

this rational liberty, protected by the strength of union, may endure forever—" *Esto perpetua.*" And throughout the ages may the Republic ever have the blessing of Christ the King.

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THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST.

1. VITA JESU. *Dionysii Carthusiani Opus.* Printed at Strasburg in 1473.
2. PUBLIC LIFE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. By H. J. Coleridge, S. J. Vol. I, II. London, 1875.

We have taken these two works as the heading of our article, not because we have any intention of critically examining their contents, but because one of them is the oldest, the other the newest work in print, on their common subject, which we have looked at.

One of them is a not very thick volume, in that small folio shape much used in the very early days of printing books. The text is the usual black letter, with large capitals colored by hand, ornamenting the commencement of sundry chapters, while in other chapters you see the blank spaces that should have been so adorned, and were not. Nearly every line presents some form of those contractions which shortened the labor of the penman as he toiled over the pages of his manuscript, and which, though puzzling enough to a modern reader, were then familiar to every one who opened a book. The paper is coarse and strong, and very slightly tinged with the yellow of age. The moths, however, have made their mark; yet not so as to interfere with the print, which is delightfully clear, and still as black as if the book had come from the press only five years ago. Is the manufacture of such printing ink one of the lost arts? We do not see it in modern books.

The other work is from the facile pen of a learned English Jesuit; a son, we believe, of Coleridge the poet and philosopher, and a brother of a distinguished English judge. It is in the ordinary English octavo shape, with such paper, and binding, and clear legible print, as will not fatigue the eye to read nor the hand to hold, nor will the purchase of it drain the purse. Its merits and its cheapness will doubtless secure for it a wide circulation.

Between these two works, printed four hundred years apart in time, how many thousands of volumes on the same subject have been given to the world? To say nothing of the countless editions of the Bible, of the New Testament, of the Gospels, in the various languages of mankind, how many works of the Christian Fathers, of

the early Christian Apologists, and of other Christian writers of later times, down to the invention of the art of printing, on this same venerable theme, have been called from the libraries where they lay in manuscripts, almost as forgotten as the dead in the tombs, and were made to live again, by the magic power of this wondrous modern art. Has any year of the last four centuries failed to give life to some new work, perhaps to scores of them, on this same ever thrilling subject? The stream still rolls on. To judge by the numerous announcements of still other new works which the booksellers' circulars of France, England, America and Italy announce for early publication, there is very little likelihood that the stream will run dry in our day.

In truth there is no subject better entitled, for many reasons, to claim the attention of earnest men in every age, than this. Of all the events that have occurred in the history of the world, there is none to be compared, either for importance or for far-reaching and long-enduring influence, to the establishment of Christianity eighteen centuries and a half ago. Its advent inaugurated a revolution such as neither the force of arms, nor the skill of statesmanship, nor the boldest efforts of mere philosophical teaching, could have effected. The most learned, polished, and civilized nations of the earth yielded to it. They surrendered their national traditions, their heathen mythologies, and their Pagan worship, for the new faith and the new worship; and ever since have counted it their greatest honor, to be numbered among the followers of the Crucified One, and to be styled Christian. The history of Christianity becomes henceforth and in its truest sense the history of the civilized world. Its history is the history of the intellect, the heart, and the conscience of humanity. Ignore it, and the historic page is blank. The issues of the past cannot be understood and set forth in their true light, as the issues of the present cannot be discussed and decided, without recognizing and awarding full force to the unceasing influence of Christianity in moulding character, and in restraining or spurring on men to action.

To the historian as to the fervent believer and to the bitter opponent, the chief figure in Christianity is Christ Himself, who stands so prominent that all others are dwarfed beside Him. Around Him its history turns. He is the very soul of it, in a sense infinitely beyond the degree on which the founders of schools of any kind, philosophic, scientific or religious, have ever been known to influence, or can influence their followers. His every word is sacred; His acts and the events of His life are called to mind, and made the theme of devout meditation; His teachings are reverently commented on; His precepts are to be obeyed, and His example to be followed. His person is the object of adoration and of love.

From the beginning it was announced that His is "the only name given to man whereby we can be saved." Worshiped by the Christians, to Him they have ever prayed, to Him they give thanks for favors and blessings received, and from His omnipotence and mercy they hope to obtain whatever of grace and blessing they need for consolation, strength or courage. That one among His followers is most perfect, who most truly is imbued with his Master's spirit and most exactly walks in His footsteps. Christ is everything to them, in life and in death, for this world and for the next. It is the faith of three hundred and fifty millions of the inhabitants of this globe.

On the other hand, Christ stands with equal prominence in the eyes of the opponents of Christianity, by whatever name they are called. They see in Him the central figure, or rather the embodiment of Christianity, and they never fail to make Him the special target; for from Celsus to Renan it has ever been so. Whoever attacked Christianity felt bound to attack the person of Christ specially.

What was the general tenor of argument followed by Celsus, and the other early Jewish and Gentile opponents of Christianity, and what the special points they strove to make against our Saviour, may be learned in some measure from the works of Origen, Tertullian, Justin Martyr, and other early Christian writers, who repelled these assaults. We say, in some measure; for unfortunately, of those early Christian works, a great part has perished. Of the heathen writings we have little more than mere fragments. To judge by these fragments, the civilized world is a gainer by the loss of them. Anything weaker, viler, fouler, can scarcely be imagined. The veriest infidel of to-day would turn from them with nausea. What effect they had in their own centuries, we can understand from one fact: the world rapidly became Christian.

We are more familiar with the spirit of the attacks in modern times. In the last century the attacks were marked by a virulence and coarseness above measure. Led on by Voltaire, D'Alembert, and others of that school, and accepting from them the pass-word: *Ecrasons l'infame*, (*crush the miscreant*), the infidel opponents of Revelation were profuse in their use of insulting sneers, mocking witticisms, atrocious slanders, and frantic denunciations. Against our Lord they never failed to pour forth bitter and blasphemous tirades. The echoes of their foul language may still be heard from the lips of Garibaldi and some others taught in that school. Their scholars are not all extinct. But Satan seems to have felt that he made a blunder in that mode of attack. At least, he has, since then, entirely changed the order of battle. Did he find that he had miscalculated the power of the influences, natural and supernatural,

which rule men? Did he see with dismay, that those coarse outbursts of virulence and blasphemy disgusted men; and that the recoil from them was all in favor of the religion he was attacking?

Anyhow, the present style of attack is quite different: Christianity is now spoken of with words of seeming respect, and its beneficial influence on the world is confessed and lauded. Sometimes, its *quasi*-truth is acknowledged. Was it not the natural, perhaps the necessary development of the religious side of man's nature, called for by the force of things at a certain stage or phase of the progress of the world, superior to every phase, known or unknown, that preceded it, admirably suited to the exigencies of the time of its existence, but itself to be superseded in due time by some other phase or form of religion, something more philosophical and better, when humanity shall have advanced to a more elevated stage of perfection, and shall see truth more clearly than now?

Christ our Lord they speak of in tones of dulcet sweetness. They admire Him. They see clearly that He rose far above His age. He was superior to Socrates, Plato or any other philosopher of antiquity. He surpassed them in the clear intellectual insight into truth, and in His wondrous perception of the needs of mankind, and of the possible modes of meeting them and satisfying them in some measure. The moral code He established was far superior to any the world had hitherto ever heard from the lips of a teacher. He possessed a wondrous force of character which gave Him power to impress on the minds of His immediate followers the thoughts and purposes which filled His own mind and heart, and of stirring them up to a wonderful degree of heroic and life-enduring enthusiasm for their fulfillment. Nay more—what is far more wonderful—he could and did perpetuate and exercise that power and influence on successive generations of men, for centuries after. Undeniable facts like these prove Him to have been truly a phenomenal man, unequalled as yet by any in the history of humanity. If Comte, Renan, and such men of our day surpass Him, it is only through the force of exterior advantages. They have in their favor eighteen centuries of progress and accumulated experience; eighteen centuries during which the human mind has not been standing still. From the standpoint now happily reached, they can discern the truth more clearly than even He, with His marvelous insight, but standing on a level centuries lower. They can take more expanded and more correct views. Hence, they are able to point you out His uncertainties, His mistakes, His failures and His errors. They will trace the influence of these onward in the history of His religion among men; and they will show you where and when, to these original errors and mistakes made by the Founder of Christianity and lying at its root,

men have since added others perhaps more pernicious. Whatever is good in Christianity, whether of origin or of development, they approve; whatever in it was suited to the circumstances and needs of man, they commend. If still suited, they wish to see it carefully cherished and preserved. But whatever was untrue, or has become unsuited, they will put aside. In all this they claim to stand up impartially for truth, and for what is beneficial to mankind. As true men, having the strength of their convictions, they must labor strenuously to do so. But they will do it with words of gentleness for the excusable, perhaps the unavoidable errors of the past, and especially with words of reverence, of veneration even, for the Great Founder of Christianity.

It is the *Hail, Rabbi*, and the kiss in Gethsemani, over again.

This modern style of attack, so artful and insidious, is, we are sorry to say it, not without visible effect. Works of this school profess such reverence for religion and religious subjects, seem so candid and impartial in treating them, and are so full of religious forms of speech, that the reader fails to see the true purpose and aim. When the "Ecce Homo" was published anonymously several years ago, was it not a matter of doubt and of argument among many, anything but infidels, whether the brilliant unknown writer really intended to explain and defend Christianity, or to contribute his portion to the grand work of overturning it?

Our Protestant brethren are suffering terribly from such attacks. They have no arms fitted for the encounter. The old time war cry—The Bible, the Bible alone, the Bible interpreted by itself, the Bible interpreted by every man for himself—is valueless now. It neither strikes terror into the enemy, nor gives courage to the heart of him who uses it. It never had any value to count, save where men accepted beforehand and clung tenaciously to the belief of their fathers as to the integrity, the inspiration, and consequently the divine authority of the Bible; and where they similarly accepted, and, at least in a general way, retained without questioning, such interpretations of the Scriptural texts as had been sanctioned by their parents and teachers. Such traditional teaching gave something of definiteness to their belief. But where that was cast aside, and a man struck out for himself—as indeed the fundamental principle of Protestantism required him to do—he usually found himself very soon afloat on a sea of doubts and uncertainty as to the proper number of books in the Bible, as to the accuracy of the text, as to the inspiration and authority of the whole, or what might yet be left to him. He was tossed to and fro by varying and undecided opinions as to the meaning of the text. The present state of the Protestant mind is one of uncertainty sad to contemplate. It is due to the fact, that what only a

few did formerly, almost every thinking mind, at all conversant with the literature of the day, is now forced to do at the imperative command of modern science.

The geologist assures him, that since the discoveries of geology as to the past vicissitudes of the earth, the old time-honored interpretation, which his fathers gave, and which he held as to the meaning of the beginning of Genesis, is all wrong, and must be put aside. Perhaps he is willing to put this point alongside that other point, which astronomy made two or three centuries ago, as to the meaning of certain texts of Scripture which had been generally supposed to bear on the question of the motion of the earth or of the sun. But for all this, it is a shock to his own powers of accurate interpretation of Scripture. Possibly it shakes the certainty of his belief in the inspired accuracy of the Sacred Writer. This is but the beginning of his tribulation. The archæologist cometh, with the ethnologist, and the philologist and others, to assure him that they have abundant evidence, part of it contemporary, from the antiquities of Egypt and Mesopotamia, India and China, showing that in those lands men were living in organized nations before the date which his Protestant Bible assigns for the Deluge, nay, even farther back than the date for the Creation. His Bible chronology goes by the board, and he is left like a ship at sea that has been forced to cut away her masts. Ere his mind grows calm again and he can reconcile himself to the new state of thoughts, the paleontologist comes, to throw on his scientific canvass weird, shadowy figures of the prehistoric and the primeval man, who, he says, lived a wild savage life, clothed in skins, dwelling mostly in caves, living by rude fishing and hunting, and for a time ignorant of agriculture, perhaps destitute of language. He clearly roamed over the earth contemporary with the mastodon and the mammoth, long since extinct, away back in the geological periods of time, in the post-pleiocene, perhaps in the pleiocene, and even in miocene eras. These are the latest, and therefore the truest and most reliable of all geological discoveries. He looks at the ghost-like figures, bewildered and perhaps alarmed. Nor are his nerves at all quieted by the scientific chorus of Darwin, Huxley and others, as they sing, that man was not created by God at all, but was developed out of an ape or some other animal, in virtue of the law of struggle for life or of some other inflexible natural law; that man has no spiritual nature whatever, but is wholly made up of particles of matter; that life, and thought, and conscience, are all the production or necessary consequences of the action and interaction and changes among these particles and atoms of matter; that they are all as much regulated by law as the flowing of water down the hillside, or the motion of the moon in her orbit; and that all such

changes producing the effects thought due to the presence of a soul, are themselves but the effects of other precedent causes; the whole, one and all, occupying their appropriate places in the grand series of events which are following each other in this material universe—a series, the commencement and ending of which are both unthinkable, and we need give ourselves no concern about them.

Is it wonderful, that in this conflict between his religious belief and science, where, on one side there stand the text—the substance and the authority of which he is by no means sure of—and his powers of interpretation, which he has already learned to distrust, the more he studies the matter; and on the other side, this array of forces of modern science, marching on *en echelon*, with seemingly the confidence of assured victory; the Protestant finally either becomes skeptical, or gives up the whole question as something on which no one can arrive at certainty, and settles down in dim persuasion that doctrines are nothing, that the essence of Christianity is morality, and a vague belief that religion is a very respectable, good thing, especially for women and children.

The position of the Catholic is very different. We believe in Christ and the Holy Church which He founded, and to which He gave full authority to teach, in His name, unto all men and for all time, all things whatsoever He commanded. She is for us the pillar and ground of Truth. From her teaching we learn the doctrines of Divine Revelation. On her authority, or rather on the authority of Christ speaking through her, we believe them. The Scriptures we hold to have been given by divine inspiration, for our edification and instruction; and not, by any means, as a manual or text book, from which to learn the doctrines of Revelation. A text book or manual would of course state these doctrines clearly, fully and in something of a logical order. The simplest inspection of the Bible will show that it is as far removed from this as possible. The very form and character of its contents prove that it was never intended as such a manual. In the Bible the doctrines and precepts of Revelation are of course often alluded to, are often referred to more clearly, are sometimes stated explicitly. Some texts are clear, so clear that the meaning can scarcely be mistaken. Others are not so clear, and others again are so obscure, or so abstruse, that the daring or unskillful may wrest them to their own destruction. Our ability to understand any passage may depend on its own explicitness and clearness, on our own power of mind and acumen, or on our thorough acquaintance with the peculiarities of the special writer, the language or dialect in which he wrote, the manners and customs and habits of thought of those he was addressing, and to whose minds he would, more or less, accommodate his words.

The special circumstances of the time and place must have their weight, and should be known, if we would determine with accuracy and precision the original meaning of any passage of Scripture. Where the Church has defined that a certain passage bears a certain meaning and defines a certain doctrine, we accept that definition as final. But this has been done only in a very few instances. For the rest, we know that God cannot contradict Himself and cannot contradict in Scripture any doctrine which He has taught through His Church. Any interpretation of a text, therefore, which contradicts a doctrine defined or taught by the Church, must be set aside at once as an erroneous interpretation, because it contradicts a known truth. Interpretations of a text which are conformable to the teaching of the Church, are not censurable as to doctrine. Whether they express correctly the meaning of the passage of Scripture, depends on the clearness of the text, which may forbid any other interpretation, or whether this is the meaning in which it appears, from concordant interpretation of the Fathers, that this text has been traditionally understood from the beginning. Otherwise the question must be settled by other rules of criticism.

What we have now said concerns such texts as refer specially to doctrine and morals. There is, however, in Scripture much of historical narrative, and of poetry. The two are sometimes united; or the earliest garb of historical narrative was poetry. Poetry calls for a freedom of expression, which may delight the imagination and give pleasure to the feelings. Oriental poetry goes far beyond our modern poetry in the boldness and the frequency of its tropes, metaphors and other figures suited to Eastern minds and Eastern customs. Then such illustrations gave force, emphasis, beauty, perhaps clearness, to the words, in the minds of the hearers. To us, the same illustrations and ornaments might fail in producing such an effect. Our languages are different, and our habits of thought almost as different. Illustrations most proper and effective in their case might not be understood, or might be even misunderstood by us. Where an illustration is drawn from a fact of nature as viewed or understood by the hearers, and therefore perfectly legitimate in their case, it might well happen that we would take what is simply and really only a poetic or oratorical illustration, for the assertion of a truth. Such was the case in relation to sundry passages of Scripture, which, if taken literally, would mean that the earth stands still, and the sun moves. They were understood literally, and were even quoted in that sense, until the progress of astronomy proved that the sun stood still, and that the earth moved. Then it became evident that the former mode of interpretation was a mistake, that these texts did not assert a fact, and were only poetical or oratorical figures, in which the ordinary

usus loquendi—the popular phrase or form of language, based indeed on a misconception of facts—was used to convey more forcibly and intelligibly a divine truth.

Let us illustrate our meaning, and the character of the question, by a supposition which is not too extravagant. The Poet Laureate of England, or our own Longfellow, might well indite a few poetic stanzas, speaking of the rising of the Orb of day, of his majestic ascent to the meridian, of his gradual descent along his path in the western sky, of his lingering awhile over the broad prairie, and of his final setting amid the glory of golden and purple clouds. This might be done exquisitely. None would find fault with it, none would misunderstand it. But if those same stanzas fell into the hands of a people holding to the olden Ptolemaic system, and as yet rejecting the Copernican theory, lately presented to them and still unproved, it might very well happen that they would quote the poet as agreeing with them. They might perhaps be brought to understand that this is a poetic conception and license of speech; but it would be difficult to make them realize that the same freedom of speech would be heard in the prosaic conversation of daily life, and would even be found on the pages of scientific books teaching, *ex professo*, the Copernican theory. And all this, without a suspicion anywhere, that the sincerity of their belief in the Copernican system was thereby imperiled, or in the slightest degree put in doubt.

Such latitude in the use of expressions allowed in our modern prosaic matter-of-fact languages, might well prepare us for similar, if not far greater latitude, in the figurative and glowing poetry of the ancients. In such cases, the Catholic student is in no way disturbed by the discussions of critics and the ultimate decision arrived at, whether it be one way or another. To us these questions are to be decided, if they ever can be, by the canons of criticism and by the aid of any light of truth that can be thrown on them. The authority of religion is not involved in them. Our belief of any or of all the doctrines of our holy faith, is not based on any such weak support as our feeble critical ability to decide questions which may have vexed the learned for centuries. It is based on the authoritative decision of that Church which Christ our Lord established for the very purpose of teaching us divine Truth.

This much for that multitude of questions which, so far as they seem to touch religion, involve only the interpretation of texts of Scripture. There are, however, other questions presented of a different character, inasmuch as some of them directly contradict, or indirectly but logically impugn, doctrines defined and positively revealed by God. For example, some of them deny that God

created the universe. Huxley seems bent on maintaining that in man there is no spiritual soul. In such cases, we know that the so-called scientist is in error. It is not true science, but a falsely called science, which pretends to correct the teaching of God himself. The scientific world itself, in the long run, generally does execution on such theories. The path of science as it marches on, is marked, as it were, by the dead bones of countless theories, each one of which in its day was hailed as an advanced truth, destined to crush the superstition of Revelation. Such, for instance, was the theory very much in vogue twenty years ago, of the plurality of the human race—a theory tending to deny the doctrine of original sin, and of redemption. Its popularity was at the highest, when Agassiz supported it with his theories of the various centres of creation. Now, in less than one generation, it is so completely dead that we scarcely find a reference to it. The Theory of Development is just now all the rage, and has demolished its predecessor. The arguments hailed only twenty years ago as irrefragable and overwhelming, now only call for a smile. The tide of scientific opinion is running in an exactly opposite direction.

The tide may run for a time in one direction, or in another. The Catholic, like the inhabitant of a city by the sea, knows that his port of Divine Truth ever stands in the same unchanging place, unmoved by these passing currents. The bark that would find safety in its tranquil haven, may have to stem these currents before entering.

But, however, tempting the theme, we must not let our pen run off into questions of the conciliation of the conflicts of some modern so-called scientific theories and the Truths of Divine Revelation, as presented and taught in the Catholic Church. On some other occasion we may feel at liberty to do so. At present we propose to take up the central truth of all Christianity—the Doctrine of the Divinity of our Lord and Saviour—and to consider how it stands now, amid the multitudinous attacks of modern advanced thinkers.

The subject is not inopportune. The seemingly respectful tone of these attacks, their seeming candor, their assumption of deep learning, and the circulation of them everywhere, have produced, as we intimated, a visible and deplorable effect. Many pulpits, claiming the title of Christian, are heard denying and arguing against His Divinity; many others give a very uncertain sound; and still others appear studiously silent, as if unwilling to offend the hearers who created them and by the breath of whose nostrils they live, by broaching a subject on which there exists among them an irreconcilable difference of opinion. Were it not for the Catholic Church, belief in the Divinity of the Incarnate Son of God, our Re-

deemer, would soon die out among men, perhaps would already be counted among the dreams of the past. She it is who now, as in all times past, proclaims each day her faith in the true Divinity of her Founder, THE WORD MADE FLESH, the Only begotten Son of God, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, who became man, and was crucified for us on Calvary.

It is not easy to sum up in a few sentences the many, and often contradictory, statements made by so many writers in their attacks on the doctrine. We will throw them into the form of an historical statement. This form is sometimes affected by themselves. It gives distinctness to their statements, and it will allow us to grapple with various points separately and in their proper order. We may presume them to speak thus :

1. The Jewish people, at and for some centuries before the birth of Christ, was intensely monotheistic. The idea of a Trinity of Persons in the Godhead was unthought of by them. The idea that a man born of a woman in their own land, and living among them, could be God, because in Him dwelt the Second Person of the Divine Trinity, or for any other reason, could never have entered their minds. It would be directly antagonistic to their most sacred doctrine, and to all their habits of thought.

2. Jesus of Nazareth was born a Jew, was trained and educated as a Jew, and never in all His life went outside the Jewish world, He was sincerely and deeply religious. It would have been specially repugnant to Him to entertain any such doctrine. He certainly never could have invented it. It is positive that He never taught it. It was unknown to Him.

3. It was equally unknown to His Apostles, who were also all of them Jews and, like Him, trained in the school of Jewish religious thought. They never taught it.

4. The early converts to Christianity, whether of the Jewish race, or from Gentilism, not having been taught it, did not hold it. The Jews, in becoming Christians, did not consider themselves severed from their own race; for they continued to frequent the Temple while it stood, to observe the Mosaic law; and this so tenaciously, that they ultimately formed a Christian sect of their own—the Nazarenes—which continued to exist in the fourth century. They would ever naturally hold the Jewish idea of the unity of God. The Gentile converts held the same. They gave up Polytheism, and came to believe the one true God, Creator of all things.

5. It was only long after the death of the Apostles that the Christians, sprung from Gentilism and trained in the philosophic schools, probably of Alexandria, originated this idea of the Divinity of Christ. They found in the teachings of Plato, then universally respected, a certain parallelism of words and thoughts,

which served to prepare minds for the announcement of the Doctrine of the Trinity, and to give it something of a seeming support. The prevalence of polytheistic ideas took away from their minds all antecedent difficulties, so strong in the Jewish mind. The doctrine of the Divinity of Christ was but a practical corollary of that of the Trinity. This doctrine, establishing something of a connection between Christianity and the most popular philosophy of the day, gave a dignity and an importance to Christianity, before the learned world, which otherwise it could not have possessed. For the Christians it was more than an offset to the ignominy of the Cross. The Christian philosopher and apologist found in it full scope for eloquence and for philosophic argumentation, and an ever ready reply to the assaults made on Christianity from the character and the fate of its Founder. And it admirably satisfied the craving of all Christian hearts for something to strengthen and console them amid the taunts and galling insults, to which they were daily subjected, because they were the followers of a despicable crucified Jew. With this doctrine in their hearts, all such shafts fell harmless to the ground. Hence the doctrine was acceptable, spread rapidly; first among the learned and philosophizing classes, of course, and then from them among the mass of Christians of every class. Finally, despite the opposition of Arius and others, it was defined at the council of Nicea in A. D. 325.

6. From that date on, the Divinity of Christ has been the accepted and cherished doctrine of Christianity. But the time has come when the progress of historical criticism, the more scientific discussion of religious truth, (if indeed there be such a thing as real objective truth in religion,) and the investigation of the origin and growth of religious ideas and systems among the different races of men, have enabled scientific minds now to undo this error of fifteen or sixteen hundred years standing, and to reach results more in accordance with the advanced and advancing teachings of pure reason.

This we offer as a fair summary of the historical statements which the opponents of Christianity put forth with an air of confidence, as a decisive argument against the doctrine they are assaulting. We do not, of course, pretend to enter into the minor details, in which they frequently differ among themselves and contradict each other. We group the whole in broad outline.

The first statement does not touch the question at issue, and its accuracy has been controverted. The second statement goes on the supposition that Christ simply gave a fresh development to the existing Jewish religious ideas of His day, and did not go outside of that system. Above all, it ignores the thought that the world received through Him a new revelation from Heaven, of divine

truths hitherto unknown to men. This is in perfect accordance with their own theory that any divine revelation, as Christians understand the word—the miraculous imparting of knowledge to the world by God, whether of Himself, or through an inspired envoy—being a miracle, is absolutely impossible. But in an argument with Christians, to assume this theory, which Christians do not admit, or to assume that no divine revelation was made through Christ, is to beg the question,—a feat these advanced thinkers are very much given to perform. However, we shall show that Christ did, in fact, teach this doctrine of His Divinity, that the Apostles taught it, that the earliest Christians held it, and that so far from being the philosophizing figment of a later day, originating long after the time of Christ and the Apostles, it is in fact the original central doctrine of Christianity, around which all other doctrines are grouped in logical order and connection.

Whether or not, before the advent of Christ, the Jewish people possessed any intimation of the Doctrine of the Trinity, or of a plurality of persons in God, or of the Divine character of the Messiah whose coming they looked forward to, are for our subject questions only of secondary importance. If the reply be affirmative, the facts would indeed be a valuable argument in favor of our doctrine. But if negative, it can avail our opponents nothing. Obviously the antecedent ignorance of the Jewish people on these points would be no ground why at a later day, when Christ had come, He might not and should not enlighten their ignorance, and declare to them the truth hitherto unknown.

But in fact, the reply has been given in the affirmative by writers who specially studied the question. The modern Jewish school of thought has been for centuries intensely anti-Christian on these points. Their continued discussions with the Christians in every age, and their efforts to elude the cogencies of Christian arguments founded on passages of the Old Testament, have driven the Jewish controversialists into one groove, which ever since the establishment of their theological and Rabbinical school at Tiberias, in the fifth century, has become more and more rigid. What we wish to ascertain is not what do these later Rabbis say; but what did Jewish Rabbis think and say, before and about the time of our Saviour. To ascertain this, we must go back to such fragments of their sayings and teachings as have been preserved in the Talmud, the Targums and other early Jewish Works. Not to speak of others, this has been done by the late ex-Rabbi *Drach*, who published the results, in his work: *De L'Harmonie entre l'Eglise et la Synagogue* (Paris, 1844). It is certainly strange to find those old Doctors in Israel giving to the future Messiah, time and again, the very incommunicable name of God, *Jehovah*; and in their ex-

planations of Genesis speaking of *God*, of the *Word of God*, and of the *Holy Spirit of God*. It would amply repay one to study out the points which Drach makes, and to ponder and wonder over the quaint Rabinnical quotations that garnish his pages. But we leave the subject to those who may have a special turn for such studies. We have now neither the space, nor the type. We proceed to consider what is more important—the question involved in the second proposition.

Did Christ our Lord, in teaching His disciples or the crowds that listened to Him, declare the doctrine of His own divinity? This is the key of the question. The first evidence is manifestly to be sought in His own words, as given to us by the sacred Evangelists. What, then, does He say of Himself?

I. He declares Himself greater than every person and everything most sacred in the eyes of the Jewish people. He is greater than the prophet Jonas, (Matt. xii. 41,) greater than Solomon in all his wisdom, (Matt. xi. 42,) greater than the most Holy Temple (Matt. xii. 6). Prophets and just men yearned to see Him and His works, and to hear His teachings, and attained not the object of their earnest expectation (Matt. xiii. 17, Luke x. 34). He is greater than Moses, who wrote of Him, (John v. 46,) than Abraham who rejoiced to see His day, who saw it and was glad (John viii. 56). He is greater than John the Baptist, who was sent to announce Him, and who was greater than any born of woman (Matt. xi. 10–11). He is the Son of David, whom David in Spirit calls Lord (Matt. xxii. 43). He is Lord even of the Sabbath (Matt. xii. 8).

II. He claims the right to exercise, and does exercise the power which His hearers held God only could exercise. They believed that God only could forgive sins. He claims this power as His own. "The Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins" (Luke v. 24). He exercises it. "Be of good cheer, son, thy sins are forgiven thee" (Matt. ix. 2). He transmits it to His disciples. "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them" (John xx. 23).

So truly does He wield this power that He is Lord of Paradise, and can assure it to the repentant robber. "Amen, Amen, I say to thee; this day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise" (Luke xxiii. 43).

The Jews worshiped the true God—Creator of heaven and earth—just and merciful, who will reward the good and punish the wicked, and whose divine power and authority will be made gloriously manifest in His judgment of the world. Christ claims for Himself the authority of sovereign Judge. He at the end of the world shall send His angels to gather out of His kingdom all scandals. He shall cast out them that work iniquity, and shall make the just to shine as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father (Matt. xiii. 40,

41, 42, 43). For unto Him hath all judgment been given by the Father (John v. 22). Unto this judgment He shall come in the glory of the Father and attended by the angels as His servants. He shall sit upon the seat of His majesty, and all nations shall be gathered together before Him, and His judgment shall be absolute and irrevocable (Matt. xiii. 41; xvi. 27; xxiv. 30; xxv. 31-46; xxvi. 64). Ought not this to be enough? And yet we have scarcely crossed the threshold. We have but a glimpse of the glory that shines within the divine Temple of Truth.

III. Throughout His ministry He teaches, not as the Scribes and Pharisees who declare the law as given of old. He speaks with His own original authority. To Him the highest mysteries are but natural truths, clear to Him as those of the world around. He issues His commands as one having power. If He does away with the traditions and rules of the Synagogue, He establishes new precepts of His own authority: precepts which shall bind all mankind, and are of equal force with the laws given of old by the Almighty through His Servant Moses. And the warrant for all this is: "But I say to you" (Matt. v. 21-48).

IV. He foretells the future, not awaiting an hour of vision or inspiration like the prophets of old, and as if raised beyond and outside of Himself, but because He knows all things (John xxi. 17). There was nothing hidden from Him in all nature, not even in man (John ii. 25), not even the secret wishes of man's heart or the secret thoughts of his mind (Matt. ix. 4; xvi. 8; Mark ii. 8; Luke v. 22).

This is not in Him a borrowed knowledge, for He is the light of the world (John viii. 12.) He is the wisdom of God that sendeth the prophets, and which no adversary shall be able to resist and gainsay (Matt. xxiii. 34; Luke xi. 49; xxi. 15). He is what no man before Him could claim to be,—the Way, the Truth and the Life (John xiv. 6).

V. He styles Himself explicitly the Son of God (Matt. xxvii. 43; John ix. 35). And this not as man may be in a vague sense; not as all men are by their possession of reason and intelligence, nor as some men are by the possession of sanctifying grace, and the holiness of their lives; but in a special sense peculiar to Him alone.

His disciples acknowledge it (John vi. 70). The devils cry out to Him: What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Son of God (Matt. viii. 29). It is His own title. By it He is distinguished from the prophets. *They* are the servants of the house-holder, whom He sent to the husbandmen. *He* is the Son, the real true Son, whom the Father sent to them in the last place, and of whom they said, "This is the heir: let us kill Him, and we shall have the inheritance" (Matt. xxi. 33-38).

VI. This Sonship is not a Sonship vaguely or improperly so termed. It is a truth—a mystery which flesh and blood cannot teach, but which is revealed from heaven, and such that they are blessed to whom it has been revealed (Matt. xvi. 16–17).

It is real and true. He is the Son of God, the only Son of God; the Son of the Blessed God; the only begotten Son of God (John iii. 16–17), by giving Whom—“that whosoever believeth in Him may not perish, but may have life everlasting”—God has given the most signal proof of the immensity of His love for man (John iii. 16).

VII. The mystery of the character and qualities of this Sonship is clearly set forth in many passages of His teachings. He has not been called and sent by God, as Moses and the prophets were, but He proceeds from God (John viii. 42). He came out from God; He came forth from the Father (John xvi. 27, 28; xvii. 8). He will leave the world and go again to the Father. He cometh down from Heaven, where He was before, and whither men shall see Him ascend again (John vi. 33–63). The Baptist bore witness that this is the Son, whom the Father loveth and into whose hands He hath given all things, and testifieth what He hath seen and heard (John iii. 31–35). Christ Himself declared that no man hath seen the Father. He said to the Jews, “You are from beneath, I am from above; you are of the world, I am not of this world” (John viii. 23). “I am not come of myself, but He that sent me is true, whom you know not; I know Him, because I am from Him, and He hath sent me” (John vii. 28, 29). So clearly and so emphatically did He present this thought, that He could not be misunderstood. Martha summed up the instruction she and others had received, “Yea, Lord, I have believed that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God, who hath come into this world” (John xi. 27).

VIII. This pre-existence in eternity, in the bosom of the Father, which she acknowledged and which is implied in the passages we have quoted, is still more distinctly declared in others. He existed before Abraham. (John viii. 38.)

The Father loved Him before the creation of the world (John xvii. 24.) And He prays to the Father, “Glorify Thou Me with Thyself, with the glory which I had before the world was, with Thee” (John xvii. 5.) He claims for Himself, most emphatically even the incommunicable name of God, *JEHOVAH*, the distinctive name of the one true God. “Amen, Amen, I say to you, before Abraham was made, I AM” (John viii. 58.)

IX. He establishes what in the language of to-day is called, if we may use it in this sacred theme, a *solidarity* with God. God gives grace, and no man can come to Christ except the Father draw him.

Christ is the fountain of grace; He giveth living water, whereof they that drink shall not thirst forever, and shall come to everlasting life (John iv. 10, 13, 14). When He shall be lifted up from the earth on the cross, He shall draw all things to Himself (John xii. 32). He applies literally to Himself the prophecies which Isaiah (xxxv. 5) and Malachi (iv. 5; iii. 2) uttered concerning Jehovah the Lord of hosts; and shows how they must be really and literally fulfilled in Himself.

Yet while teaching thus strongly the mysterious union which exists between the Father and Himself, He is equally careful to indicate the distinction that exists between them; a distinction as mysterious as the union. He hath not come of Himself. The Father hath sent Him (John vii. 28). All that He has, He holds from the Father. He does nothing of Himself: as the Father hath taught Him, these things He speaks (John viii. 28).

His doctrine is not His own, but the teaching of Him that sent Him (John vii. 16). And He speaks emphatically, "Amen, Amen, I say unto you, the Son cannot do anything of Himself, but what He seeth the Father doing; for what things soever He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner (John v. 19). If he has life in Himself, it is because the Father hath given Him to have it (John v. 26). He and the Father are two witnesses whose testimony may not be refused (John viii. 16, 17). They are distinct and yet in unity. "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30). Whosoever sees Him seeth the Father, because He is in the Father and the Father is in Him (John xiv. 9-11).

This union is manifested in works. "My Father worketh until now; and I work" (John v. 17). Whatsoever things He doeth, these the Son also doeth in like manner (v. 19). "The Father raiseth up the dead, and giveth life: So the Son also giveth life to whom He will" (v. 21). "As the Father hath life in Himself, so He hath given to the Son also to have life in Himself" (v. 26). No man can snatch aught out of the hand of the Father: no man shall pluck the sheep out of the hands of the Son (John x. 28-29). No man knoweth the Son but the Father: neither doth any one know the Father but the Son (Matt. xi. 27). The Father sendeth the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, in the name of the Son (John xiv. 26). The Son sendeth the Paraclete from the Father, the spirit of Truth, who proceedeth from the Father (John xv. 26; xvi. 7).

The Father glorifieth the Son, (John viii. 54,) and He is glorified in the Son (John xiii. 31, 32). All things whatsoever the Father hath, are the Son's (John xvi. 15; xvii. 10). The works which He does are done by the Father who abideth in Him (John xiv. 10). Whatsoever you ask the Father in My name, He will give it you (John xv. 16; xvi. 23). "Whatsoever you ask the Father in My name, that will I do" (John xiv. 13).

Finally, Christ receives from men the same homage and worship which they gave to God. "You believe in God; believe also in Me" (John xiv. 1). The great commandment is to love God with our whole heart, and our whole soul, and with all our strength. Christ claims that we love Him more than father or mother or relatives—more than our very lives. Adoration is due to God alone, because of His divine majesty and power, and infinite perfections, Christ proclaims it. Yet to honor Him, is to honor the Father; and He allowed the man born blind, to whom He had given sight, to fall down and adore Him (John ix. 38). He allowed the pious woman to adore Him (Matt. xxviii. 9), and after walking on the waters and calming the storm, He allowed His disciples that "were in the boat to come and adore Him, saying: "indeed, Thou art the Son of God" (Matt. xiv. 33). And when Thomas, convinced of His resurrection, answered and said unto Him: "My Lord and my God," He did not chide the Apostle: on the contrary, Jesus said to him: "Because thou hast seen Me, Thomas, thou hast believed; blessed are they that have not seen and have believed" (John xx. 28, 29).

It would be easy to quote many other equally remarkable expressions of Jesus Christ, concerning Himself and His relations to God: but these are sufficient. Made familiar to us from our childhood, we are not so sensibly struck, as a stranger would be, with their unusual and mysterious character. No messenger or servant of the true God has ever used such expressions. Neither Moses, nor Samuel, nor David, nor Isaiah, nor Elias, nor John the Baptist, nor any one of the Apostles or Evangelists, nor any holy man of God since their time, has ever dared to speak of himself in this manner. In the use of this language concerning Himself, Christ stands alone of all men that have walked on earth.

What is the intrinsic meaning of His words? What is the meaning of that SONSHIP of which He so often speaks, and which He vindicates to himself so exclusively? What does He mean by His being seated at the right hand of the Power of the Father? Why thus picture Himself to us, as placed on the right hand of God the Father, seated with Him on the very Throne of the Deity in Heaven, while patriarchs and prophets, and all the saints of God, and all the angels of Heaven, praise Him and minister unto Him? Does this mean that He is true God, equal to the Father, and adored by the Heavenly court as the Father is, and that He claims the same worship from men on earth? May we not, rather, ask: Can the words be made to mean anything else than this?

But, it is objected, if Christ really meant to teach the doctrine of His Divinity, why did He not distinctly state it, in so many simple, unmistakable words? Why did he not say clearly: *I am the true*

God, who have come down from Heaven, and have taken to myself a human body and a human soul. I am God incarnate." Why has he always stopped short of this, saying only: "*I am the Christ, the only begotten Son of the living God.*" Does not the studious avoidance of the direct statement, and the studious use of other words, prove that, whatever may be the meaning of the words He used, they were at least chosen and used for the very purpose of excluding the assertion of a real divinity?

This is an objection often heard. Yet, strong as it appears, it is only a bubble, that will burst at the first touch. If we cite in reply to it, as we well may, certain passages of Scripture, which imply the possession by Christ of divine attributes, we are generally met by minute questions of refined critical interpretation, or by further remarks impugning the accuracy with which His words have been recorded; and thus raising the question of the authenticity and the authority of the Gospels. Into this question the present is not the proper time for us to enter. We here assume both; so far at least as the genuineness of the expressions of Christ quoted by us is concerned. We take it for granted that He really did use them. But we will so shape our answer as to rely on facts of history, rather than on the interpretation of certain texts.

What then, we ask, is the real meaning and import of the phrase, *Son of God*, so often used by Christ, and exclusively applied to Himself.

We maintain that this expression, *Son of God*, used by our Saviour, was then, and for that people, a distinct and clear avowal of his Divinity, and not a falling short of such avowal, as the objection asserts; and furthermore, that the form of words proposed instead, as more explicit, was not used by our Lord for the simple reason that such words would have led His hearers into error on another point.

To seize the full and true meaning of words, we must know something of the mode of thought peculiar to those addressed, and of the subjects which occupied their minds when the words were spoken. For instance, twenty years ago, if a politician announced to his constituents that he was for extending to every man in the land the rights of American citizenship, he would at once be understood to oppose Know-nothingism, and to deprecate any change in the then existing naturalization laws: for these were the questions then agitating our political world. Eight years ago, the same words would have been understood as favoring the extension of the right of voting and of eligibility to office, to the lately emancipated negroes. For a new question, unthought of at the earlier date, had arisen. It was a question so different from the former one, that many who spoke the words sincerely, as

against Know-nothingism, were utterly unwilling to repeat them as in favor of the negro. And this without inconsistency, and while they were positive that they had not, in the meanwhile, changed their political convictions. Thus we see that the true import of words depends on something else than their mere utterance. The character of the speaker and the hearers, and the circumstances of the times, are all to be taken into account. How many errors and mistakes are due to a neglect of this principle!

The Oriental mind is keen, subtle and active—we might say, of a decided metaphysical cast. At least it was eminently so fifteen hundred and two thousand years ago. It retains something of that character yet, despite centuries of the tyranny of Islamism. A cynic of other religions might sneeringly intimate, that he looked on them as industriously occupied in splitting hairs.

The Western mind, on the contrary, prides itself on being quite practical and matter-of-fact, in dealing with the questions that come before it. An Oriental would say that it is dull and obtuse: so obtuse, as often to embrace two systems at the same time, without perceiving contradictions between them, visible to him at a glance; and so dull, that in practice a course of action may be followed even for a long time, without any suspicion on our part that it conflicts with maxims or theories to which we profess to adhere. He wonders that we make so little account of intrinsic contradictions and logical absurdities. He admits and admires our boldness and power in outward action: he thinks little of our capacity for reasoning. He will stroke his beard complacently as he says that we have the empire of matter, but the Orientals retain that of the intellect.

Seven centuries ago, the scholars of the West gave themselves up to metaphysical studies, with as much, perhaps more ardour, than ever the Orientals did. We have the fruits of their labors in the hundreds of folio volumes, containing the works of the mediæval Scholastics, and filling the lower shelves of our libraries. Who reads them now? Is it possible to translate them into a modern language? Where will we find words to express the refinements, and the delicate shades of abstruse thought, and the shadowy distinctions, which were their playthings or their weapons in intellectual warfare? One would have to do now with our English tongue, what the Scholastics did with the Latin—coin a multitude of new words for special use, and modify considerably the meanings of old ones.

Our habits of thought are very different from those of the Orientals in the age when Christ spoke, and for centuries before and after. It is a singular fact, that all or nearly all the errors and heresies which the Church of God had to combat in the East, during the

first four centuries of Christianity, turned on the attributes of God, on the Trinity, and the Person of Christ—all of them the result of this rage for abstruse metaphysical speculations. The errors and heresies and religious questions originating and discussed in the West (save among the Scholastics) touch, on the contrary, the human side of Christianity—the forgiveness of sins, man's need of grace, his free-will, the authority of the Church, and the number and value of the Sacraments to be used by man. This distinction is striking, and indicates a marked difference in mental characteristics.

We doubt if that difference were ever greater in practice, than we have made it now. We have a happy knack of throwing ourselves into any question that may arise, and of discussing it, paying little or no regard to the bearing of the terms we use on any other question. The first question settled, we are quite ready to enter on another with equal zest, feeling ourselves not at all committed by the words we have used in the previous discussion, and disposed to exercise a similar liberty of terms in our present discussion. We argue, for instance, in favor of the existence of a Personal God. We mean by the words, and we contend that there really does exist, a Supreme Being, eternal, intelligent, self-existent, and all-powerful; who created the universe out of nothing, and who rules it. We mean that He really exists in Himself, and apart from that universe of created things, which are but the works of His hand. We contend that He is not the mere sum total of all existing things, as some Pantheists teach, or the sum total of the forces or laws that rule the universe, as others hold; that He is not another name only for nature, whatever is meant by that very vague word. We repudiate the assertion that He is perhaps nothing more than a mere ideal conception, created and existing only in man's own intellect—a personified summing up of our moral and religious notions, cravings and instincts. All this we argue against; and when we have proved satisfactorily the existence of a Personal God, we are ready to pass on to the consideration of his Divine Nature, and profess ourselves ready to discuss the Doctrine of the Trinity. But here the Oriental will step in and tell us that this is no longer for us an open question; for we have already decided it. We have already committed ourselves to the Jewish and Socinian idea of the Godhead, and, by our own language, have excluded the Trinity; we have argued for the existence of a *Personal* God. If we believed the Trinity, we should have said, a *Tri-personal* God.

This may seem to us the trifling of hypercriticism, deserving only no more than a passing smile. To the Oriental mind, however, it is a serious matter. What we have written is but the remark and remonstrance made to ourselves by an acute, clerical friend from

Aleppo, who was very much shocked, when once in conversation with him we happened to use the accepted English phrase *personal God*, translating it literally. His mind seized at once on the doctrinal meaning of the word Personal, and followed it out to its logical consequences. We on, the contrary, used it, as it is customarily used, only in a loose conversational sense, without any thought of being tied down to the consequences, at once and almost instinctively drawn by the Oriental mind.

Bearing in mind this special trait of the Oriental intellect, then roused to activity by the contest between Religion and the Eastern and Grecian systems of Philosophy, let us take up the words of our Saviour and weigh them well, bearing especially in mind the questions of that time, as seen by the Jewish mind. We shall see—we can scarcely fail to see—how distinctly they sometimes express, how logically they at other times imply, the great doctrines of Christianity concerning God and Christ. We shall see that this is the sense in which they were then understood by His hearers, whether disciples who yielded belief, or Jews who refused to receive His teaching.

The doctrine of Christianity is, that in the one true eternal God there are three distinct persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. In this divine mystery of the Holy Trinity there is neither a division of the one Godhead, nor a confounding or mingling of the three Divine Persons.

Moreover, the Second Person of this Divine Trinity, God the Son, became man by taking to himself a human body and a human soul; was born of a Virgin mother; taught in Judea; and died on the cross for the redemption of man. He was known among men as JESUS OF NAZARETH. He was God and man.

Both of these doctrines are asserted or implied in the teachings of Christ, whenever he declares that he is the Son of God, the only begotten Son of the Father; who was with the Father before the world was created; who was in the Father, and the Father in Him; who was one with the Father, and yet distinct from Him; who had come down from Heaven into this world, and would return to Heaven again.

The first thought or logical truth, that presents itself to the mind, as we contemplate the relation of sonship, is the identity of nature. The son must be a person distinct from the father, but of the same nature with the father. This is obvious to every mind. The son of a peasant is another peasant, the son of a noble is another noble. But to the Oriental mind, especially to the Semitic, and more especially to the Jewish mind, this idea stood out in bold relief. The importance they gave to the matter of descent, the care with which their family genealogies were preserved, their very distinction into

tribes, led them to give special prominence to this thought. The son of Aaron was a Priest; the son of Levi was a Levite: the son of David was of royal blood.

When Christ declared to them that he was truly the Son of God, the first thought that flashed across the minds of His startled and astonished hearers was this: "Who ever before preached to us that the true God hath a Son, a Son like the Father, and possessing the divine nature of that Father? The false gods whom the heathens worship, have sons, who are false gods like their fathers. The Persians believe that divine sons give birth to other divine sons. The heathens are ever speaking of such things. But we worship one true God, the only God, who revealed Himself to our fathers as a jealous God. When was it ever said before, that He too had produced a Son of His own divine nature? What does this man really mean? Does He claim that He is really such a son of God, and equal to the Father in nature and honor? Can He mean this?" When they heard Him go on to speak of being with the Father before the world was made,—from eternity; of His coming down from the Father and His return to the Father; when He told them that they knew not whence He was, and could not understand the Divine mode of His generation; that only the Father knew the Son; when he claimed union with the Father so intimate that the Father worked in Him, and He in the Father; and claimed that all men should honor the Son as they honored the Father—these and His other words made it impossible to misunderstand Him. That the Father was God, they knew. It was the most sacred doctrine of their nation. But that there is a Son of God, partaking of His Divine Nature, this Jesus of Nazareth who is speaking to them, they are not willing to believe. And what are those other words that He uttereth at times, about the Spirit of God whom the Father will send, and whom the Son will send? Is this another Divine person? Are there more persons than one in God? We cannot comprehend what He says. But that He does say it, and insist on it, our own ears bear witness.

That the Jews so understood Him, is clear from their own words and acts. "They sought the more to kill Him, because . . . He said God was His Father, making Himself equal to God" (John v. 18). They repeat the charge. "For a good work we stone Thee not, but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God" (John x. 33.). When He stood for trial before the high priest, and held His peace until, in response to the solemn adjuration, He broke that divine silence and emphatically avowed Himself the Son of God, His words were still taken in the same sense. For "the high priest rent his garments, saying: He hath blasphemed; what further need have we of witnesses?"

Behold, now you have heard the blasphemy: what think you? But they answering said: He is guilty of death" (Matt. xxvi. 63-66.) And still again, in the same sense did the Jews say of Him to Pilate. "We have a law, and according to the law He ought to die, because He made Himself the Son of God" (John xix. 7).

It is impossible to make a mistake here. Words and acts alike forbid it. They are as clear as the sunlight. The Jews did understand Christ to claim for Himself a true, veritable Sonship of God, which made Him a partaker of the Divine Nature, equal to God, thus making Himself God. This was the blasphemy of which they accused Him, and for which they condemned Him.

Had He claimed to be only a prophet or messenger of God, they would have hailed Him with joy. It was what the nation yearned for. Had he even announced Himself as an angel of God coming in the form of a man to do God's work among them, the idea would not have been strange to them. Had not angels again and again appeared among men, to Abraham, to Jacob, to Daniel, to Tobit? There was no difficulty. They would have welcomed and honored Him. The higher His grade in the angelic host, perhaps the higher would be the honors to be paid to Him; the more earnest and joyous their welcome. But when He claimed to be the veritable, eternal SON of the ETERNAL GOD—when He was clearly understood to claim a participation of the very divine nature of God—this was a trenching on the glory of the jealous God of their fathers, a blasphemy which could be fitly punished only with death. They would have been right, were the claim untrue. A blasphemy of deeper dye cannot be imagined, than such a claim, unless Christ be in truth the Divine Son of the Living God.

This is evidently what they understood Him to teach. So earnest were they, that they charged Him repeatedly with this blasphemy, and again and again took up stones to put Him to death; and finally did crucify Him, thinking they were giving glory to God.

Did He ever intimate that they misunderstood Him? Did He ever explain away His strong expressions? Quite the reverse. On one occasion, when they charged Him with blasphemy and sought to stone Him, (John v.,) He chides them for not believing Him. He exhorts them to believe, and He develops His meaning in several of those strong, unmistakable expressions which we have already quoted. On a second occasion (John x.) He arrests their headlong fury for a moment, as He did at other times, by an apt quotation from the Scripture; He again fixes their attention, and then goes on to insist more strongly than before on the doctrine which had offended them—"The Father is in Me, and I in the Father" (John x. 38)—so strongly, that their fury bursts forth

again. They seek at once to take Him, and He escapes out of their hands. So, too, on a third occasion, before the high priest. Not only did Christ, when adjured in the name of the living God, avow Himself the Son of God; but He went on to declare explicitly, that hereafter they should see Him sitting at the right hand of the power of God, and coming in the clouds of heaven to judge the world (Matt. xxvi. 64). In the day of God's Judgment of the world, they would have visible evidence of the grand truth which now they denied, and for announcing which they were about to condemn Him.

Christ takes back no word He has spoken, abates not one iota of the claim He asserts, to be the Son of the Father. His words are truth, and everlasting life. He has come to His own: His own receive Him not.

How the Jews understood His words, we have seen beyond all doubt. Their words and their acts made it perfectly clear. We now see that, on His part, Christ confirmed them in that sense; and by insisting on it, gave a second and more emphatic expression to it. He was in truth the Son of God, one with the Father in the possession of the Divine nature.

How His disciples understood him, and what they held this Divine Sonship to mean, will be made equally clear, when we come to examine how they spoke and what they taught concerning His Divinity.

We may add here that the phrase, *Son of God*, occupies a prominent place in the early Christians' writings, and is used especially in their discussions with the Jews. The same fundamental idea, distinction of persons and community of nature, between the Father and the Son, is ever understood; sometimes it is plainly expressed. Thus in the Epistle to Diognetus, an early Christian work, the unknown writer of which says (chap. xi.) that he was a disciple of the Apostles, and had become a teacher of the Gentiles, we read (chapter v.) concerning the ministry of Christ, the Son of God, sent by the Father unto this world: "As a king sends his son, who is also a king, so sent He Him: As God, sent He Him; As Saviour, sent He Him." The king's son is a king. The Son of God is God. Similarly, Justin Martyr, in his *First Apology* (chap. 63), says: "The Jews know not that the Father of the universe has a Son: who also, being the first begotten Word of God, is even God." Athenagoras, in his *Plea for the Christians* (chap. x.), gives expression to the same thought. This is the essential philosophic idea of Sonship, the very thought to which the mind of the hearer was directed. The term, *Son of God*, was a phrase the full meaning and import of which the Jews would understand clearly, and perhaps much more readily, than they would the other term, *Word of God*, less

familiar to them, but one which became more acceptable to the Greeks and Hellenizing Christians; and which, having the sanction of the Gospel of St. John, and expressing his belief, will in its turn call for our consideration, when we treat of the testimony of the beloved disciple as to the Divinity of his Master.

It is evident, therefore, that the words of Christ: "I am the Christ, the Son of God," so far from falling short of a full and explicit declaration of His divine nature, were precisely those which conveyed to the minds of his hearers a distinct statement of it, and which, furthermore, expressed the doctrine that his Divine Personality was distinct from that of the Father; and, by this statement, led them on towards a knowledge of the mystery of the Holy Trinity.

Had he said: "I am the Christ, the incarnate God," His hearers would indeed understand Him to declare His own Divinity. But they would have learned nothing of the distinction of persons in the Godhead. Ignorant of this doctrine, they would have held that God the Father, of whom alone they had knowledge, had become incarnate. They would have held that Jesus of Nazareth was God the Father, and not God the Son. The words used by Christ guarded them against this error.

Indeed, at a later day, by over-much subtilizing on the doctrine of the Trinity, and thus doing away with the proper distinction of the Divine Persons, sundry eastern Christians were led on to coalesce into a sect called the Patripassians. Their chief error was holding, that it was the Father who was made flesh, and was born of the Virgin Mary; who suffered under Pontius Pilate, and was crucified for our redemption. The strongest arguments against them were drawn by the orthodox Christians from the words of Christ Himself, as He teaches the distinct personality and the proper works of the Son of God.

We have shown, however imperfectly, that the words of our Saviour contain ample proof of His Divinity. The same doctrine may be established from the character of His miracles. The teachings of the Apostles supply still other evidences of it; and the abundant testimony at hand to show that the early Christians of every class—the immediate disciples of the Apostles—believed it, supplies historical evidence, which fully refutes the assertion, so confidently made, that this doctrine of the Divinity of Christ originated only at a later period, in the minds of certain philosophizing Christians. But to treat these points with the fullness which they are entitled to, would demand far more space than is now at our disposal. We may treat of them hereafter. Our readers will acknowledge that we have already taxed their time and patience sufficiently for this first number of our REVIEW.

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