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path open to her. She may preserve the letter by obeying the spirit; she may bring out of her treasury things new and old, interpreting the old by the new and moderating the new by the old; she may admit that forms which suited the twelfth century would have been superstitious for the sixteenth, and that expressions of doctrine which edified the sixteenth may be meaningless to the nineteenth. In this way, and in this way only, she may reconcile the claims, so often pronounced irreconcilable, of the letter and the spirit, of the past and the future, of the form and the substance. In this way she may avoid the two extremes, equally pernicious, of supposing that God's revelation of Himself to man ceased in the first, or in the sixteenth, or in any past century; or, on the other hand, that God never revealed Himself at all till now; of attributing either to the past, or to the present, or to the future, a monopoly of the teaching of God's Spirit.

> The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
> And God fulfils Himself in many ways,
> Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.

R. E. BARTLETT.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

XII.—THE LATER MIRACLES.

THE thought and action of Christ so lived in harmony that neither could move without the other; the progress of one was the progress of both. Hence the very qualities that distinguish his later from his earlier teaching distinguish his later from his earlier works. In the very degree that the former becomes, in the region of the spirit, transcendental, expressive of a

higher consciousness and diviner claims, the latter become, in the region of nature, the more extraordinary, revelations of the Son of God that had been realized in the Son of man. We may name the earlier the less, the later the greater, miracles; but we attach to these terms ideas almost the very opposite of those the Evangelists would have attached. We measure the greatness of a miracle by the degree in which it departs from the order of nature, but the Evangelists by the degree in which it manifested the nature and mind of Christ. To them it was not the contra-natural that surprised, but the manifested Christ that satisfied. The action became Him, and in the becoming action the Actor shewed his essential character, declared his native and inherent qualities.

The Evangelists, then, did not look at the miracles through our ideas of nature, but through their own idea of Christ; and only where their idea is accepted as reasonable can their history be regarded as veracious. Our physicists say, the same law that moulds a dewdrop rounds a world. The law that brings a stone to the earth binds the planets to their spheres. In the processes of nature there is no great and no little. Force is one, everywhere changing, everywhere conserved, its action illustrated and its strength expressed in the minutest as in the mightiest physical phenomena. As the physicists conceive force in nature, the Evangelists conceived energy in Christ. To the one as to the other, to create life was as easy as to ripen the grape or form the leaf. The subdued fever and the stilled storm, the healed paralytic and the revived Lazarus, were each equally possible to the power immanent in Christ; they were marvellous, not as depar-

tures from the order of nature, but as revelations of the nature He possessed. And so the Evangelical narratives are distinguished by a historical sobriety of form in marked contrast to their extraordinary contents, utterly unlike the humorous gravity, the conscious innocence of exaggeration or incongruity, that looks so naïvely out of our ancient nursery or mythical tales. Our Gospels, while they describe miracles, are, as it were, without the atmosphere of the miraculous, and narrate events that they feel to be in fullest harmony with the wondrous Person they pourtray. Pascal said,[1] "Jesus Christ speaks the greatest things so simply, that it seems as if He had never thought upon them." That spontaneous unpremeditated speech was his glory, proof that his words reflected a consciousness which knew no struggle, that his being and truth were so transparent to Himself that his claims were but as fruits of nature, his words like fragrances flung into the air by his spirit as it blushed into perfect flower. And the simplicity which distinguishes the Master's speech marks the disciples' history; and for the same reason—each is conscious that the extraordinary and miraculous is to the Person concerned but the ordinary and normal. Their faith in Christ made them insensible to the impossibilities of the physicist, and the narratives reflect alike in matter and manner the faith of their authors.

But their way of looking at events through their idea of Christ gives to the Evangelists not only a fine simplicity and realism of narrative—the more remarkable that their history is simply the most extraordinary ever written or believed by man; but also a fine consistency in their presentation of Jesus, a consistency

[1] *Pensées et Lettres*, ii. 319 (Faugère).

the more striking and significant that it seems on their part unconscious and undesigned. His thought and action did not simply move in harmony; each seemed in its successive phases but a transcript of the other. The more He asserts in his teaching his personal pre-eminence, the more do his acts seem to declare it. As his speech became more egoistic, therefore more theological, without becoming any less ethical, his acts became declarative of a personality transcendent alike as regards nature and man. The ethical import of parables like the Prodigal Son, the Rich Man and Lazarus, and the Good Samaritan, is as exalted and pure as that of the Sermon on the Mount; but the theological import of the former is greater, marked by deeper insight into the character and aims of God, into the spirit and destinies of man. The discourse to Nicodemus is much more elementary than the great Johannean discourses to the disciples, speaks less of the Son's essential relation to the Father, or his organic connection with man. There are no indications in it of truths like this: "I and the Father are one;" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father:" or this, "I am the vine, ye are the branches:" or this, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you."[1] In the later teaching of Christ his Person is thus made to become explicative of God, redemptive of man, and creative of peaceful and happy relations between the two. And these changes are reflected in his acts. The miracle at Cana is concerned with the elements, as it were, of the world; but the miracle at Bethany with the most awful mysteries of life, the saddest and most

[1] John x. 30; xiv. 9; xv. 1; xvi. 7.

sacred secrets of the spirit. While at first He is only one who can "heal the sick of divers diseases," later He is one whom "even the wind and sea obey." [1] While his first hearers were not so much astonished at Himself as at his doctrine, He appeared later to the men who knew Him best as one "transfigured, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." [2] The power He possessed seemed to grow by exercise; his last was his greatest miracle, his greatest words were his last. No sayings so divinely become Christ as the sayings on the cross; no act so finely illustrated his mind and mission as the raising of Lazarus. Action and speech were in lovely and significant harmony. He went to death from a victory over the grave. His right to lay down his life was proved by his power to raise from the dead; the prayer for the men that crucified Him is explained by the quickening word that had changed death into life. And so in Christ doctrine and deed confirm each other: if by the one He predicted the death, by the other He explained the resurrection that was to be accomplished at Jerusalem.

These qualities of the Evangelical narratives as records of so-called miraculous events—so finely natural and immiraculous in tone, so finely consistent and harmonious, almost without consciousness or design, in their conception and literary presentation of Christ—suggest a line of thought supplementary to one pursued in a former paper. [3] The miracles were then discussed in their relation to the Person of Christ; now they are to be discussed in relation to the Evangelical

[1] Mark i. 24; iv. 41. [2] Luke iv. 32; Matt. vii. 28; xvii. 2.
[3] "The Earlier Miracles," THE EXPOSITOR, vol. viii. 288, ff.

history. The former discussion rose out of the earlier miracles, the first manifestations of the supernatural in Christ; the present is directly concerned with the later miracles, the most extraordinary and least credible in nature. Yet these are the very events that the Evangelists relate so simply that it seems as if they thought nothing could be more natural than their occurrence, yet so subtly, that they are harmoniously woven into the very texture of the narrative, and essentially incorporated with its substance. And the qualities are indissolubly associated. It is because they conceive miracles as so natural to Christ, that they present them with an art so simple yet so perfect, so unconscious yet so complete.

Now, as our space is necessarily limited, the discussion cannot be allowed to range over the whole field, and so had better be confined to the very definite issues raised by a single typical case. The most typical case, fullest at once of critical difficulties and of the comfort that comes of the highest Christian truth, is the raising of Lazarus. It is the greatest of Christ's miracles: to know this is to know all. There is none harder to believe; none that, believed, is so rich in meaning, so glorious in its assurance to faith and in its promise to hope. The truths embedded in it, and embalmed by it, are many and cardinal. It expresses with wonderful force the tender grace, the holy human sympathy, of Christ. His love for man is made eminently intense and personal by his love for Martha and Mary and Lazarus. His place in the home is made inmost and secure by faith in the gentle Presence that dwelt with the sisters of Bethany, a Presence that seems to consecrate the family, and make it the seat

and sanctuary of Divine influences. When, too, the soul sits dumb and desolate in "the shadow feared of man," peace and comfort come from the voice of Him who once spoke a dead friend into life; or when sorrow has come to the spirit like a hot wind, which dries its moisture and burns up its fruits and flowers, banishing at once the rain of heaven and the dew of earth, then those tears Divine Manhood once wept at the grave of the man He loved fall on the arid soil, and moisten it into soft humanity again. Then, too, Christian hope might wither and die, were it not for the words that, while they might as words of a friend cheer the sisters, nothing less than a miracle could verify or transmute into words of truth for the world. We love our dead; we love even their very dust. We love the memories that endear the past and the hopes that gladden the future; making us, in the very moment when the longing born of love is mightiest, feel "the touch of the vanished hand," and hear "the sound of the voice that is still." And the faith which created these hopes owes in a large measure its being to the words spoken and the deed done at the grave of Lazarus. The words, "I am the resurrection and the life," have created the angel of hope that watches the sleep of the Christian dead, and makes it to the living radiant with peace and immortality. Were they to cease to be Christ's, should we not feel as if a stream of dismal paganism had been turned against our sun, and clothed it in clouds? And if they stand alone, they as good as cease to be his; the words without the miracle become but an impertinent or idle vaunt, a promise that all nature and all history have combined to deny and disappoint. Only lips that could

speak creative words could say with truth, "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die."

But the very eminence of its spiritual significance makes the difficulties that beset it graver and weightier. What is finely reasonable as a symbolical narrative becomes, when studied as a sober historical record, amazing and incredible. A miracle of healing is comparatively explicable; it may result from the subtle co-operation of two imaginations and two wills: but a miracle like this is an act of creation, an event not only outside all experience, but contrary to it. Then, too, the evidence for it seems slender, altogether inadequate. It is peculiar to the Fourth Gospel; the Synoptists know nothing of it. On the supposition that it occurred, their silence seems inexplicable. It is exactly the sort of event they would have loved to describe: it exalts Christ and degrades his enemies; it is the victorious proof of his claims and their infamy. It is most remarkable that three men, the nearest, too, to the time and place, should omit all mention of what is certainly Christ's most extraordinary achievement, whilst a fourth and more distant historian describes it in so full and realistic detail. When the matter is so stated, it does seem as if the difficulties must vanquish belief, and reasonable faith be pronounced impossible.

But, now, let us look at the matter from the side of the Evangelical history, especially with the view of discovering how it is affected by the denial of the miracle, whether it become more or less consistent and comprehensible, more or less coherent and credible. Let us see, then, how any of the several forms of denial compatible with historical criticism would affect the narrative that more directly concerns us. There is the

theory favoured by the older Rationalism, that the fancied miracle was due to a series of happy accidents and coincidences; that the death had been apparent, not real; that the cold atmosphere of the tomb and the piercing accents of a loved voice had combined to awake Lazarus from his deathlike sleep; that the agitation of Jesus was due to the appearance of the revived corpse, but, presence of mind overmastering fear, the summons, "Lazarus, come forth!" had as its result the emergence of the supposed dead man. This interpretation was intended, while denying the reality of the miracle, to preserve the historical truth of the narrative. But how did it succeed? The miracle is introduced by a history, which must be negatived if the natural explanation is to stand. Jesus said, "Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep, but I go that I may awake him out of his sleep."[1] And this clear pre-intimation of purpose and prophecy of the event are at once emphasized by the words, "Lazarus is dead; and I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe."[2] Then the words of Jesus to Martha are significant, "Thy brother shall rise again,"[3] especially in the light of his answer at the grave to her remonstrance about the removal of the stone, "Saidst I not unto thee, that, if thou wouldest believe, thou shouldest see the glory of God?"[4] These sayings were immovable stones of stumbling to the theory that maintained the reality of the event, but denied the truth of the miracle, for the accident of the end could not explain the expressed design of the beginning. The historical truth of both was impossible, If the event was accidental, the sayings must be false; if the

[1] John xi. 11. [2] Ibid. xi. 14, 15. [3] Ibid. xi. 23. [4] Ibid. xi. 40.

sayings were true, the event could not be accidental. But the theory, granting as probable all its violent improbabilities, was even in more radical contradiction to the narrative. It failed to explain the conduct of Jesus. Why did He go to the grave? Why did He desire to see the buried Lazarus? A dead body was a hateful thing to the Jew; to touch it was to be defiled. If Jesus was above the prejudices of his own countrymen, He must still more have been above the morbid curiosity of ours. It would be hard to imagine anything more un-Christlike than the desire to see the wasted dead, or to look into an offensive "charnel cave." The criticism that must assume such a desire stands convicted of incapacity to understand the Person it would reach and pourtray.

Has the mythical theory, then, which was more merciless to Rationalism than even to orthodoxy, been more successful? Strauss explained this and the similar Evangelical miracles as due to the early Christian imagination, unconsciously creative, clothing Jesus in the supernatural attributes and actions of Elijah and Elisha, the most wonderful of the Old Testament prophets.[1] With the philosophical bases and critical assumptions of the mythical hypothesis we have here no concern, but only with the question whether the explanation it offered be compatible with this narrative in particular or the Evangelical history in general. The first thing that strikes us, as affecting both points, is—it does seem strange that the finest creation of the mythical imagination, working under conditions essentially Jewish, and with materials derived from the Old Testament, should be found in the Fourth Gospel. It

[1] *Leben Jesu*, § 100.

is marked throughout by almost fierce Judaic antipathies, and its want of a Hebrew atmosphere and colouring has been held one of its most distinctive characteristics. But the purest and most original work of Hellenistic speculation does not seem the proper soil for the purest and most original product of the Judæo-Christian phantasy. The one position is the negation of the other. The theory would have required our narrative to appear in Matthew, and can only regard it as misplaced in John, without being able to give any reason why it has been so misplaced. Then the narrative is wonderfully sober, vivid, and truthful in feature and detail—far too much so to be the work of an unconsciously creative imagination, which, being essentially exaggerative, never sees its objects as they stand revealed by the clear light of nature to a clear and searching eye. If the central event is mythical, the incidents that surround it must shew the action, the tool-marks, as it were, of the mythical faculty. But do they? The topographical accuracy is remarkable,[1] and still more so the minute and delicate way in which peculiarities of character are indicated,[2] the circumstantial and careful attention to unimportant yet most significant details relative to the persons, their relations, their history, their feelings, hopes, actions, as influenced now by custom and now by personal reasons, sorrow, concern, or love.[3] This is not the way in which the mythical imagination goes to work: its creations are on a large scale, thrown off with a fine contempt for those delicacies of light and shade that in real life so subtly cross and blend. And

[1] John xi. 18.
[2] Ibid. xi. 16, 20, 28, 29, 32. *Cf.* 21, 39.
[3] Ibid. xi. 1, 2, 5, 8, 19, 28–31, 33, 38.

when we analyze the narrative, we find it too full of tender and moving humanity to be a creation of the idea. "Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus."[1] The dropping out of Mary's name is a most significant touch, as if the stronger had absorbed the softer sister, or been to her a sort of mother or head. Then, their love to Christ is finely indicated in the message,[2] which expresses a trust that knows no hesitancy or fear. The conversation, too, of Jesus and his disciples is finely in keeping with their respective characters: they afraid to go into Judæa, He afraid only of the darkness, resolved to walk in the light, even though it should lead straight down into the valley of death.[3]

But the most perfect scene is the successive interviews with the sisters. Each is true to her character as we know it from Luke.[4] Martha — strong, self-possessed, not so absorbed in grief or in the formal comforts custom offered as to be blind or indifferent to what was going on around — is the first to hear that Jesus has come; and, with a heart equally divided between love and care for the living and sorrow for the dead, she goes out to meet Him. Mary, contemplative, emotional, a genuine mystic, so filled with her great sorrow as to be passive in its hands, sits still in the house. Martha, erect, calm while regretful, goes with quiet thoughtfulness softly out to meet Him. Mary, broken and bowed down, is suddenly, when she hears Jesus has come, filled by a new emotion, and driven, as it were, by an irresistible impulse, "she rose up hastily, and went out," and on reaching Jesus, "fell down at his feet." The myth-making faculty does not

[1] John xi. 5. [2] Ibid. xi. 3. [3] Ibid. xi. 8–10. [4] Luke x. 38–42.

work in this delicate, yet most gentle and human, way. It is possessed by the love of the miraculous, lives in the region of sensuous exaggeration, where the finer qualities of the spirit are lost, and only the vulgar marvels of the senses live and flourish. Here we have a true "sanctuary of sorrow," with all its sorrowful elements born of man, all its sacred and comforting influences born of God.

But if the mythical theory was too violent and improbable, too little historical, too purely *a priori*, what of the theory that succeeded and superseded it, the theory formulated by Baur, developed and applied by Zeller and Schwegler? Baur thought the narrative was an artistic rearrangement of materials found in the Synoptists, especially Luke; its motive being determined by the dogmatic aim or purpose of the Gospel. It is, as it were, an acted parable, designed to illustrate the words, "I am the resurrection and the life." As Christ by healing the blind appeared as the Light of the world, so by raising the dead He appeared as its Life. The narrative was but a symbol or sensuous form for this truth. The materials used were borrowed from Luke, the widow's son of Nain, the scene between Martha and Mary, and the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, where the wish was so devoutly expressed that Lazarus might be raised from the dead, in order to instruct the living.[1] There was, indeed, no point that more finely exercised the ingenious critics of Tübingen than this, shewing how John had so skilfully manipulated a parable of Luke as to transform it into a history illustrative of the power of faith against the absolute unbelief of the Jews. But their

[1] Luke vii. 12; x. 38-42; xvi. 19-31.

endeavours mainly proved their own surpassing ingenuity. The parable and the history are alike in this—each has a Lazarus, and in each he dies: in every other respect they are fundamentally different.[1] The parable shews how the rewards and penalties of the future redress the wrongs of the present; but the history regards only the present, and has no eye for the future. In the parable the return from death is pronounced impossible; but the history brings Lazarus out from the very bosom of death. The parable strongly emphasizes the poverty of Lazarus; but in the history he lives in comfort, if not in affluence. The moral of the parable is, "They will not be persuaded, though one rose from the dead;"[2] but the history says, "Many of the Jews who had seen the things Jesus did, believed on him."[3] The Tübingen derivation of the narrative from the parable was thus possible only by emphasizing two superficial resemblances, and forgetting many radical differences. If Baur declared that the Lazarus of the history presupposes the parable of Lazarus, Hengstenberg affirmed that the parable of Lazarus presupposes the Lazarus of history; and each had about equal authority for his dictum, uttered the conceit of a vagrant fancy, not the sober judgment of criticism.

The Tübingen criticism was, indeed, here as thoroughly unscientific as unsound. It was often curiously unfaithful to its own philosophical principles—instead of regarding history as the manifestation and explication of the ideal, imagining that where the ideal began the real or historical ceased; that where persons like Martha, Mary, and Lazarus were made to exhibit

[1] Hase, *Geschichte Jesu*, p. 513. [2] Luke xvi. 31. [3] John xi. 45.

or illustrate the power embodied in Christ, they could not really have lived. Yet when we find the sisters mentioned in Luke reappearing in John, with their respective characters so subtly and perfectly preserved in new and most tragic relations, it is a proof, not of literary invention working with borrowed materials, but of historian supplementing historian, the two halves of a broken ring joining to form a whole.[1] Then, too, if our narrative is to be interpreted as a conscious literary creation, meant to typify Christ, the incarnate Logos, as the Life victorious over death, how are sayings and acts that positively contradict this design to be explained?[2] He would be but a clumsy artist who allowed such incompatible elements to steal into his picture; but a clumsy fiction is no fiction: it invites the detection and exposure that are its death. As nature, John's art is here inimitable; as art or invention, it is poor indeed.

But, now, we come to another and still more extraordinary explanation, without doubt the most unworthy ever proposed by a scholar and critic of reputation. M. Renan sees that an event little less marvellous than a miracle is needed to explain the enthusiasm of love and hate which at once glorified and embittered the death of Jesus. So he conjectures that[3] "something really happened at Bethany which was looked upon as a resurrection." In the heavy and impure atmosphere of Jerusalem the conscience of Jesus lost something of its original purity, and He was no longer either Himself or his own master. In the act which was desired the family of Bethany were led to take

[1] Hase, *Geschichte Jesu*, p. 514. [2] John xi. 4, 33, 37, 41.
[3] *Vie de Jésus*, chap. xxiii.

part. "Faith knows no other law than the interest of that which it believes to be true." Obedient to this comprehensive principle, "Lazarus caused himself to be wrapped in bandages as if dead, and shut up in the tomb of his family;" and when Jesus came and ordered the stone to be removed, "Lazarus came forth in his bandages, his head covered with a winding-sheet." The old Rationalism was sanity to the new Romanticism. It implies a moral obtuseness one may wonder at but cannot reason with. Lack of insight into the character of Jesus and the motives that inspired the early Christian society may lead to strange results, but it can hardly be either cured or corrected by hostile argument.

The narrative, then, does not seem rationally interpretable on any theory that negatives the miracle. But it is one thing to say, These theories are false, and quite another thing to say, The miracle is true. This is a point that does not simply concern the interpreter; it concerns the historical critic as well. From his side we are confronted with two questions—one as to the silence of the Synoptists, another as to the silence of the witnesses at the trial. If a miracle so extraordinary had really been performed, could the Synoptists have passed it over in silence? or could the trial, a few days later, of the Person who worked it have been conducted and concluded without any reference or allusion to what must have overborne and outweighed all oral testimony, however adverse? Are these two points capable of reasonable explanation? or must they be allowed seriously to affect the authenticity and credibility of the narrative?

Let us, as the most serious and significant, consider

first the silence of the Synoptists. And here it is necessary to observe that the silence is not peculiar to one narrative, does not affect it alone, but everything which John records as having been done and spoken in and about Jerusalem prior to the Passion. The difficulties connected with the silence must therefore be borne, not by our history alone, but by the Gospel as a whole; and, of course, the degree in which their pressure can be distributed over the whole is the measure of the relief given to each individual part. If the silence had been here, and nowhere else, it might have been ominous; but as it is, within the limits specified, general, it must be explicable through the essential character of the Fourth in contrast to the Synoptic Gospels, not through the peculiar nature of our special narrative. The Synoptists are, in a sense, not three, but one. They have a common source, and, it may be said, common materials. Then, their history is Galilean; alike as to scope and contents it is defined by the kind of ministry there exercised. When they come to Jerusalem it is to tell the story of the Passion; and, for them, its shadow is so deep that it eclipses and conceals all besides. The Galilean history is a unity, a circle which an incident like the miracle at Bethany would have broken. It is noteworthy that Luke's fragmentary notice of Martha and Mary says nothing as to their home, only that Jesus "entered into a certain village."[1] The incident could find a place in his history only as unlocalized. While their silence is thus not only explicable, but, in a sense, inevitable, it is significant that they make Bethany the home of Jesus while at Jerusalem,[2] and the point whence He starts on his triumphal entry.[3] Certainly He must

[1] Luke x. 38. [2] Matt. xxi. 17; Mark xi. 11, 12.
[3] I. xi. 1–11; Luke xix. 29, ff.

have found there kind hearts; and there, too, the people must have found a cause of wonder and enthusiasm.

But the speech of the Fourth is as capable of explanation as the silence of the Synoptic Gospels. John is as much concerned with the Judæan as the Synoptists with the Galilean ministry, and for reasons that touch the essential character of his Gospel. His history is ideal, without ceasing to be historical. The idea that receives more sensuous expression in the New Jerusalem of the Apocalypse, receives subtler expression in the history that is so tragically localized in and round the Old Jerusalem, the city of the Jews, the enemies while the descendants of the ancient people of God. The city He had consecrated, but they depraved, was the appropriate scene of the last fell conflict between their guilt and his victorious grace. And John describes the various acts in the great drama, from the first ominous word to the tragic climax. Without his Gospel the death of Christ would, even on its simply historical side, remain to us a riddle—a mere wanton and unprovoked crime. With his Gospel, we can see the hostile forces gathering, and mark their inevitable march. The Synoptists shew us the Master educating his disciples, founding his society, instituting his kingdom; but John shews us Christ in conflict with the Jews—how He came to his own, but his own refused to receive Him—with the consequent struggle between his light and their darkness, culminating on their part in the Cross, on his in the Resurrection.

And the history is written to exhibit this tragic struggle in its several successive stages. The miracles are so presented as at once to define and deepen it, as to shew their influence on the progress of the

dread story. The earliest miracles excite a wonder that almost becomes faith.[1] For a moment belief and unbelief seem alike possible; but the moment is of the briefest, only one "man of the Pharisees" seeking Jesus, the others holding aloof in disdainful neglect. The miracle at the pool of Bethesda shews the neglect developed into hostility; the Jews "persecute" Jesus, and "seek to slay him."[2] The cure of the man born blind deepens the exasperation; Healer and healed are alike hated, and the "disciples" of Moses ominously pronounce "this man a sinner."[3] The raising of Lazarus forms the tragic climax: what most manifests Christ's power most provokes the Jews' anger; the very event that best proves his Divine energy ripens their guilty purpose.[4] The miracle forces the persons in the divine drama to declare themselves, and face each other as absolute foes —so manifests the divinity in Christ as to compel the Jews either into submission or into fatal collision. The Nemesis that follows the guilty choice drives them on the latter: the Man is to die really on account of the miracle, or, rather, what it signified as to Him and threatened as to them, but ostensibly "for the people" —*i.e.*, his death is necessary to the maintenance of their religious ascendency, but is to be demanded for political reasons. Our narrative is thus an integral part of the tragedy unfolded in the Fourth Gospel—is indeed at once a culminating and a turning point—the point where the hostility of the past culminates, and where the crime of the Cross begins. The speech of John was thus as inevitable as the silence of the Synoptists is explicable.

[1] John ii. 23; iii. 2.
[2] Ibid. v. 16.
[3] Ibid. ix. 16, 24, 28, 29, 34.
[4] Ibid. xi. 47-53.

Without the miracle his history had wanted its key; with it their history had wanted its unity—the unity it owed to its moving within the limits of the Galilean ministry, the geographical term denoting also a distinct intellectual, moral, and social sphere.

Our discussion of the first question, the silence of the Synoptists over against the speech of John, has brought us to the point from which we can best approach the second question, the silence of the witnesses at the trial. The reason is obvious; John subtly makes Caiaphas indicate it.[1] Jesus is to be a religious victim disguised as a political offender. Rome, tolerant to the religions of her subject peoples, would not judge in matters of faith.[2] To charge Jesus with an offence against Moses had simply been to release Him; their one chance was to convict Him of a political crime. To this point their energies were directed; so their charge was, "We found this person perverting the nation, and forbidding to give tribute to Cæsar, saying that he himself is Christ the king."[3] The Synoptists and John are here thoroughly agreed. The priests and rulers translated the Hebrew theocratic into the Roman political idea, and urged the death of Jesus because He had claimed to be "the King of the Jews," which they denied, confessing that they had no king but Cæsar.[4] But John alone shews us the framing of the charge and the reasons for it—the craft that made the least political of teachers a sacrifice by clothing Him in the sins of the most tumultuous and rebellious of peoples; "It is expedient for us that one man should die for the

[1] John xi. 49, 50. [2] Acts xviii. 15. [3] Luke xxiii. 2.
[4] Matt. xxvii. 11, 29, 37; Mark xv. 2, 12, 26; Luke xxiii. 38; John xviii. 33, 35, 37; xix. 12, 14, 15.

people, and that the whole nation perish not." But this scheme required a carefully arranged trial, with well-selected witnesses. They must be theirs, not Christ's—speaking not to what He was, but to what He was needed to be. So there could only be suppression of whatever could make for his divine mission and character, and bold suggestion of whatever could make out political speech and designs.

But it is not enough to shew that objections urged against the truth of our narrative turn into evidences and claims on its behalf; we must also shew that it is necessary to the subsequent Evangelical history. As it grew out of what preceded, what succeeds grows out of it. This is a point which M. Renan has well perceived. He says, "If we reject this event as imaginary, all the edifice of the last week in the life of Jesus, to which our Gospel gives so much solidity, crumbles at one blow." This is all the more serious that the Fourth Gospel from this point "contains an amount of minute information infinitely superior to that of the Synoptists."[1] But the relation our narrative bears to the Johannean history is less significant than its relation to the Synoptical. One side of this relation has been seen — that touching the trial; now we may note another. The triumphal entry is a very remarkable, and, as it stands in the Synoptists, an unexplained incident. The enthusiasm of the people seems to be without any real or adequate cause. The wonder that Jesus had at first awakened had long since died, and He had been living sadly with "his own" under the shadow of the Cross. Why this sudden outburst of an admiration and enthusiasm that mocked even the joyous

[1] *Vie de Jésus*, p. 514.

homage of his early ministry? Why did the people in these last dark days do as they had never done in his first bright ones—hail Him as the Messiah, the King coming in the name of the Lord? In seeking an answer, we must note the point from which Jesus approaches the city, Bethany. In Bethany He finds a home; his fame seems associated with it. As He comes from it towards Jerusalem, the multitude flows out to meet Him, breaking, as it sweeps round his little band, into the glad shout, "Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heaven, and glory in the highest!"[1] The event that explained the anger and guilty resolution of the priests will also explain the enthusiasm of the people—will explain, too, their sudden recoil into the fierce and pitiless passion which demanded the Cross and mocked the Crucified. Disappointed enthusiasm is dangerously akin to furious hate. The greater the act that kindled the enthusiasm, the harder it is to satisfy its demands. The men who had been stirred to admiration by a miracle would be certain to crave miracle, and the craving ungratified would leave them, first suspicious, then discontented, then angry. Where enthusiasm was for the power rather than the person of Christ, his behaviour in Jerusalem could only disappoint and provoke. When the men who had hailed Him as Christ the King saw that He did no miracle, but quietly submitted to indignities, capture, mockery, they felt like men who had been deceived into acts of undeserved honour, and, turning against Him revengeful, they broke into the cry, "Crucify him, crucify him!" Thus our miracle explains the enthusiasm at once of their homage and their hate,

[1] Luke xix. 38.

shews how the people that welcomed Him into the city could also be the people that followed Him along the way of sorrow with the scornful cry, "He saved others; himself he cannot save."

Into the rich and most varied spiritual meanings of our narrative it is not possible to enter. It is a divine allegory, full of the most sublime and consolatory truths; and to attempt to unfold these, would be to attempt to reach the deepest treasures of our faith. Two living poets have, each in his own way, used this narrative. Tennyson seizes its influence on Mary, and imagines the sister satisfied in the possession of her brother, and restful in the presence of Christ.

> Her eyes are homes of silent prayer,
> Nor other thought her mind admits,
> But he was dead, and there he sits,
> And He that brought him back is there.
>
> Then one deep love doth supersede
> All other, when her ardent gaze
> Roves from the living brother's face,
> And rests upon the Life indeed.
>
> All subtle thought, all curious fears,
> Borne down by gladness so complete,
> She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
> With costly spikenard and with tears.

Browning, stronger, more masterful, has, with rare imaginative insight, gone to the heart of the matter, and presented us with a picture of Lazarus as he may have lived and must have spoken. Karshish, the Arab physician, meets him, and feels—

> The man had something in the look of him—

awed, convinced, credulous in the presence of his story,

unable to disbelieve it, yet ashamed of his belief. Browning has nothing finer than the analysis of Karshish as he tells the story he has heard from Lazarus.

> This man so cured regards the Curer, then,
> As—God forgive me!—who but God Himself,
> Creator and Sustainer of the world,
> That came and dwelt in flesh on it awhile!
> —Sayeth that such an one was born and lived,
> Taught, heal'd the sick, broke bread at his own house,
> Then died, with Lazarus by, for aught I know,
> And yet was . . . what I said, nor choose repeat,
> And must have so avouch'd himself, in fact,
> In hearing of this very Lazarus,
> Who saith—but why all this of what he saith?
> Why write of trivial matters, things of price
> Calling at every moment for remark?
> I noticed on the margin of a pool
> Blue flowering borage, the Aleppo sort
> Aboundeth, very nitrous! It is strange!

Yet the tale fascinates him; its wonderful truth has filled his imagination, and melts him into admiration and awe.

> The very God! Think, Abib: dost thou think?
> So, the All-Great were the All-loving too—
> So, through the thunder comes a human voice
> Saying, "O heart I made, a heart beats here!
> Face, my hands fashion'd, see it in myself!
> Thou hast no power, nor may'st conceive of mine,
> But love I gave thee, with myself to love,
> And thou must love me who hast died for thee."

And there, for Lazarus and for all ages, lies the inmost truth of the miracle. A. M. FAIRBAIRN.