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ARTICLE II.

RECENT LIVES OF CHRIST.

BY THE REV. E. F. WILLIAMS, D.D., CHICAGO, ILL.

As a preparation for a study of the recent Lives of Christ, one cannot do better than carefully to read the monographs by Canon Farrar in the Encyclopædia Britannica, by Rev. S. J. Andrews in Johnson's Cyclopædia, by Dr. William Thomson in Smith's Bible Dictionary, and by Zöckler in the Schaff-Herzog Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge. An article on Christology in this last work, by Dr. Philip Schaff, should also be read. These articles will acquaint us with the differing theories and theological prepossessions of the authors of the leading lives of Christ, and enable us to understand and make due allowance for the prejudices of the author we are reading. The immense bibliography connected with the life of our Lord may be studied in the various editions of Hase's monumental work.

The Patristic church made no attempt to treat the life of Christ historically or critically. It was satisfied with the simple gospel story. The Harmonies of Tatian and Ammonius only seek to set forth the substantial agreement of the evangelists. Poetical representations of the life of Christ—*lyrical*, as the Apotheosis, of Prudentius; *dramatic*, as the Suffering Christ, of Gregory Nazianzen; *epic*, as the Evangelical History of the Spanish presbyter, C. Vettius Aquilinus Juvencus, who lived in the fourth century—were frequent and striking. The Greek paraphrase of the Gospel of John, by Nonnus of Egypt, which appeared in the fifth century, and the heroic poem of the Miracles, by Coelius Sedulius, of the same century, testify to the interest taken in the earthly life of Jesus of Nazareth. (See article in Schaff-Herzog.)

Harmonies and poetical treatises were also produced in the Middle Ages. The Harmony of Victor of Capua, published in the ninth century, and the Monotessaron of Gerson, which appeared at Cologne in 1471, were thorough and critical. Two of the many lives of Christ written in this mediæval period for purposes of devotion are worthy of notice: the work of Bonaventura, first printed in 1480, and appearing at London in an English translation as lately as 1881; and the work of Ludolphus Saxo, a Carthusian monk who lived at Strasburg about the middle of the fourteenth century. His book was printed at Strasburg in 1470 and at Brussels in 1870.

Of the lives of Christ written prior to the eighteenth century, the one by Jeremy Taylor, which appeared about 1653, alone has permanent value. For the richness and beauty of its style, the serenity and devoutness of its spirit, this life is still worthy of study. The life by John Fleetwood (probably an assumed name), which is sometimes bound up with a life of John the Baptist, the twelve apostles, and the Virgin Mary, appeared about the middle of the last century, and till very recently held its place as a popular presentation of the historical facts connected with our Saviour's public ministry. The sale of the book still continues, though its scholarship is far from accurate.

As Schaff and many others have pointed out, the beginnings of a new era in the methods of biblical study may be traced in the writings of the English deists of the last century. Their hostile criticisms were met by such Englishmen as Lardner, Stackhouse, Paley, and by such Germans as Döderlein, Semler, Reinhard, Herder, and Jacob Hess. But the great impulse which led to the modern critical study of the gospel history, and, above all, of its central personage, was furnished by Schleiermacher's lectures at Berlin. These lectures, first given in 1819, and many times repeated, were published from notes in his possession by Rüttenik in 1864.

"Schleiermacher," says Farrar, "wished to steer be-

tween the Ebionitic and the Docetic views of Christ, but while maintaining the divinity, he systematically endeavors to reduce the miracles within the scope of natural laws, and treats even the resurrection in a rationalizing manner, as though Jesus had not really died. Hase leans in the same direction, supposing that Jesus possessed some unknown power, and a sort of sanative magnetism." Both writers seem to have had Paulus in mind, who sought to explain away the supernatural elements in the Gospels, while yet accepting the evangelists as trustworthy witnesses. Hase's lectures at Tübingen in 1823-4—published as a *Leben Jesu* in 1829, in a fifth edition in 1865, and in a still more expanded form as a *History of Jesus* in 1875—also helped forward the new movement. The works of such negative and destructive critics as Paulus (1828), Strauss (1835-65), and their followers, were ably answered by Protestant writers like Neander (1837, a seventh edition of his *Life of Christ* is dated 1873), Tholuck (1837), Ebrard (1842), Wieseler (1843), J. P. Lange (1843-71), Hahn (1844); and by Roman Catholic writers like Kuhn (1838), Sepp (1843), Bucher (1859), and Bishop Dupanloup of Paris (1870). The writings of the Tübingen school, of which the great names are Bruno Bauer (1841-50), F. C. Baur (1847-53), Hilgenfeld (1854), and Volkmar (1857), were the providential cause of Ewald's *History of Christ and his Times* (1855), a work which Dr. Howard Crosby characterizes as "learned but unsatisfactory," but which has nevertheless been productive of good, and is worthy the attention of the careful student. In opposition to the theories of the same school are the works of Lichtenstein (1856), Riggenbach (1858), Baumgarten (1859), and Bishop Ellicott (1860). Renan's *Life*, sparkling like a diamond, popular and sceptical, was published in 1863; Schenkel's *Charakterbild Jesu* in 1864. A later work by this author on the Christ of the apostles and of the sub-apostolic times, appeared in 1878; Keim's *Historic Christ* appeared in 1865; his *Jesus of Nazareth* in 1867-72; Haus-

rath's *The Times of Jesus* in 1870; Wittichen's *Life of Jesus* in 1876, and Volkmar's *Jesus the Nazarene* in 1881. In contrast with these publications, and in some sense in answer to them, are De Pressensé's *Jesus Christ, his times, his life, his work* (1865), Weizsäcker's *Researches on the Evangelical History* (1864), Gess's *The Person and Work of Christ* (1870-79), Dupanloup's *History of our Lord Jesus Christ* (1870), Rev. S. J. Andrews' *Life of our Lord on the Earth* (1863), F. W. Farrar's *Life of Christ* (1874), and Cunningham Geikie's *Life and Words of Christ* (1877). The second volume of the Roman Catholic writer Bougaud's *Christianity and the Present Time*, entitled *Jesus Christ*, should be mentioned; and also the great work of Joseph Grimm, *The Life of Jesus according to the Four Evangelists*, of which the first volume was published in 1876, and which is thus far the best life of Christ which the Romish Church has given us. Two lives of the first importance have lately come from the press, that by Professor Bernhard Weiss, of Berlin, and that by Dr. Alfred Edersheim, of England. On the *Doctrine of the Person of Christ*, the great work of Dorner (1845-56) is still our chief authority. Reference should here be made to *Ecce Homo*, to Dr. Joseph Parker's *Ecce Deus*, written in answer to it, to Dr. Parker's *The Inner Life of Jesus*, and to such monographs as Canon Liddon's *Bampton Lectures on Our Lord's Divinity* (1866), Hardwick's *Christ and other Masters* (1855-8), Professor A. M. Fairbairn's *Studies in the Life of Christ* (1880), and the Rev. Dr. W. G. Blaikie's *The Public Ministry and Pastoral Methods of Our Lord* (1883). Of this work by Professor Blaikie, which is made up of lectures given to the students of New College, Edinburg, a recent reviewer has said: "It is a careful study of our Lord as a minister among men, examining his propositions, his spirit, his work as a teacher, his discourses, and his dealings with the apostles, and the different classes with which he came in contact. The whole is considered as an example for the Christian min.

istry of to-day." The work is extremely interesting, and should be thoughtfully and widely read. The influence of Supernatural Religion, great as it has been in weakening confidence in the credibility of the New Testament writers, has been almost entirely destroyed with unprejudiced minds by Bishop Lightfoot's remarkable articles in the *Contemporary Review*, and by Rev. Henry Wace's Bampton Lectures of 1882, entitled *The Gospel and its Witnesses: the Principal Facts in the Life of our Lord, and the Authority of the Evangelical Narratives.*

The *Christ of History*, by John Young, LL.D., of Edinburgh, published in London, 1855, and republished in this country by Robert Carter and Brother, New York, is an able and interesting argument, by which the author seeks to show that the admitted facts of the personal life and ministry of Jesus of Nazareth can be explained only upon the supposition that he was divine; that his public ministry and his spiritual character cannot be reconciled with the outer conditions of his life by those who deny his deity; in a word, that the incarnation, which unites the divine and the human, is the only possible explanation of his unique person and history.

Passing, now, from this historical sketch, for the materials of which I am indebted to the catalogues, and to Farrar's summary, and which I have prepared in order to show the extraordinary energy with which studies that centre in the Gospels and around the person of Christ have been pursued during the last fifty years, I come now to a brief review of those *Lives of Christ* which are accessible in English, and with which we are all more or less familiar.

And, first, let me speak of those *Lives of Christ* which may be termed partial, or incomplete, and which relate to some special aspect of his work or phase of his character. Two of these *Lives* are very stimulating and helpful,—that by Dr. Joseph Parker on the *Inner Life of Christ* (three volumes, 1882), and *Studies in the Life of Christ*, by Rev.

A. M. Fairbairn (1880). Dr. Parker's volumes are remarkable for the evidence they furnish of careful study, for keen insight, for fresh, original thought, for felicitous statement, and for the reverent, devout spirit which pervades them. The work has evidently grown out of sermons preached at the City Temple, and is therefore practical and timely. Professor Fairbairn's book is scholarly and instructive. Its chapters first saw the light as Sunday Evening Lectures at Aberdeen, and are now printed as preparatory to a larger and more comprehensive work, for which we impatiently wait. The titles of these discourses are full of suggestions; viz., *The Historical Conditions; The Narrative of the Birth and Infancy; The Growth and Education of Jesus, His Personality; The Baptist and the Christ; The Temptation of Christ; The new Teacher; The Kingdom of Heaven; Galilee, Judea, Samaria; The Master and the Disciples; The Earlier Miracles; Jesus and the Jews; The Later Teaching; The Later Miracles; Jericho and Jerusalem; Gethsemane; The Betrayer; The Chief Priests, the Trial; The Crucifixion; The Resurrection.* The work is not easy reading. Though the style is clear, and the words well chosen, the sentences are overloaded with thought. A pardonable fault, indeed, only let the student save the book for the freshest and best hours of his working life, rather than for the restful and dreamy days of vacation.

Another treatise of surpassing merit is Archdeacon Hardwick's *Christ and Other Masters*. The reader of this work thinks at once of the Rev. F. D. Maurice's *The Religions of the World and their Relations to Christianity*. Archdeacon Hardwick's object is to exhibit the real position and relation of Christianity to those other religions which have had and continue to have so great an influence on mankind. The work is in four parts. The first is introductory, and treats of the religious tendencies of the present age, the unity of the human race, the characteristics of religion under the Old Testament; the second

part, of the religion of Judea; the third, of the religions of China, America, and Oceanica; the fourth, of those of Egypt and Medo-Persia. Everywhere we see the hand of a master, and while the treatise is only an essay upon comparative religion, and therefore falls into the class of writings to which such books as the Rev. James Freeman Clarke's *Ten Great Religions* and Johnson's *Oriental Religions* belong, it is far superior to them. It is, indeed, among the few books which every minister ought to read. It is a book which broadens one's views, and strengthens one's faith in the historic truth of the Christian religion and in its immense superiority to any other religion which has received the allegiance of any of the families of men. Here, too, I may speak of Dr. E. H. Sears's *The Fourth Gospel, the Heart of Christ*, published at Boston in 1872. Dr. Sears gives us a picture of Christ, as he appears in the writings of St. John. In his treatment of the supernatural, miracles, Gnosticism, the Johannean writings, he is unusually fresh and instructive. Without claiming to be a complete life of Christ, but as furnishing a picture of the Christ of the Apostle John, I believe the book will have a permanent place in theological literature. The tenth chapter of Dr. Bushnell's *Nature and the Supernatural*, entitled, *The Character of Jesus*, as preventing his possible classification with men, should not be overlooked. Whatever may be the fate of the work of which this chapter is a part, it is safe to say that this chapter will live for centuries. It is in Dr. Bushnell's freshest and most characteristic style,—original, brilliant, profound, and reverent. It is inferior in no respect to Ullman's epoch-making book on the *Sinlessness of Christ*. This is the place, also, in which to mention Professor Henry M. Goodwin's *Christ and Humanity; A Life of Christ*, by Dr. Howard Crosby; another by Dr. Deems, and another by Edmund Kirk, the latter chiefly in the words of the evangelists; and Dr. W. G. Schauffler's *Meditations on the Last Days of Christ*. Dr. Schauffler

was one of our most distinguished missionaries, and his book, published by the American Tract Society many years ago, consists of a series of devout meditations designed to quicken and strengthen piety. *Ecce Homo*, appearing more than twenty years since, remains in the front line of suggestive, stimulating, though rationalistic, lives of Christ. For pure, perspicuous English; for manly expression; for vigorous, original thought; for striking ways of restating old truths, *Ecce Homo* has become a classic. Its heterodoxy, if heterodox it be, has been met by Dr. Parker in *Ecce Deus*, which should be read in connection with it. Those who are interested in looking at the life of Jesus from a Swedenborgian point of view will find pleasure in *Deus-Homo*, or *God-Man*, by Theophilus Parsons, late Professor of Law in Harvard University. The aim of *Deus-Homo* is neither controversial nor critical. The author believes that Christ the divine is human, and that the human is divine also; that He is God and man, perfectly and in full degree. The book was published at Chicago in 1867 by E. B. Myers and Chandler. The *Christ of Humanity; or, the Enigmas of Christianity*, by George Reber (Charles P. Somerby, New York, 1876), will not convince many readers that St. John never saw Asia Minor or that Irenæus was the author of the Fourth Gospel. His theory that the Christ we worship is the creation of St. Paul will find little favor.

Christ and Humanity, by Professor H. M. Goodwin, of Olivet College, is a thoughtful book, but has not had an extensive sale. It is in two parts. The first part is made up of discourses on Christ and Humanity: the second is an historical and critical review of the doctrine of Christ's person. This review has cost the author much study, and furnishes us much valuable knowledge. Rejecting the modified Sabellianism of Dr. Bushnell, to whom the work is dedicated, Professor Goodwin ranges himself with the *Kenoticists*, Zinzendorf, Thomasius, Liebner, Gess, von Hofmann, Kahnis, Delitzsch, Schöberlein, Kübel, Lange,

Ebrard, Godet, De Pressensé, and Dr. Howard Crosby. These Kenoticists say that Christ has but one consciousness and but one will; that by his *kenosis* (Phil. ii. 6-8; cf. 2 Cor. viii. 9; John i. 14; Heb. ii. 17, 18; v. 8, 9) he actually laid aside, abandoned, the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence during the whole period of the incarnation. These writers differ in the degree of the *kenosis* which they advocate. Kahnis and Lange think that it is in not using, rather than in not possessing, these attributes. Dr. Crosby says that our Lord reduced himself to the dimensions of humanity, but adds that this is a subject about which we cannot speculate, inasmuch as it transcends human thought. Professor Goodwin believes that the *λόγος* is the human pre-existing element which "became incarnate by taking flesh, and which occupies the place of the soul. To be incarnate, the divine must be harmonized; this is limitation, and implies progress from ignorance to knowledge and wisdom. The Word did not assume flesh, but *became* flesh. As the true idea of God includes humanity, so the true idea of Man includes God. Their essential unity is the basis of the possibility of the incarnation as a *kenosis*."

I have already spoken of the lives of Christ by Strauss and Renan. The positions of Strauss in his earlier work were carefully considered and honestly met by a multitude of able and scholarly men. Hence his second and more popular Life of Jesus for the common people, which is still in circulation. Both of these books are painful reading. They give evidence of vast, but perverted, knowledge, and plead eloquently and piteously for that "fear of the Lord which is the beginning of wisdom."

Renan, scholarly after the French style, clear cut, brilliant, popular, has had more readers than any other infidel writer, and, by his confident yet not over-accurate statements, has shattered the faith of not a few. His Life of Jesus, though little more than an "historical romance," has been answered, not only in France, but in England and

America as well. The reply both to Strauss and Renan, by Dr. Schaff, published by the American Tract Society in 1865, and entitled *The Person of Christ, the Miracle of History, and containing a collection of the testimonies of unbelievers as to the deity of Christ*, has a value in **inverse ratio** to its size. This is a little book **which** ought to go into every pastor's library.

Another fragmentary life, and one which rejects the Fourth Gospel as the work of St. John, able, yet far from convincing, is from the pen of Sir R. Hanson, an English judge residing in Australia. This life, *The Jesus of History*, was published in London by Williams and Norgate in 1869. In this work Jesus is a humble peasant who leads a pure and holy life, and gives wise and useful instruction. As such he was looked upon by the Jews as a fanatic. His claim to be king brought him into collision with the Roman authorities and led to his crucifixion. The author's style is strong and clear. He sums up opinions like a judge. He strives to be fair, but it is evident on every page that he has never seen "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world," that he is simply a critic dealing with data which may or may not be true, and the truth or falsity of which, startling as the thought is at first, is after all a matter of no real consequence. His position is virtually that of Monsieur J. Cohen, in the *Deicides*, (Michael Levy Frères, Paris, 1864)—that the Jews are not justly chargeable with guilt in seeking the death of Jesus, inasmuch as, with their training and prejudice, they could not accept him as their Messiah.

Most of the other *Lives of Christ*, which are easily obtained, may be grouped in two great classes,—those which are popular rather than scientific, and those which are severely critical. The value of *Lives of the first class* depends very largely upon the extent to which they carry out the purpose for which they were written. A compilation may have far greater merit than an original production.

One of the best popular Lives of Christ is by Hesba Stretton, a well-known Sunday-school writer. Her book, *The Wonderful Life*, (Dodd and Mead: New York, 1874) is only "a slight sketch," but in that "sketch" of 325 small pages Miss Stretton sets forth all the facts of the earthly ministry with clearness and force. She makes no pretensions to originality or scholarship. She enters into other people's labors, appropriates and arranges as suits her taste. The book is worthy a place in every Sunday-school library and would be read with pleasure and profit by many a man who has no time for Geikie, or Hanna, or Farrar. Another excellent work of this same class is a *Life of Jesus for the Young*, especially for young men of sixteen or thereabouts, by Dr. Joseph P. Thompson, the lamented pastor of the Broadway Tabernacle. Style, arrangement, thought, theology are characteristic of the author. The book is one which a father would gladly put into the hands of a son on entering college or leaving home for a life in the great business centres. Its high price has stood in the way of its circulation.

Immanuel, or The Life of Christ, by Dr. Zachary Eddy, with a rich and brilliant introduction by Dr. R. S. Storrs, published at Springfield, Mass., by W. J. Holland and Co. in 1868, and sold only by subscription, is a book which has some faults and many decided merits. It contains the fruits of the faithful study of many years. Its style is somewhat sermonic, magisterial, dogmatic. It is, or rather was, fairly abreast of modern learning, yet it nowhere gives evidence of any thorough acquaintance with the positions of the distinctively critical school of our day. As a popular treatise, written for rural homes, for Sunday afternoons, and as a help to devotion, the work is to be warmly commended. In saying this I should add that if it had been one-half as large its value would have been more than doubled.

The Life of Christ by Dean Milman, and forming a portion of his *History of Christianity*, is a summary of the

main facts of the public ministry. As such it is clear and interesting. It has been made with due regard for what is to follow, and is neither full nor meagre. A compilation like this by Dean Milman sometimes affords us a pleasure in reading which is not found in the pages of Geikie or Farrar. Perhaps the reason is that such compilations are compelled to pay due regard to what may be called "the perspective of history." A mere compendium, belonging to the Series of Hand Books for Bible Classes by T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh, and prepared by Rev. James Stalker, and comprising only one hundred and thirty-eight pages, is, in my judgment, one of the best books of its kind in existence. Its author is something more than a compiler. He has mastered the difficulties of his subject. He writes like a scholar, yet without making his scholarship prominent. In analysis he is sharp and thorough. His pages abound in startling, suggestive contrasts. In a single sentence he often packs away the learning of volumes. This is one of the books to be kept on the study table for constant use. The *Life of Christ* by Dr. Lyman Abbott is scholarly and devout. It makes wise use of the better commentaries, of modern geographical and archaeological researches, of essays by specialists on controverted points, and of the works of Ellicott, Andrews, Neander, and Lange. As a tolerably full life, written with great care, and contained in a volume of moderate size, Dr. Abbott's book is to be unreservedly commended.

A word should here be added in reference to the brilliant fragment on the *Life of our Lord* by the Rev. Henry Ward Beecher. Of little value as the production of a scholar, yet not without scholarly pretensions, it is full of suggestions on every page. Yet it everywhere lacks completeness, and is without perspective even where it claims to be finished. Like its author it is immensely stimulating. We read, and read again. How marvellous the language! How striking the imagery! How wide the sweep of thought! What intuitions, what revelations!

A second perusal is even more satisfactory than the first. Nevertheless, one feels, though it would be hard to say why, that the book is not one to be thoroughly trusted, or to pass into history as a classic. For the sake of its author we rather hope that the long-promised second volume will not appear. Nevertheless let no one who can, fail to read the volume which has already appeared.

Turning now to that class of lives which claim to be original and scientific we find that they fall into two groups. In the first group are such lives as Hanna's, Farrar's, Geikie's, and Edersheim's; in the second, such Lives as those of Hase, Neander, Liddon, Ellicott, Andrews, Weiss, and Keim.

The Life of our Lord, by the Rev. William Hanna, D.D., LL.D., was brought out in this country by the house of Robert Carter and Brother, in 1870. It was in six volumes, though the volumes did not appear simultaneously nor in chronological order, but as they grew out of the author's ministry. Thus the volume on the Last Day of Our Lord's Passion was published several years before the other volumes of the series. In later editions the six volumes were compressed into a single volume. For family use, for devotional purposes, for the restfulness, and peace its perusal produces, this Life merits high praise. Its scholarship is trustworthy. The best results of modern research are made use of. The author's main purpose is to present the facts of our Lord's life and to persuade his readers to believe in Him. Hence the devoutness and reverence of the volumes, the spirit of genuine piety that breathes forth from every page.

He marks very clearly the divisions of time in our Lord's ministry. The beginning and end of each of its periods are set forth distinctly. Nowhere can we read a chapter without feeling that the author has thought his way through the subject of which it treats. He quotes sparingly, and chiefly from the Scriptures.

The one fault of the work, if fault it be, is the monotony

of the style. This is too uniformly excellent. There are no passages which take us into the author's confidence, where he talks with us. He never forgets that he is the preacher and that we are listeners. We make the best use of the book, therefore, when we read but one or two chapters at a time, and keep it on hand for comfort and instruction, in weary, lonely, despondent hours. The volume should be in all our parish libraries.

Farrar's *Life* (E. P. Dutton and Company, 1874) both in its original two volume edition, and in the cheaper one volume edition, is too well-known to call for extended notice. The grace and ease of its style, the fulness of its notes, the clearness of its divisions, its wise summaries on disputed points of the opinions of many investigators, the movement and rhythm of its sentences have given it a popularity to which no other life of Christ has yet attained. In 1881 it had passed through twenty-three editions in England, in addition to an equally wide circulation in Canada and the United States. And yet, few ministers, or well-trained laymen, I think, read the book with entire satisfaction. There is a little too much of the "reporter" in it. It has an unpleasant suggestion of the newspaper. It is too sensational, or too dramatic for the subjects of which it treats. Could it borrow some of the dignity and reverent piety of Hanna, and repay the debt thus created with some of the felicities of its language, and some of the sprightliness of its style, we should have two well-nigh perfect treatises on the life of Christ in the English tongue.

The *Life and Words of Christ* by Cunningham Geikie (D. Appleton and Company) is perhaps *facile princeps*, among the popular *Lives of Christ*. Dr. Geikie is a man of vast learning. His net gathers of every kind. Unlike Hanna's his pages bristle with quotations from all sorts of books. We often wish, in the weariness of our flesh, that he would be content to give us the facts, and set less store on names and authorities, that he would diminish the number of his pages by putting into them less lumber. Yet his use of

archaeological, ethnological, historical, geographical, and exegetical learning is marvellous. Taking the notes at the end of the volumes into account, I know not where another such mine of information is to be found. But, hazardous as it is to make the statement, I do not altogether like Dr. Geikie's book. It is safer than Farrar's, not so stilted, or richly monotonous in its style as Hanna's but I doubt, if after all, it is really their equal. Its paraphrases of the words of the evangelists seem to me unfortunate and out of place. Not infrequently they are positively flat, repulsive even. For myself I make haste to turn from its perusal to the clear, simple, crisp sentences of the Gospel writers. Having said this, it still remains true that Geikie's *Life of Christ* is a masterful production. This *Life*, with the *Lives* by Hanna and Farrar, will furnish most intelligent people with all the reading of this sort which they will care to have. Critical minds, however, will not be content to stop here. Edersheim's *Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (A. D. F. Randolph and Company, 1884) in two volumes of 698 and 826 pages respectively, will therefore claim attention, and claim it as the work of a Jew of immense erudition, and the most devout Christian spirit. In placing this work among the popular lives of Christ, I fear lest I have made a mistake. True, the work has reached a second edition, and this for a costly work, six dollars net, may be taken as convincing testimony to its popularity. Yet I doubt if the common people will ever hear Dr. Edersheim gladly. I hesitate to speak positively, but it seems to me that his pages are too full of curious learning, and carefully expressed thought, for all save thoroughly disciplined readers. Those who do read these pages and understand them,—the style is not always clear—will find themselves amply repaid. Dr. Edersheim gives us a picture of the times in which Jesus lived,—and here we may compare Professor Delitzsch's *A Day in Capernaum*,—shows us the homes of the people, introduces us to their customs, makes us feel the burdens

both of their religion and of their government. With him as a guide we form an acquaintance with the schools of that early day, and enter into sympathy with the wise Gamaliel, the devout Simeon, the zealous Saul. No one who has yet written on the life and times of Jesus has brought to his task such familiar acquaintance with Jewish learning as Dr. Edersheim. For this reason the volumes are unique and important. They are too scholarly and critical for the daily reading of the average Christian family. They lack the glow and devoutness of spirit for which, in works like this, the common mind invariably looks. But scholars cannot afford to neglect them.

The *Life of Christ* by DePressensé, has never had a large circulation in this country. It is a work with many specially valuable features. It has all the sharpness of analysis the clearness of thought, the crispness of expression which characterize the French mind. Nor does it lack "unction." It is very full on the events connected with the life of John the Baptist, and his relations to Jesus. It paints its pictures in single sentences, and it paints them so that we can see them, and tell what they are. If only to see how differently the French mind, even when profoundly Christian, treats the same subject from the German, the English, or American, we should read this work of DePressensé. For a similar reason I recommend the perusal of Mozomdar's *Oriental Christ*, a series of meditations, in themselves of no particular value, but suggestive of Hindu mind and Hindu thought.

Of the Bampton lectures for 1865 on our Lord's Divinity, by Canon Liddon, I need simply say that it is rich in patristic learning and accompanied by a body of notes whose reading is almost a liberal education. Exegetically considered, Bishop Ellicott's Hulsean lectures for the year 1859, are quite as good as the Bampton lectures of Canon Liddon. Here every word is weighed and every position fortified with ample learning and great skill. The mas-

tery of these two books will do more for the minister than the reading of a dozen such Lives as Geikie's or Farrar's. Superior to either of them in some respects is the unpretending *Life of Our Lord, Considered in its Historical, Chronological, and Geographical Relations*, by the Rev. S. J. Andrews of Hartford, Conn. This Life was published by the Scribners in 1873, and is full of painstaking research. I have found the study of this book exceedingly profitable. In his harmony he usually follows Robinson, though he is everywhere an independent thinker.

Here too I must refer again to Neander's *Life of Christ*, a book which will never grow old or cease to be fragrant with memories of the simple, childlike spirit of its distinguished author. Most of us are familiar with the English translation of this work made in 1847, and now appearing in Bohn's library. The book should be read a few pages at a time, with a knowledge of the circumstances in which it was written. Not more learned, but with a greater appearance of learning, is Hase's *Life of Christ*. For its stores of information, as well as for its methods of treating the records of the New Testament, this life should be constantly consulted. As a summary of opinions, and for its bibliography of the Lives of Christ, this treatise has never been surpassed. It is minutely critical but rationalistic in its tendencies though claiming to be orthodox.

The two Lives of which I am now to speak are those of Keim and Weiss. Both are critical. They are books to be studied, rather than read. From differing points of view these two writers seek to cover the whole field of gospel study. That the results of their efforts will be universally acceptable, either in rationalistic or in orthodox circles, we very much doubt. Both works are of great value,—that of Keim for the thoroughness of its investigations from a rationalistic point of view, that of Weiss as the latest critical work by an orthodox German theological professor. According to the Rev. Joseph Cook, the three best Lives of Christ in existence are those of Keim,

Weiss, and Edersheim. I am not yet prepared to accept his opinion. For Lange's encyclopaedic work I have great admiration. It is a thesaurus of learning. Like the commentaries that bear his name it contains every thing. It is heavy, dull, fanciful, faulty in arrangement, not abreast with the scholarship of to-day, yet, for the wise and plodding student, I doubt if it has been superseded even by Mr. Cook's trinity of writers.

In this brief sketch I have given little but names and titles. A volume would be needed for any adequate criticism of the authors to whom I have referred. I hope I have done none of them injustice. With varying merit in the treatment of the earlier and later portions of our Lord's ministry, they seem alike to fail in their attempts to describe the closing scenes of his earthly life. Like General Lew Wallace's charming *Ben Hur*, their final chapters invariably disappoint us. Is it because of our inability to comprehend the height and depth, the length and breadth of the love of God in Jesus Christ, to enter into complete sympathy with Him in His Passion? Is not this a proof of our Lord's Deity, a proof also of the inspiration of the Evangelists, who write neither too much nor too little, on whose pages the story of this wonderful life moves steadily on to the consummation on the cross, to the burial in the sepulchre, to the resurrection on the third day, to the ascension from Olivet, to the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost in that upper room where the disciples gathered in Jerusalem? Let scholars and critics continue to write as they will. The Four Gospels are after all our only storehouse of facts, the only witnesses to whom we must all be content to appeal. No lives of Him who spoke as man never spake, will ever be produced which will repay study like the simple evangelical narratives. To these we must ever return with increasing confidence and admiration. "But these are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name."