions.—Indignation of the Pharisees.—“Who is this?”—Jesus once more cleanses the Temple.—Hosannas of the Children.—“Have ye never read?”—The Greeks who desired an Interview.—Abgarus V.—Discourse of Jesus.—Voice from Heaven.—The Day closes in Sadness.—Bivouac on the Mount of Olives 530

CHAPTER L.

MONDAY IN PASSION WEEK.—A DAY OF PARABLES.

Jesus Hungers.—The Deceptive Fig.—Hopelessly Barren.—Criticisms on the Miracle.—Right View of it.—Deputation of the Priests.—“Who gave thee this authority?”—Counter-question of Jesus.—The Priests reduced to Silence.—Parable of the Two Sons.—Parable of the Rebellious Husbandmen.—The Rejected Corner-stone.—Parable of the Marriage of the King's Son.—Machinations of the Pharisees 544

CHAPTER LI.

THE DAY OF TEMPTATIONS.—THE LAST AND GREATEST DAY OF THE PUBLIC MINISTRY OF JESUS.

The Withered Fig-tree.—Power of Faith.—Plot of the Herodians.—Its Dangerous Character.—The Tribute Money.—Divine and Ready Wisdom of the Reply of Jesus.—Attempt of the Sadducees.—A poor Question of Casuistry.—The Sevenfold Widow.—“As the Angels of God.”—“The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.”—Implicit Teaching of Immortality 554

CHAPTER LII.

THE GREAT DENUNCIATION.

“Master, thou hast well said.”—“Which is the great commandment?”—Answer of the Rabbis.—Answer of Jesus.—“Not far from the kingdom of heaven.”—Question of Jesus to the Scribes.—David's Son and David's Lord.—Their Failure to Answer.—The Final Rupture.—“Woe unto you, Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!”—The Voice which broke in Tears.—“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem!”—The Denunciation deserved.—The Denunciation fulfilled 564

CHAPTER LIII.

FAREWELL TO THE TEMPLE.

A happier Incident.—The poor Widow.—True Almsgiving.—Splendour of the Temple.—“Not one stone upon another.”—Jesus on the Mount of Olives.—“When shall these things be?”—The great Eschatological Discourse.—The Two Horizons.—Difficulties of the Discourse, and mode of meeting them.—What must come before the Final End.—The Immediate Future.—Warning Signs.—Parable of the Fig-tree—of the Ten Virgins—of the Talents.—After Two Days.—Last Evening Walk to Bethany 575

CHAPTER LIV.

THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

Meeting of Conspirators in the Palace of Caiaphas.—Their Discussions.—Judas demands an Interview.—Thirty Pieces of Silver.—Motives of Judas.—“Satan entered into Judas.”—The Wednesday passed in Retirement.—Last Sleep of Jesus on Earth 588

CHAPTER LV.

THE LAST SUPPER.

“Green Thursday.”—Preparations for the Meal.—The Upper Room.—Dispute about Precedence.—Jesus washes the Disciples' Feet.—Peter's Surprise and Submission.—“Ye are clean, but not all.”—Teaching about Humility.—Troubled in Spirit.—“One of you shall betray me.”—“Lord, is it I?”—Peter makes a Sign to John.—Giving of the Sop.—“Rabbi, is it I?”—“He went out, and it was night.”—Revived Joy of the Feast.—Institution of the Lord's Supper 596

CHAPTER LVI.

THE LAST DISCOURSE.

“Now is the Son of Man glorified.”—“Little Children.”—The New Commandment.—“Lord, whither goest Thou?”—Warning to Peter.—“Lord, here are two swords.”—Consolations.—“How can we know the way?”—“Lord, show us the Father.”—Difficulty of Judas Lebbæus.—Last Words before Starting.—The True Vine.—Plain Teachings.—Gratitude of the Disciples.—Fresh Warnings to them.—The High-Priestly Prayer 609

CHAPTER LVII.

GETHSEMANE.—THE AGONY AND THE ARREST.

PAGE

Walk through the Moonlight to Gethsemane.—Last Warning to Peter.—Gethsemane.—Scene of Agony.—Desire for Solitude and yet for Sympathy.—The First Struggle with Agony of Soul.—Its Intensity.—The Bloody Sweat.—Not due to Dread of Death.—“Simon, sleepest thou?”—The Second Agony.—The Disciples Sleeping.—The Third Agony and Final Victory.—“Sleep on now, and take your rest.”—Torches in the Moonlight.—Steps taken by Judas.—“Comrade.”—The Traitor’s Kiss.—Jesus advances.—“Whom seek ye?”—“I am He.”—Terror of the Band.—Historical Parallels.—Jesus arrested.—Peter’s Blow.—“Suffer ye thus far.”—The Young Man in the Linen Sheet.—Bound and Led away . . . 618

CHAPTER LVIII.

JESUS BEFORE THE PRIESTS AND THE SANHEDRIN.

Asserted Discrepancies.—Sixfold Trial.—“To Annas first.”—Hanan, the High Priest *de jure*.—His Character.—His Responsibility for the Result.—Degradation of the then Sanhedrin.—Pharisees and Sadducees.—Greater Cruelty of the Latter.—The Sadducees, the Priestly Party.—Cause of their Rage and Hatred.—“The Viper Brood.”—Jesus repudiates the Examination of Hanan.—“Answerest Thou the High Priest so?”—Noble Patience.—The Second Phase of the Trial.—In the Palace of Caiaphas.—Committees of the Sanhedrin.—“Sought false witness.”—Total Failure of the Witnesses.—“Destroy this Temple.”—Silence of Jesus.—Despair of Caiaphas.—His violent Adjuration.—Reply of Jesus.—“Blasphemy.”—“*Ish maveth*” . . . 636

CHAPTER LIX.

THE INTERVAL BETWEEN THE TRIALS.

The First Derision.—The Outer Court.—John procures Admission for Peter.—The First Denial.—The Second Denial.—The Galilaean Accent.—The Third Denial.—The Look of Jesus.—The Repentance of Peter.—Brutal Insults of the Menials.—The Dawn. iii. The Meeting of the Sanhedrin.—Their Divisions.—Third Phase of the Trial.—A Contrast of Two Scenes before the Sanhedrin.—Jesus breaks His Silence.—The Condemnation.—The Second Derision.—The Fate of Jesus . . . 649

CHAPTER LX.

JESUS BEFORE PILATE.

“Suffered under Pontius Pilate.”—What is known of Pilate.—First Outbreak of the Jews against him or his Arrival.—The Aqueduct and the Corban.—The gilt Votive Shields.—The Massacre of Galilaeans.—The Massacre of Samaritans.—The Palace of Herod.—Jesus in the Palace.—Led before Pilate.—Pilate comes out to the Jews.—1. His Roman Contemptuousness.—Determines to try the Case.—Vagueness of the Accusations.—“Art Thou the King of the Jews?”—“What is truth?”—First Acquittal.—2. Fierceness of the Jews.—Jesus sent to Herod Antipas.—Cruel Frivolity of Herod.—Second Acquittal.—3. Last Phase of the Trial.—Temporising of Pilate.—Dream of his Wife.—Cowardly Concession.—Jesus or Bar-Abbas?—“Crucify Him.”—The Scourging.—Third Derision.—The Crown of Thorns.—“Behold the Man!”—Last Efforts of Pilate to save Him.—Last Warning to Pilate.—“The Son of God.”—“Behold your King.”—Pilate terrified at the Name of Cæsar.—He gives way.—He washes his Hands.—“His blood be on us, and on our children!”—Fulfilment of the Imprecation . . . 661

CHAPTER LXI.

THE CRUCIFIXION.

“*I, miles, expedi crucem.*”—Two Malefactors.—The Cross.—Procession to Golgotha.—Simon of Cyrene.—The Daughters of Jerusalem.—The Green and the Dry Tree.—Site of Golgotha.—The Medicated Draught.—The Method of Crucifixion.—“Father, forgive them.”—Agony of Crucifixion.—The Title on the Cross.—Rage of the Jews.—The Soldiers.—Parting the Garments.—Insults of the Bystanders.—The Robber.—Silence of the Sufferer.—The Penitent Robber.—“To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise.”—The Women from Galilee.—“Woman, behold thy son.”—The Noonday Darkness.—“Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?”—“I thirst.”—Vinegar to Drink.—“Into Thy hands.”—“It is finished.”—The Centurion.—The Multitude.—What the Cross of Christ has done.—The Crurifragium.—Water and Blood . . . 688

CHAPTER LXII.

THE RESURRECTION.

Utter apparent Weakness of Christianity at the Death of Christ.—Source of its subsequent Strength.—Joseph of Arimathæa.—Nicodemus.—The Garden and the Sepulchre.—The Women mark the Spot.—Request of the Sanhedrin that the Tomb might be guarded.—The Dawn of Easter Day.—The Women at the Sepulchre.—The Empty Tomb.—Peter and John.—1. First Appearance to Mary of Magdala.—2. Appearance to the Women.—Story Invented by the Jews.—3. Appearance to Peter.—4. The Disciples at Emmaus.—5. The assembled Apostles.—6. The Apostles and Thomas.—7. At the Sea of Galilee.—Jesus and Peter.—“Feed my lambs.”—“What shall this man do?”—8. The Five Hundred on the Mountain.—9. Appearance to James.—10. The Ascension.—“At the right hand of God, the Father Almighty.” . . . 715

APPENDIX.

— 44 —

	PAGE
EXCURSUS I.	
THE DATE OF CHRIST'S BIRTH	735
EXCURSUS II.	
CHRIST AND THE CHRISTIANS IN THE TALMUD	737
EXCURSUS III.	
JESUS AND HILLEL	738
EXCURSUS IV.	
GREEK LEARNING	742
EXCURSUS V.	
THE TALMUD AND THE ORAL LAW	742
EXCURSUS VI.	
TRADITIONAL DESCRIPTION OF THE APPEARANCE OF OUR LORD	744
EXCURSUS VII.	
JEWISH ANGELOLOGY AND DEMONOLOGY	745
EXCURSUS VIII.	
THE UNNAMED FEAST OF JOHN V. 1, AND THE LENGTH OF THE MINISTRY	746
EXCURSUS IX.	
HYPOCRISY OF THE PHARISEES	748
EXCURSUS X.	
WAS THE LAST SUPPER AN ACTUAL PASSOVER?	750
EXCURSUS XI.	
OLD TESTAMENT QUOTATIONS	755
EXCURSUS XII.	
NOTES ON THE TALMUD	756
EXCURSUS XIII.	
THE SANHEDRIN	760
EXCURSUS XIV.	
PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES	762
EXCURSUS XV.	
TRADITIONAL SAYINGS OF CHRIST	764

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE		PAGE
Map of Palestine	<i>Frontispiece</i>	The Wilderness of Judæa	87
Eastern Khan	1	Eastern Threshing-Floor	89
Chapel of the Angelus ad Pastores	3	Quarantania	92
Bethlehem, showing the Convent Buildings	5	On the Dead Sea	96
Street in Nazareth	8	Loaf-shaped Fossil	99
The Convent of the Nativity, Bethlehem	9	Portion of the Temple Wall—The Jews' Wailing Place	103
Interior of the Chapel of the Nativity	12	Head of the Emperor Tiberius	106
Coin of Herod the Great	13	Fords of the Jordan	108
The Star in the East	14	Representation of the Face of our Lord	113
An Offering of Turtle-Doves	17	Early Portrait of our Lord	114
The Magi bringing their Offerings	19	On the Sea of Galilee	117
Early Medal of the Magi	21	Oriental Fig-Tree	119
Shekel of Bar-cochab	27	Eastern Water-Pots	122
Palms and Plain of Jericho	28	Oriental Wedding Ceremonies	124
Map of South Palestine	30	Ruins of Kefr Kenna	128
Rachel's Tomb	31	The Dead Sea	132
Houses in Bethlehem	34	Palms and Fruits of Palestine	134
The Golden Gate, Jerusalem	37	Site of Capernaum	138
Mountains of Moab	39	Windows of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre	140
Map showing the Mountain Ranges of Palestine	40	The Church of the Holy Sepulchre	143
In the Plain of Jezreel	41	Capital of Column at Jerusalem	145
The Roller-Bird	43	Carved Arch at Jerusalem	147
Women of Nazareth	45	Shekel	150
A Carpenter's Shop in Nazareth	50	Banks of the Jordan	151
Plains of Galilee	51	Jacob's Well	160
The River Kishon	53	Mount Ebal	161
"Barc and Dewless Gilboa"	54	Ruins of the Temple of Manasseh, Samaria	164
Walls of Jerusalem	57	Sychar	165
An Olive-Grove	60	Plain of Esdraelon	167
Coins of Archelaus	61	Roll of the Pentateuch at Shechem, said to have been written by Eleazar, the son of Aaron	171
The Hills round Nazareth	62	Cliff behind Nazareth	174
Nazareth from the South-West	64	Cana in Galilee	176
Early Greek Writing	69	South End of the Sea of Galilee	183
A Well in Palestine	71	The Sea of Galilee	185
Looking down on Nazareth	73	Fish of the Sea of Galilee	186
Jerusalem from the Road to Bethany	76	Kûrn Hattîn (Mount of Beatitudes)	189
Hermon	77	Fishermen of the Lake of Galilee	193
Monastery on the Summit of Carmel	79	Fish of the Lake of Galilee	194
The Plain of Jezreel—Distant View	80	Boat on the Lake of Galilee	195
On the Jordan	81		
The Jordan Valley	83		

	PAGE		PAGE
The Huleh Lily	198	Coin of Caligula	304
Scarlet Anemone	199	Christ Walking on the Water	306
Tiberias	206	Denarius of Tiberius	308
Ruins of Tell Hûm	211	Fish of the Lake of Galilee	309
Roman Centurion	212	Ruins at Tell Hûm	315
Nain—Mount Tabor in the Distance	214	Ruins of Jewish Synagogue	320
Rock-hewn Tombs	216	The Calling of the Apostles	323
Mount Tabor	217	Swine-Husks (Pods of the Carob-Tree)	324
Coin of Herod Antipas	219	Plan of Jerusalem at the time of King Herod	331
The Dead Sea by Moonlight	221	Ruins of the Synagogue at Irbid	333
The Reed of Palestine	223	Passover Cake	334
Magdala and the Lake of Galilee	225	Egyptian Corn	335
Sitting at Meat	227	The Table of Shewbread	336
Ancient Meal-Table	227	" " (From the Arch of Titus)	337
Spikenard	228	A Street in Jerusalem	339
Lake of Galilee and Kûrn Hattîn	233	Washing Hands in the East	342
Phylacteries	236	The Golden Candlestick	343
Eastern Dress	237	Eastern Washing Utensils	346
Didrachm of Rhodes	240	Walls of Jerusalem	347
An Eastern Sower	243	Oriental at Prayer	348
The Lake of Galilee	247	Gem showing the Story of Jonah	356
Flowers from the Shores of the Sea of Galilee	250	Tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat	357
Caves in the Hill-sides—Lake of Galilee	253	Ruins at Tyre	364
Ruins of Gerasa	258	Sidon	365
Houses in Nazareth, showing Exterior Staircase	261	Coin of Tyre	366
Cure of the Paralytic	263	"The Dogs eat of the Crumbs"	368
On the Shore of the Lake of Galilee	265	The River Jabbok	369
Wine-Skin	267	Ruins at Gerasa	370
The Raising of Jairus' Daughter	268	Blessing the Loaves and Fishes	372
A Captive Jew with Fringed Garments	269	Ruins at Gerasa	373
Fringed Garments (Eastern)	270	Hills overlooking the Sea of Galilee	374
Eastern Flute Player	271	Ruins of Chorazin	377
Eastern Bier	272	Ruins of Cæsarea Philippi	380
View of Jerusalem	274	Cave at Banias	381
Eastern Sandals	275	Coin of Philip the Tetrarch	390
Group of Eastern Pilgrims	280	Mount Hermon	391
Martyrdom	281	Ruins of Cæsarea Philippi	392
The Jaffa Gate, Jerusalem	282	The Transfiguration	393
The Tower of Antonia	284	Safed and the Lake of Galilee	398
The Pool of Bethesda	285	Remains of an Ancient Arch at Jerusalem	404
The Paralytic at Bethesda	287	Tetradrachm of Antioch	405
Reconstruction of the Temple	289	St. Peter's Fish—from the Lake of Galilee	408
Head of our Lord, after the type of the Emerald Vernicle, presented by Bajazet II. to Inno- cent VIII.	292	General View of the Tabernacle	409
Ruins of Machærus	294	Lulab and Citron	410
Coin of Herod Antipas	295	Various Forms of the Tabernacle	411
Petra	297	The Pool of Siloam	416
Dancing Women	299	Priests' Trumpets	417
Tiberias and the Lake of Galilee	303	Capital Built into a Wall in the Haran Enclosure at Jerusalem	419
		The Hills of Galilee	420

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

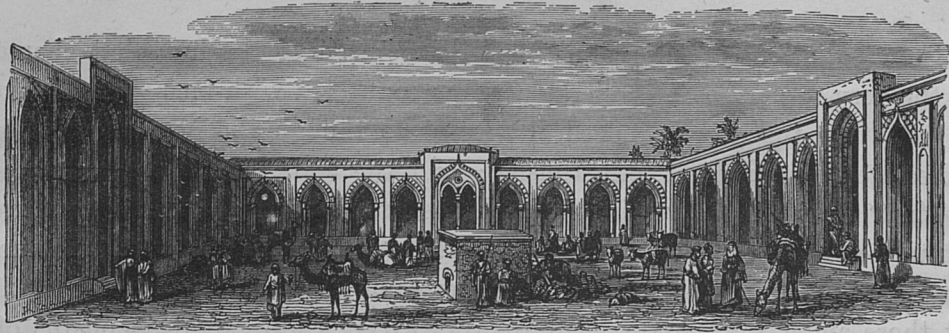
xxiii

	PAGE		PAGE
The Sanhedrin	422	The Mountains round Jerusalem	554
Plan of the Temple	424	Jerusalem from En Rogel	557
The Mount of Olives	425	Jewish Coins.	559
Colossal Lamp	432	Jewish Coin	560
A Levite	433	Bronze Coin of Titus	563
The Mosque of Omar	436	Head of Titus	564
The Golden Gate	437	The Tomb of David at Jerusalem	568
Gems Engraved with the Typical <i>Good Shepherd</i>	442	The Arch of Titus	572
The Sea of Galilee	443	Roman Soldiers Attacking a City	573
The Village of Siloam	447	Coins to Commemorate the Capture of Judah	575
Ruins on the Site of Nineveh	451	In the Garden of Gethsemane	576
Ruins on the Site of Chorazin	452	Jerusalem from the Summit of the Mount of Olives	579
Roman Ship	454	Eagle on Roman Standard	585
Bust of Vespasian	455	Eastern Lamp	584
Bronze Coins of Vespasian	457	" "	584
The Village of Jenin (<i>En-gannim</i>).	458	The Mount of Olives from Jerusalem	585
The Jordan Valley	461	Flowers and Grasses of Palestine	586
Mount Gerizim and Samaria	463	Apotheosis of Titus	587
Ruined Synagogue at Meiron	465	Jerusalem—the Damascus Gate	588
Group of Samaritans	467	Shekel	591
Roman Triclinium	472	The Pool of Hezekiah, Jerusalem	593
House of the "Rich Man" at Jerusalem	477	Portrait of Christ	596
On the Road from Jerusalem to Jericho	479	Triclinia	598
Bedawin Robbers	480	Eastern Mats—Sitting at Meat	600
Looking down on Bethany	486	Eastern Sandals	601
Bethany	489	The Summit of Gerizim	607
Sepulchre in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, called "Absalom's Pillar"	491	Capital of a Column at Jerusalem	608
Portrait of our Lord	494	Daybreak at Jerusalem	609
The Hills of Gilead	495	The Garden of Gethsemane	613
Ancient Law Scroll	497	St. Stephen's Gate	618
On the Road to Bethany	505	The Valley of the Kidron, from St. Stephen's Gate	619
Carved Tomb at Jerusalem	509	The Garden of Gethsemane, from the Slopes of Olivet	620
The High Priest	512	Moonlight on the Mount of Olives	621
Jerusalem from the Hill of Evil Counsel	513	Olives, Pomegranates, &c.	623
Gem with Christian Symbols	515	Olive-Press	625
Mound at Jericho	516	Eastern Lamp	629
Figs, Palms, &c., of Palestine	518	The Tomb of St. Helena	631
The Supposed Site of Jericho	520	The Valley of the Kidron	633
Square Ruin at Jericho	521	Slopes above the Kidron	636
Bethany	524	Roman Soldier	638
The Hill of Evil Counsel	530	Jewish High Priest	644
Bethphage	531	Foundations found at Jerusalem	645
Eastern Asses	533	Base of a Column found at Robinson's Arch	648
Statue of Titus	536	The North End of the Lake of Galilee	649
The Brook Kidron	537	Part of an Ivory Diptych with Scenes from the Passion	653
The Entry of Jerusalem	539	Aceldama	657
The Walls of Jerusalem	544	The "Pools of Solomon"	661
Jerusalem from the Mount of Olives	545		
Jewish Priest	549		

	PAGE		PAGE
Roman Daggers	663	A Roman Centurion	708
The Village of Siloam	664	Various Forms of Crosses	709
Ruins of Cæsarea Philippi	665	Roman Soldiers	712
Pilate Washing his Hands	671	Sepulchral Chest from Jerusalem	713
Roman Chair of State	672	Ancient Vase found at Jerusalem	714
Flagellum or Scourge	676	St. John and the Sheep	715
Nubk-Tree	677	Scenes from the Passion	719
Palestine Thorns	679	The Walk to Emmaus	724
Roman Seat of State	680	Emmaus	725
Arch of the "Ecce Homo," Jerusalem	681	Map of the Lake of Galilee	727
Coins Struck by Pontius Pilate	685	The Miraculous Draught of Fishes	728
Roman Balista	686	The Country around Bethany	732
Scourging	687	Eagle or Coin of Antioch	737
Interior of St. Stephen's Gate, Jerusalem	688	Coin of Vespasian	742
Trophy of Roman Arms	689	Coin of Cæsar	744
The Via Dolorosa	693	Coin of Pania	746
Some of the earliest Representations of the Crucifixion	696	Early Christian Gem	750
Ancient Sarcophagus with Bas-Reliefs of the Scenes from the Passion	701	Flagellation	756
Myrrh and Hyssop	706	Head of Apollo	761
		Ancient Bronze Tablet	764
		Ancient Bronze Lamp	766



The Illustrations of Places and Customs and Habits of the People are from Photographs, expressly to obtain which Mr. F. MASON GOOD visited the Holy Land. The Copies of Coins, Gems, and other Antiquities are produced under the superintendence of the Rev. S. S. LEWIS, M.A., F.S.A., Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, Corresponding Member of the Archaeological Societies of Paris and Berlin.



EASTERN KHAN.

THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

THE NATIVITY.

“He was made human that we might be made divine.”—ATHAN., *De Incarn.*, p. 54 (*Opp.* i. 108).



NE mile from Bethlehem is a little plain, in which, under a grove of olives, stands the bare and neglected chapel known by the name of “the Angel to the Shepherds.”¹ It is built over the traditional site of the fields where, in the beautiful language of St. Luke—more exquisite than any idyll to Christian ears—“there were shepherds keeping watch over their flock by night, when, lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord² shone round about them,” and to their happy ears were uttered the good tidings of great joy, that unto them was born that day in the city of David a Saviour, which was Christ the Lord.

¹ “*Angelus ad Pastores.*” Near this spot once stood a tower called Migdal Eder, or “Tower of the Flock” (Gen. xxxv. 21). The present rude chapel is, perhaps, a mere fragment of a church built over the spot by Helena. The prophet Micah (iv. 8; v. 2) had looked to Migdal Eder with Messianic hopes; and St. Jerome (*De Loc. Hebr.*), writing with views of prophecy which were more current in the ancient than in the modern Church, ventures to say “that by its very name it fore-signified by a sort of prophecy the shepherds at the birth of the Lord.”

² By “glory of the Lord” (Luke ii. 9) is probably meant the Shechinah or cloud of brightness which symbolised the Divine presence.

The associations of our Lord's nativity were all of the humblest character, and the very scenery of His birthplace was connected with memories of poverty and toil. On that night, indeed, it seemed as though the heavens must burst to disclose their radiant minstrelsies; and the stars, and the feeding sheep, and the "light and sound in the darkness and stillness," and the rapture of faithful hearts, combine to furnish us with a picture painted in the colours of heaven. But in the brief and thrilling verses of the Evangelist we are not told that those angel songs were heard by any except the wakeful shepherds of an obscure village;—and those shepherds, amid the chill dews of a winter night, were guarding their flocks from the wolf and the robber, in fields where Ruth, their Saviour's ancestress, had gleaned, sick at heart, amid the alien corn, and David, the despised and youngest son of a numerous family, had followed the ewes great with young.¹

"And suddenly," adds the sole Evangelist who has narrated the circumstances of that memorable night in which Jesus was born, amid the indifference of a world unconscious of its Deliverer, "there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men of good will."²

It might have been expected that Christian piety would have marked the spot by splendid memorials, and enshrined the rude grotto of the shepherds in the marbles and mosaics of some stately church. But, instead of this, the Chapel of the Herald Angel is a mere rude crypt; and as the traveller descends down the broken steps, which lead from the olive-grove into its dim recess, he can hardly persuade himself that he is in a consecrated place. Yet a half-unconscious sense of fitness has, perhaps, contributed to this apparent neglect.

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 71.

² Luke ii. 14, ἐν ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας: such is the reading of the best MSS., \aleph , A, B, D, and some of the best versions, the Vetus Itala, Vulgate, Gothic, &c. Moreover, however dear the other reading may be to us from long and delightful association, this best maintains the obvious poetic parallelism:

Glory to God	in the highest,
Peace to men of good will	on earth.

By ἀνθρώποις εὐδοκίας we may perhaps understand with Valcknaer, "men with whom God is pleased." As I shall not unfrequently refer to the text of the Greek Testament, I may take this opportunity of telling the ordinary reader that by \aleph is meant the *Codex Sinaiticus*, now at St. Petersburg, discovered by Tischendorf in 1844, and perhaps as old as the fourth century; by A, the *Codex Alexandrinus* in the British Museum, written in the middle of the fifth century; by B, the *Codex Vaticanus* in the Vatican, which belongs to the middle of the fourth century; by C, the *Codex Ephraemi*, a palimpsest in the Imperial Library at Paris, not later than the fifth century; by D, the *Codex Bezae* in the University Library at Cambridge, not later than the seventh century; by E, the *Codex Basilienensis*, about the eighth century; by F, the *Codex Boreeli* at Utrecht; by L, the *Codex Regius Parisiensis*, an accurate and important MS. of the eighth century. I shall seldom refer to the readings of any later MSS.

The poverty of the chapel harmonises well with the humble toil of those whose radiant vision it is intended to commemorate.

“Come now! let us go unto Bethlehem,¹ and see this thing which has come to pass, which the Lord made known to us,” said the shepherds, when those angel songs had ceased to break the starry silence. Their way would lead them up the terraced hill, and through the moonlit gardens of Bethlehem, until they reached the summit of the grey ridge on which the little town is built. On that



CHAPEL OF THE "ANGELUS AD PASTORES."

summit stood the village inn. The khan (or caravanserai) of a Syrian village, at that day, was probably identical, in its appearance and accommodation, with those which still exist in modern Palestine. A khan is a low structure, built of rough stones, and generally only a single storey in height. It consists for the most part of a square enclosure, in which the cattle can be tied up in safety for the night, and an arched recess for the accommodation of travellers. The *leewan*, or paved floor of the recess, is raised a foot or two above the level of the court-yard. A large khan—such, for instance, as that of which the ruins may still be seen at Khan Minyeh, on the shore of the Sea of Galilee—might contain a series of such recesses, which are, in fact, low small rooms with no front wall

¹ Luke ii. 15, διέλθωμεν εἰς βηθλεὴμ. I must remark at the outset that in most of my quotations from the Gospels I do not slavishly follow the English Version, but translate from the original Greek.

to them. They are, of course, perfectly public; everything that takes place in them is visible to every person in the khan. They are also totally devoid of even the most ordinary furniture. The traveller may bring his own carpet if he likes, may sit cross-legged upon it for his meals, and may lie upon it at night.¹ As a rule, too, he must bring his own food, attend to his own cattle, and draw his own water from the neighbouring spring. He would neither expect nor require attendance, and would pay only the merest trifle for the advantage of shelter, safety, and a floor on which to lie. But if he chanced to arrive late, and the *leewans* were all occupied by earlier guests, he would have no choice but to be content with such accommodation as he could find in the court-yard below, and secure for himself and his family such small amount of cleanliness and decency as are compatible with an unoccupied corner on the filthy area, which must be shared with horses, mules, and camels. The litter, the closeness, the unpleasant smell of the crowded animals, the unwelcome intrusion of the pariah dogs, the necessary society of the very lowest hangers-on of the caravanserai, are adjuncts to such a position which can only be realised by any traveller in the East who happens to have been placed in similar circumstances.

In Palestine it not unfrequently happens that the entire khan, or at any rate the portion of it in which the animals are housed, is one of those innumerable caves which abound in the limestone rocks of its central hills. Such seems to have been the case at the little town of Bethlehem-Ephratah, in the land of Judah. Justin Martyr the Apologist, who, from his birth at Shechem, was familiar with Palestine, and who lived less than a century after the time of our Lord,² places the scene of the nativity in a cave. This is, indeed, the ancient and constant tradition both of the Eastern and the Western Churches, and it is one of the few to which, though unrecorded in the Gospel history, we may attach a reasonable probability.³ Over this cave has risen the Church and Convent of the Nativity, and it was in a cave close beside it that one of the most learned, eloquent, and holy of the Fathers of the Church—that great

¹ "It is common to find two sides of the one room where the native farmer resides with his cattle, and the remainder elevated about two feet higher for the accommodation of the family" (Thomson, *Land and Book*, II., ch. xxxiii.). See, too, Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, i. 18.—*Leewan* is a corruption of *el-ewán*, which signifies any raised place to sit upon. A distinction has been drawn between *κατάλυμα* (Luke ii. 7), and *πανδοκείον* (Luke x. 34), but probably the only distinction is that the former was a *free* place of shelter, and had no host.

² Justin Martyr was born at Flavia Neapolis, A.D. 103, and died A.D. 166. The date of his First Apology was about A.D. 138.

³ It is impossible to stand in the little Chapel of the Nativity, and to look without emotion on the silver star let into the white marble, encircled by its sixteen ever-burning lamps, and surrounded by the inscription, "*Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.*"