
A table of contents for *Bibliotheca Sacra* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_bib-sacra_01.php

ARTICLE II.

MORE RECENT WORKS ON THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

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THE most noteworthy Lives of Jesus that have appeared during the last two or three years are those of Renan, Schenkel, and Schleiermacher, and the revised edition of Strauss's. The first of these has been so widely circulated, and has called forth so many criticisms, that it seems almost superfluous to add anything to what others have said. Nevertheless, for the sake of completeness and of convenience of comparison, it may be well to take here a cursory view of the work.

If we compare Renan with Strauss, in reference to the general impression which their works are fitted to make, the former must be pronounced the least objectionable. He aims at a more positive result. He does not manifest such an utter lack of sense for the dignity of Christianity. There are parts of the book which, by the vividness which they impart to certain scenes in the life of Christ, must be called by every one exceedingly interesting and valuable. German critics usually call Renan's work less profound than that of Strauss; and so it is, if minuteness of discussion and criticism is made the test. But Strauss wrote for the scientific, Renan for the popular, reader. This gives Renan's work a perspicuity and attractiveness which by no means necessarily indicate lack of learning or of care. In one respect, certainly, Renan is superior to Strauss; we mean in his acquaintance with the genius, customs, and literature of the Jews. And this acquaintance has been skilfully used. In one particular, however, we may admit the charge to be well founded. While Strauss by one fundamental assumption, that of the unreality of the supernatural, and the consequent simple humanity of Christ, jus-

tified his absolute rejection of the New Testament as a source of history, Renan, though starting with the same assumption, ascribes also a considerable degree of credibility to the Gospels. Consequently he is obliged to resort to numerous, and often fanciful, conjectures, in order to make the two assumptions harmonize. His logic is less rigorous than that of Strauss, because his appreciation of Christianity and his regard for historic probability are greater. In short, he has not the courage to develop a fundamental error so fearlessly to its legitimate results.

As to the four Gospels, Renan's view is as follows: they are all, speaking in general terms, genuine and authentic; but we do not have them in their original form. For, at first the Christians had no scruples in making additions to and changes in the Gospels. "Each one wrote on the margin of his copy the sayings and parallel passages which he found elsewhere, and which pleased him." Not till after the middle of the second century did the Gospels receive their present form and authority. Mark is more authentic than Matthew, and Matthew more than Luke. John's Gospel is, as to the historical part, superior to either of the others; but the language there ascribed to Christ is in general not so authentic. Although the origin of this Gospel is a puzzling problem, it must be considered probable that John wrote the most of it, putting, unconsciously, his own later-learned philosophy into the mouth of Jesus. For "our recollections are formed like everything else; the ideal of a person whom we have known changes with ourselves." In general, of the fourth Gospel we may say that it contains "the reminiscences of an old man; sometimes marked by wonderful freshness, sometimes by strange errors." But all the Gospels are "partly legendary." This must be inferred from the fact that they are so "full of the miraculous and the supernatural." The problem, therefore, is to separate the wheat from the chaff, and construct an authentic life of Jesus. In order to do this, the chief thing needed is an "aesthetic sense"; "conjecture" must be

allowed to play freely. The deficiencies of the Gospels in pragmatic and chronological arrangement must be supplied by hypothesis.

Renan's general hypothesis respecting Jesus is, that he must at first have availed himself of moral aphorisms and customs which were current at his time, in impressing his views on the people; that then, having become more mature and self-possessed, he acquired a calm, poetic eloquence, holding himself aloof from controversy; that gradually he became more stimulated by his ideas respecting the kingdom of God, i.e. "the kingdom of the spirit," was roused by opposition, and at last dealt chiefly in polemics and invectives. "These," adds Renan, with great naïvete, "are the periods which are clearly distinguishable in the Koran." With this plan before him, the writer has nothing to do but to compose the life, selecting now a passage from this place, now one from that, just according as it best serves to execute the plan, rejecting what does not suit it at all, as being legendary. As a security that his "artistic sense" does not mislead him, he can only say that, when one examines the Gospels carefully, "the real words of Jesus disclose themselves, so to speak, spontaneously." Let one example illustrate his principle and method: the narrative contained in Mark iii. 21, says Renan, belongs to the latter part of Christ's public life. But, one might object, it comes very early in the book; it seems to belong there; do you not know, besides, that, according to very many critics, it is in Mark especially that we may look for the most accurate historical sequence of events in the narratives? That proves nothing, would be the reply; my business is to bring order out of chaos, and to do that, this passage must be moved. But why just this passage? Because, according to the progress of development in Jesus' character, it could not be that in that early period, when he lived in Galilee, surrounded by such bewitching scenery, loved and followed by admiring disciples, waited on by women, who, to be sure, "loved him more

than his work," but towards whom he yet cherished "extraordinarily tender sentiments," — it cannot be that in that first year, when he only preached the kingdom of the humble and lowly, in that year "when God veritably dwelt on earth," — it cannot be that during that "idyllic" life he could have been accused of being beside himself. But why not? Because this could only happen after he had been in Jerusalem, when his fanatical tendencies had been developed; when he went so far as to disown family ties, to require absolute poverty and celibacy; when he fancied himself possessed of superhuman authority; when he had ceased "to find pleasure in living, loving, seeing, and feeling." But how do you know there was just such a development in Jesus' character, and that only late in life he proclaimed his "destructive principles"? Because this was the case with Mahomet, and must have been also with Jesus. But how do you know that Jesus' life must have presented the same phases as Mahomet's? My "aesthetic sense" tells me so. But others hold different views; why must we trust your "sense" rather than theirs? Because "in order to write the history of a religion, it is necessary, first, that one should have once believed in it; secondly, that one should fully believe in it no longer."

This is no caricature. We are asked by Mons. Renan to trust implicitly to his *a priori* conceptions of what Jesus' character and life must have been, and that, too, for the very reason that he no longer believes in Christianity! The audacity of this claim would seem more amazing, did Renan not have the art of clothing the most surprising, and even offensive, sentiments in such a poetic gracefulness of style. Whatever may be thought of his taste in conceiving, he certainly has a rare skill in delineating. The title taken by the Dutch theologian Osterzee for his review of Renan's work, "History or Romance?" is a most fit one. If the novel is not a model one, the failure is due rather to the fundamental error of Renan's estimate of Christ than to his lack of genius and fancy.

A more serious question is that which relates to Renan's honesty. The most candid reader cannot deny that it is, at least, open to suspicion. Such contradictory representations as he gives of Christ's character certainly agree ill with his declared purpose to give a consistent picture. Jesus, we are told, was "sinless," and yet "not free from sin." He was "the greatest of moralists"; yet accepted the title "Son of David," only because "without it he could have hoped for no success." He is a man "who will never be surpassed"; yet he was a very ignorant man, having even no "clear idea of what it is that constitutes individuality." He is of such importance that "without him history is unintelligible"; yet his doctrines were "utopian and chimerical." He "attained the very summit of human greatness"; yet he was a fanatic, who "violated the sacred restraints of human nature, and even praised his followers for being bad sons and unpatriotic citizens, when they became such for his sake. He was "the creator of the eternal religion of humanity"; yet this creation was an accident, for had not John the Baptist been beheaded, he "would have continued to be only an unknown Jewish schismatic." These antitheses might be almost indefinitely multiplied. And no fewer quotations might be made, showing in what manner Renan, in his patronizing explanations and defences of Jesus' conduct, contrives to damn with faint praise or with half-concealed irony. When he attempts to transfer his own pantheism to Jesus, we are reminded of his remark that our "ideal of a person changes with ourselves." The cavalier-like manner with which he sets aside the most prevalent beliefs respecting Christ and the sacred narratives as hardly worth noticing, may be cunning, but is not quite ingenuous; and, even with the greatest stretch of charity, one can hardly believe his enthusiasm to be sincere when he exclaims, in reference to Mary Magdalene's account of her visit at the tomb of Jesus: "Divine power of love! Holy moments in which the passion of a visionary woman gives to the world a risen God!"

But to notice all such instances of misinterpretations and unfair insinuations would require a volume.

We turn to Schleiermacher. The delay in issuing his Life of Jesus has been occasioned by the difficulty of procuring an accurate version of his Lectures, as they were delivered; he himself having left only a fragmentary manuscript.

Those who are acquainted with Schleiermacher's other works can infer what in general would be the characteristics of this. That Christianity is the only true religion; that Christians constitute, and, in order to be such, must constitute, a church; that this church is animated and permeated by the spirit of Christ; that its life is drawn, not merely from Christ's doctrine, but from his person,—this is, in brief, Schleiermacher's creed. He denies Christ's divinity, as being unintelligible if he is to be also considered as a real man; yet he accepts the doctrine of the church, that Christ was specifically different from all other men. His task then is, as he states it, to show how Christ is the sufficient ground for the salvation of all men, and yet how he can be simply human. Schleiermacher does not attempt to present a connected account of Christ's life, confessing this to be impossible, in view of the imperfect data furnished in the narratives of the evangelists. Without attempting any minute criticism of the origin and relation of the four Gospels, he accepts the universal testimony of the church that the fourth is really from the apostle John, and attaches to it, therefore, special value. He makes it the basis of his representation of Christ's character and work, assigning to the others a secondary, but nearly co-ordinate importance.

The following is a summary of the most noticeable points in Schleiermacher's view of Christ's life: Matthew's and Luke's narratives of the Saviour's early life cannot be harmonized with each other, and are little trustworthy. Neither Christ's birth, nor anything connected with it, was miraculous. Yet Luke ii. 41–52 is authentic. The baptism was of no special importance; by submitting to it, Christ

wished merely to recognize John as his forerunner, and forgiveness as necessary for the Jews. The temptation must be considered as not a real occurrence, but as having probably a parabolic significance. Jesus had no distinct plan respecting his public work. He entered upon it gradually, even before the time when he is in the New Testament represented as beginning it. Being in the strictest sense sinless, he must have become very early in life conscious of being destined to a peculiarly high vocation. He labored where and as circumstances drew him out, following the movings of his benevolence and his pure moral sense. The term "Son of God" is explained in Heb. iii. 5, 6. Christ having been in a special manner acquainted with the will of God, as a son, in distinction from a servant, shares the counsels of his Father. Jesus' doctrine respecting himself is not essentially different from that found in the writings of the apostles; but we must distinguish what is polemic and apologetic in Christ's teachings from his direct affirmations, which distinction affords a wide margin for the doctrine of accommodation. Jesus' quotations from the Old Testament are mostly applications, rather than explications, this being to a certain extent true even of his claim to be the expected Messiah. His mission was to invite men to come to himself, "in order to receive from him all the elements of the spiritual life." The communion of Christians with Christ is the mystical, of Christians with one another the ecclesiastical, side of Christianity. Jesus' death had no expiatory virtue; it was only necessary to the highest success of his mission. The Holy Ghost promised by him to his disciples is nothing but the spirit of Christ remaining with them, i.e. the spirit of brotherly love and union, springing from attachment to a common Lord. This indwelling of the Holy Ghost in the church is the best analogue by which to illustrate in what sense God was in Christ. Jesus was a mere man, yet a generic rather than an individual man. He had an altogether peculiar relation to God; such an acquaintance with God

[Gottes bewusstsein] that he could truly say: "No man knoweth the Father but the Son"; but he had no existence before his life on earth. The expressions in John which seem to favor this doctrine, are to be referred rather to God's foreknowledge and fore-ordination of Jesus' relation to his work of redemption.

Schleiermacher's treatment of the miracles of Christ is a very interesting part of the book. It is quite evident that if the most striking miracles had been recorded only in the synoptical Gospels, Schleiermacher would have explained them all away, as invented or exaggerated by a later generation. But this not being the case, he resorts to the hypothesis that the miracles of healing were effected in a natural way, although in a very remarkable degree, by the force of Christ's spiritual nature acting on the physical constitution of others through the medium of an excited and expectant state of their emotions. This makes the greater number of the miraculous occurrences "comprehensible." In general, if we can understand Christ's *motive*, and also his *mode* of working, in a given case, there is no trouble. When either of these conditions is unfulfilled, the problem is difficult; when both fail, the accuracy of the narrative may be doubted. Thus, there was no need of Jesus feeding the five thousand, and we cannot see how, with so small a quantity of food, he could have done it; hence, probably nothing wonderful took place. This seems also to be indicated by the expression in John vi. 26. The daughter of Jairus was not dead, and probably the same is true of the young man at Nain. Lazarus was not raised by Christ, but, as Christ himself says, directly by God.

We cannot enumerate further particulars. The discussion of this subject, though not lacking in acuteness, must strike every reader as very unsatisfactory. Indeed, Schleiermacher himself acknowledges that no settled doctrine respecting this matter should be looked for until the origin of the Gospels is more critically investigated.

In sketching the sufferings and death of the Saviour,

Schleiermacher, following John, as usual, doubts the truth of the account of the agony in the garden, and of the miraculous occurrences mentioned in the other Gospels. The different narratives of the resurrection are compared, and the discrepancies presented, but no positive result is obtained. One can hardly tell whether the author has any opinion or not. Having begun with the promise to make the life of Christ comprehensible, he brings us at last to a most important point, where the real state of the case is left entirely unexplained. We are left in doubt whether the crucifixion resulted in a real death; in doubt, therefore, whether there was a real resurrection, and in still greater doubt how Jesus' life finally ended. Schleiermacher evidently discredits the whole story of the ascension. Yet he cannot believe that the apostles knew of Christ's actually dying a natural death after the resurrection. Hence we are told that the question is involved in uncertainty, this only being certain, that it was better for the disciples that Jesus himself should be away, so as not to overawe them, and thus render them unable to work independently.

Schleiermacher's Lectures on the Life of Jesus were heard by so many, and their purport, therefore, was so generally known, that the appearance of this book, of course, excites no very great attention. Yet not an inconsiderable party in Germany occupy still substantially Schleiermacher's theological point of view, and welcome its appearance. It is not unworthy of its great author, however faulty in many, and those even important, particulars. Though he often wrenches the scriptures, following his strong bent to develop everything out of his consciousness, yet he seems not to be conscious that this is a questionable course; he does not write in the spirit of a narrow controversialist, but seems rather to be driven by an inward impulse. He is sceptical, we may say, but not a sceptic who looks at Christianity from the outside, and affects thus impartially to examine it. He not only professes to be a Christian, but his spirit, in spite of all which is open to criticism in his views, is one which no true Christian can fa

Prof. Schenkel's "Characterbild Jesu" deserves notice, not so much because it is a specially valuable contribution to theological literature, as because it is the work of a prominent theologian, and indicates a certain tendency in German speculations. If we were in general terms to compare Schenkel's work with Renan's, we should say that the latter is as truthful a picture of the life of Jesus as one could expect from an infidel, and that the former is as untruthful a picture as one could expect from a Christian. As is well known, Schenkel has been for several years receding more and more from his former orthodox ground; this work may be taken as an index of his present position.

The key-note of this work, as of the two just considered, is the professed determination to make the life of Jesus thoroughly comprehensible. In his introduction, Schenkel reviews the past and present church doctrine respecting the person of Christ. He declares the notion of the union of two natures absurd; laments that the Reformers should have left their work half done, by omitting to attack this error; finds herein the chief source of rationalism — a movement which went too far, was checked by Schleiermacher, but not overcome, since he started from a too subjective point of view, thus leaving the way open for Strauss, by a stricter historical criticism, to attack the foundations of Christianity, by which attack many were frightened back to orthodoxy, but to a worse one than the former, because not so sincere. Hence, Schenkel concludes, a truthful presentation of the life of the Founder of Christianity is urgently needed. This he here attempts to give.

As to the sources of his biography, Schenkel accepts as satisfactory the investigations of Holzmann, and takes Mark as furnishing the most authentic narrative. The order of events as given by Mark is followed, as being chronologically correct. He thinks that Mark himself wrote somewhere between A.D. 45 and 48. His priority to all others is proved by his having no apparent special design in writing, by the lack of artistic arrangement, by the absence

of all accounts of Jesus' childhood and of different journeys to Jerusalem, and by his giving less of the miraculous. Matthew wrote, probably, before A.D. 60, Luke still later, and is the least trustworthy of the three. As for the fourth Gospel, Schenkel cannot away with it. He denies its genuineness; finds in it no "development" of Jesus' character; declares it utterly irreconcilable with the others; detects everywhere a distinct dogmatic purpose, viz. to exalt and deify the character of Christ; declares it impossible that Christ should have talked so long and in such a strain as is here often represented, and concludes that, though it contains trustworthy records, and may partially and indirectly be traced to John, it is yet of comparatively late origin, being written after A.D. 110. Schenkel's treatment of this topic is conducted neither with candor nor with critical thoroughness. He seizes at every item which may serve to weaken the authority of John, and ignores every effort that may be made to reconcile his Gospel with the others.

According to Schenkel, Christ was a mere man, yet a man of unexampled dignity, the hope and light of the world, the Saviour of men, etc. Schenkel does not affirm Jesus' sinlessness so emphatically as Schleiermacher, yet he seems to hold it. This, however, he can do with less difficulty than Schleiermacher, for he believes in no kind of innate depravity. Christ had naturally remarkably strong religious sensibilities. Luke ii. 41 seq. is probably authentic, "especially as all marks of legendary embellishment are lacking." Jesus' relation to the Baptist is "difficult," but we must suppose that curiosity led him to visit John, and a desire to identify himself with the people, not a sense of sin, to have induced him to be baptized. At that time he began to feel himself called to a great work, but he had yet no conviction that he was the Messiah. He had no plan respecting his labors in general. He preached a more thorough kind of repentance than that required by John. He never looked with favor on the Mosaic law; hence it is certain that the Sermon on the

Mount as given by Matthew is less accurate than in Luke. Hence, too, Matt. xxiii. 3, and other similar expressions, are spurious. In Mark viii. 27 we find the first intimation that Jesus began to think that he must call himself the Messiah. "This was the only way, at least with a part of the Jews, to make his thoughts gain entrance, and to attain the object of his mission." His opposition to Judaism grew more and more decided. He did not go to Judaea but once; that was, however, several months before his crucifixion. The cleansing of the temple indicated that the fall of the temple service was "an already accomplished fact." Christ's agony in the garden was occasioned by his fear of death, dread of disgrace, and especially by the thought that he must bear the hate of men. When on the cross he did not address John, for John was not there. Luke's account of the conversion of the thief is also wrong. The death was real, and there followed no resurrection. The subsequent appearances of Christ are to be considered as spiritual. This is indicated by Paul, who puts his own vision of Christ by the side of that of the other disciples, as if of the same nature.

As to miracles, Schenkel of course rejects them, but allows, like Renan and Schleiermacher, to Jesus a peculiar healing power. Whenever this cause is not a sufficient explanation of a recorded effect, it is only necessary to say that the record is "a later tradition." If it is found also in Mark, it is the work of "the subsequent reviser." Whenever it suits his purpose, Schenkel prefers Matthew or Luke's statement to Mark's. Sometimes he even gives the preference to John. In such cases he has only to remark that the expression or narrative is "genuinely historical."

But the task proposed of making Christ's life comprehensible, as being that of a mere man — is it accomplished? In the sense of having denied to him divinity, it is indeed done; this requires only a few strokes of the pen. In the sense of pronouncing all narratives of miraculous events

spurious, it is also done; this requires only a few strokes more. But taking what is accepted by the biographer as authentic, do we find even then everything made so very simple? Jesus, we are told, was *the* Light of the world; his character and vocation were altogether peculiar; from the nature of the case such a phenomenon as his life cannot be repeated. Here is a mystery which, if we admit no special divine interposition, is vastly more incomprehensible than the miracles which Schenkel finds it so hard to comprehend. How is it explained? Not daring to say that Jesus had a clear consciousness of being the incarnate Word, Schenkel hopes to make the case comprehensible by representing Christ's consciousness as dim, and gradually growing in clearness. The peculiar dignity of his person and work, it is said, "passed before his soul." He had a "presentiment" that he was to be the Redeemer of men. His commission seemed to come to him "like a gleam of silver light from above." He came at last "to recognize himself as the Mediator between God and man ..... as the peculiar Son of the heavenly Father." He learned this from "the mysterious depths of his own consciousness." During the progress of events "it had become to him an incontrovertible certainty that he would have to undergo anguish, pain, and death, as an offering for the oppressed and abused portion of humanity." "The tyranny of the letter had to kill Jesus, in order to die with him." "With his death he paid to the ordinances their last debt." This death was a propitiation for the sins of the world, "because in its blessed consequences the condemnatory effect of the [Jewish] ordinances was abolished." Such are some of the vague expressions by which Schenkel tries to smooth over the difficulty of reconciling the actual narratives of Christ with his own assumption of Christ's simple humanity. They may satisfy those who already hold substantially the same views; they will scarcely convince any real believers or real unbelievers.

There is in the book a certain moral earnestness, which deserves recognition. Though not enti

polemic tinge, it can hardly, like Renan's, make the impression that the author is using clandestine means to gain his end. He has certainly a thorough belief in the superiority of Jesus to all other men, and in Christianity as the one perfect religion. He professes to wish to relieve the church of errors which impede its progress. He is apparently convinced that his views are the only tenable ones. We will not dispute his honesty, but must regard his work as an unsuccessful attempt to accomplish an undesirable end.

Strauss, in the new edition of his work, gives, as a prominent object of the revision, a desire to make it more suitable than the first form for popular reading. The difference, however, in this respect, is trifling. This edition may, in general terms, be characterized as an attempt to restate and fortify the position taken at first. Strauss has given up nothing of the rigor with which he before maintained the mythical theory of the origin of the Gospels. Indeed, in point of scientific thoroughness of discussion, the new work is superior to the old, and would, were it not that his theory has been already so often replied to, receive, or at least deserve to receive, more attention than did the former. Strauss avails himself of the critical investigations which in the last thirty years have been directed, especially by the Tübingen school, against the genuineness of the New Testament books. The title of the present work is as great a misnomer as that of the other. The expectation that, in imitation of Renan, he would produce something of a more positive character than before, is disappointed. Strauss extends a very friendly word to his French coadjutor, expressing the hope that his [Strauss's] work will prove to be as well adapted to Germany as Renan's is to France; but the greeting can be occasioned only by the fact that he is more anxious about the result of his efforts than about their special character, for he has to express his regret that Renan should have fallen into the "fundamental error" of ascribing any credibility to the Gospels. As for himself, he still insists on the principle that no trust should be given to testimony in favor of the genuinen

the force of it can by any means be weakened. Whatever is not absolutely demonstrated has for him no binding force. He has not relaxed from the rigor with which he applies what Professor Tholuck calls the Castor and Pollux canon of criticism, viz. the principle that when two authors disagree, *neither* tells the truth. We have here no occasion to enter into the details of his treatment of the main subject. Perhaps the most noteworthy fact suggested by the appearance of the book, is the fact that Strauss, after so long a silence, and after his former book had almost sunk into oblivion, still clings to his belief, and even cherishes the hope that it will yet obtain general currency.

Nor, to speak honestly, does this expectation of his appear to us very quixotic. The review which Strauss, in the opening of this revised edition of his Life of Jesus, passes on the different writers on the same theme, from Hess to Renan, is, to our mind, the most valuable part of the book — valuable as pointing out the weaknesses of the arguments of those who have undertaken to reconcile the authenticity of the Gospels as they stand with rationalistic or semi-rationalistic views of miracles. Strauss's logic is here unquestionably very keen and vigorous. He points out, with unsparing severity, the inconsistency of trying to effect any such reconciliation. For our part, we would much rather not be required to meet him on the ground taken by those whom he there criticises. His view seems to us, we will not say more nearly correct, yet far more easily to be maintained, than that of those who treat the Gospels as real histories, and yet assume, independent of all external guidance, to "feel out" the truth, throwing away what their feelings dislike as legendary and false. We cannot but hope that this work will do good, by serving to show the uselessness of seeking to eradicate the miraculous element from revelation. If we must choose between considering Christianity as a myth, and considering it as a revelation from the God of nature, who both could and did use miraculous measures in revealing his will, we have little to fear as to the result of the contest. S

issue extremely simple. He disdains to argue at any length the question whether miracles are possible or probable. He simply assumes that to believe in miracles is absurd. Admit this premise, and his conclusion is the most logical one that can be drawn. He holds that the impossibility of miracles implies the impossibility of such a phenomenon as a sinless man. In his opinion, to say that Jesus was a person whose like cannot be again expected, is just as much the affirmation of a miracle as is that of the resurrection of a dead man. And he is right. Herein even Renan violates his own doctrine; Schenkel, as to his general position, is still more assailable, while Schleiermacher, unwilling to admit the reality of a physical phenomenon the *how* of which he cannot comprehend, yet affirming in the case of Jesus with such sharpness and boldness a wonder in the realm of spirit just as incomprehensible, and infinitely more important, than the others at which he stumbles, reminds us of nothing else so much as of one who strains out a gnat and swallows a camel.

To conclude, Strauss's work, far from being one whose doctrines are outlived, in reality represents a strong tendency of the times. Utter disbelief in the supernatural is the form which rationalism now inclines to take. In Strauss it finds one of its ablest representatives. The sight is in itself a sad one; but the Christian may even rejoice that the enmity of his foes, if it is not to be avoided, takes so violent a form. When it is maintained that Christianity owes its very existence to pure lies or silly fancies; when it is seen, moreover, that this is the most consistent form that the enmity can assume, we may take courage. The work is easier than when directed against the puzzling sophistries of half-way infidels, or the timorous doubts of half-way Christians. The enemy is not a smooth-tongued Wordly-Wiseman, but an unmistakable Apollyon, straddling quite over the whole breadth of the way. The scientific defender of Christianity can meet the opposer by a simple *reductio ad absurdum;* the practical defender needs only to use the sword of the Spirit and the shield of