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But even human life gives scope for acts in which the limits of such moral obligation are transcended—acts which are not moral, but far higher than moral; acts immediately inspired of God, the understanding of which is to morality as the discovery of a fourth dimension would be to geometry. It is only in this sense that the substitution of Christ is not moral. It transcends the moral world because it has to recreate it. Substitution, in short, is mediation raised to its highest power, exalted and glorified by love to its most compelling intensity. No one who accepts the idea of mediation in religion at all is in the right to reject it *a priori* here. To do so is to declare that he can measure the love of God beforehand and tell all that it can or will do. But it is not beforehand that we know anything about redemption. "*Hereby perceive we love.*" Who could have told beforehand that a Divine righteousness would come to sinful men in Christ Jesus set forth by God as a propitiation in His blood?

JAMES DENNEY.

## THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

### VI.

#### PRACTICAL CONSEQUENCES. THE ETERNAL PUNISHMENT OF SIN.

IN former papers I have traced the popular and traditional doctrine of the endless permanence of all human souls to the teaching of Plato and to the school of Greek philosophers of which he is the most illustrious representative; and have endeavoured to prove that it was altogether alien from the phrase and thought of Christ and His Apostles so far as His teaching and theirs are embodied in the New Testament, and that it entered into, and subsequently became prevalent in, the Church mainly through the influence of Plato apparently in the latter part of the second century. We have also considered the teaching of several

modern theologians, but have not found any one who seriously endeavours to prove that the immortality of the soul is taught in the Bible.

In this paper I shall discuss a few passages in the Bible which shed some light on the nature of the human soul, the inferences we may fairly draw from them, and the bearing of these inferences and of the popular doctrine of the immortality of the soul on Christian thought, and especially on the ultimate doom of those who reject the Gospel of Christ.

In Genesis i. 26 man is raised conspicuously above all other creatures of God by the deliberate purpose, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness," and by his destination to "rule among the fish of the sea and among the birds of the heaven and among the cattle and in all the earth"; by the careful and repeated statement in v. 27 of the accomplishment of this purpose; and by the blessing and command in v. 28. It is worthy of note that in chapter ix. 6, even after the fall, and again in James iii. 9, man is still said to be made in the likeness of God. All this calls attention to the superiority of man to the other animals: and this superiority resides chiefly, though not exclusively, in the soul of man.

The unique superiority of man, both body and soul, is further emphasized in chap. ii. 7, where he is said to have been formed out of dust by a definite act of God, and his soul is described as a special inbreathing of life from God.

That even fallen man is described as still made in the image of God, implies that this image was not altogether lost by sin. And we notice that man's intelligence and self-determination survived the fall. On the other hand, we read in Colossians iii. 10 that "the new man is renewed for knowledge, according to the image of Him that created him." This suggests irresistibly that the image of God included a moral likeness to the Creator.

Upon this image of God, light is shed by Romans viii. 29: "Whom He foreknew, He also foreordained to be conformed to the image of His Son, in order that He may be Firstborn among many brethren." We have here the eternal Father contemplating the eternal Son with absolute satisfaction, and resolving, before the world was, to surround Him with later born sons who, in created human form, will bear His image. In consequence of man's sin, this creative purpose involved the suffering and death of the eternal Archetype. But, when Paul wrote, the price had been paid; and he announces the coming accomplishment of the original creative purpose.

Casual references in the Old Testament, e.g. Ecclesiastes iii. 21, xii. 7, Job xxxii. 8, call attention to the dignity of man's spirit and to its essential superiority to the life of animals. But they do nothing to prove or suggest its endless permanence when, through man's obdurate disobedience, God's purpose of mercy towards the individual has been finally frustrated. For, throughout the New Testament, the eternal life promised by Christ is made conditional on faith and obedience: just as, in Genesis ii. 17, continuance of the life given in Paradise is made conditional on obedience to a specific Divine command.

Some Christian writers have endeavoured to support the doctrine that all human souls will think and feel for ever by metaphysical arguments derived, like those of Plato, from its immaterial and uncompounded nature. Others have suggested that, since sin is utterly against the creative purpose of God, its ultimate result must be to extinguish the rational existence which He has given. All such arguments seem to me valueless. For life and reason and sin are to us insoluble mysteries. Certainly He who out of nothing called the reasoning soul of man can, if He will, send it back to the non-existence from which it came. But the destruction threatened to those who reject the salvation

offered by Christ is no proof that He will do so. For in many cases objects said to be *destroyed* (see p. 132) evidently continue to exist without prospect of extinction. Our only sources of knowledge touching the ultimate destinies of men are the historic revelations from God recorded in the Bible and especially the supreme revelation given to us in Christ and recorded in the New Testament.

The Bible teaches clearly that man as created was destined by God to share His endless blessedness. But this by no means implies that every man will exist for ever even when existence has become an unmixed curse.

The real significance of the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is its bearing on the ultimate destiny of the wicked. This solemn subject demands now brief consideration.

The only clear passage in the Old Testament on this topic is Daniel xii. 2: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to eternal life, and some to shame, to eternal abhorrence."

Throughout the New Testament, e.g. Matthew vii. 13, 14, xxv. 32-46, John iii. 16, v. 29, Romans ii. 7-12, 2 Thessalonians i. 7-9, Revelation xx. 12-15, we read of two paths, one leading to life eternal, and the other to destruction. This last denotes, as we saw on p. 132, utter ruin, the loss of all that gives worth to existence, whether or not the lost object ceases to exist or continues in a worthless existence.

Some other passages speak of this ruin as final. So Philippians iii. 19, "whose end is destruction"; 2 Corinthians xi. 15, "ministers of Satan, whose end will be according to their works; Hebrews vi. 8, "whose end is to be burnt." Finality is also implied in the frequent metaphor of the destruction of vegetable matter by fire. So Matthew iii. 12, "the chaff He will *burn up* with fire unquenchable"; chap. xiii. 30, "collect first the tares,

and bind them into bundles, to *burn* them up"; v. 40, "just as then the tares are gathered together and *burnt up* with fire, so shall it be at the completion of the age." This metaphor implies finality. For no one who had any hope or thought of their ultimate restoration could compare the doom of the wicked to chaff or weeds cast into the fire and there *burnt up*. Finality is also implied in Matthew xxvi. 24: "Good were it for him if that man had not been born." For if endless blessedness, even in some cases after long suffering, were the ultimate destiny of all men, existence would in every case be an ultimate blessing. These passages prove that universal salvation was far from the thought of their writers.

Other passages speak of the acute suffering of the lost. So Matthew viii. 12, xiii. 42, 50, xxii. 13, xxiv. 51, xxv. 30, Luke xiii. 28: "There shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." Also chap. xvi. 23, 24, 25: "lifted up his eyes being in torments. . . . I am in anguish in this flame." But in these places nothing is said about the duration of the suffering.

The only passages in the Bible which suggest the endless suffering of the lost are the following:—

We have Daniel xii. 2, already quoted: "Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to eternal life, and some to shame, to eternal abhorrence." This last word is found also in Isaiah lxvi. 24, as a description of the corpses of the wicked: "They shall be an abhorrence to all flesh." It describes, not suffering, which is far removed from our thought of a corpse, but the horror produced in the beholders. Such horror may continue, as a memory, long after the object which evoked it has passed away; but not after the object has been restored. The above passage cannot therefore be appealed to in proof of the endless suffering of the lost.

In Matthew xviii. 8, xxv. 41, we read of "eternal (or

age-lasting) fire." But this does not imply the endlessness of that which is cast into the fire. Indeed the same words are used in Jude 7 to describe the fire which destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah: "they lie before us as a pattern, undergoing just punishment of *eternal fire*." The fire was *age-lasting* in the sense that the desolation wrought by it lay before the eyes of Israel for long *ages*.

Another terrible picture of the future punishment of sin is found in Mark ix. 43-48. Our Lord here bids His hearers make any sacrifice, even surrender hand or foot or eye, rather than "go away into Gehenna." This last word, He at once expounds by the addition, "to the fire unquenchable." In a second warning we have simply the phrase "cast into Gehenna." In a third, we have the same phrase with the remarkable addition, "where their worm dies not, and the fire is not quenched."

This remarkable phrase recalls at once Isaiah lxvi. 24, already referred to above. The prophet sees a new heaven and a new earth. Yet, amid that glory, the glorified ones will go forth and behold the corpses of those who have sinned. The words before us suggest continuance of the awful spectacle. For, if there were no corpses to feed upon, the worm would die: and, if there were no fuel, the fire would be extinguished.

The easiest explanation of these words in Mark ix. 48 is that they were added to convey the idea of intense suffering, like that caused by the gnawing of a worm or by fire. For we have here no mention of "corpses." But the change from "will not die . . . will not be quenched" in Isaiah lxvi. 24 to the present tense in Mark ix. 48, "their worm does not die and the fire is not quenched," suggests continuous suffering in the present rather than endless suffering in the future. This change of tense and the difficulty of the metaphor forbid us to interpret this passage as an assertion of the endless torment of the lost.

Very conspicuous is the solemn announcement in Matthew xxv. 46, "these shall go away into *eternal punishment*, but the righteous into eternal life." We have already seen, on p. 130, that the word *eternal* denotes *age-lasting*, and is frequently in the Septuagint applied to objects whose duration is by no means endless. But its precise meaning in this passage is immaterial, because other passages in the New Testament imply, as we shall see, that the punishment of the wicked will be endless. This meaning however lies, not in the word, but in other New Testament teaching.

We now ask, Does *age-lasting punishment* involve *age-lasting suffering*? Already we have seen that in the Synoptist Gospels the punishment of the wicked includes acute suffering. And indisputably the word *age-lasting* describes the duration of the punishment, or at least of its effect. But the future punishment of sin will include, not only actual suffering, but loss of the endless blessedness for which all men were created. Consequently, whether or not the suffering continues, the punishment will be as lasting as the life forfeited. For punishment does not cease till the punished one is restored to the condition in which he would have been if he had not sinned. Consequently we need not fear the paradox that a man may be undergoing punishment even after he has ceased to exist: for, if loss of existence be a judicially inflicted consequence of sin, it is itself a punishment. Similarly, the civil penalty of death is not measured by the pain inflicted but by the loss of life. No one thinks, apart from retribution beyond the grave, that the punishment is over when the criminal is dead. This is well put by Augustine in his *City of God*, book xxi. 11: "He who for some great crime is punished with death, do the laws reckon his punishment by the space of time in which he is put to death, which is very brief, and not by this, that he is removed for ever from the society of the living?" *In sempiternum auferunt de societate viventium.*



Just so, whatever becomes of the lost, their punishment continues so long as they are not restored to the favour and life of God. In other words, the phrase *eternal punishment* does not imply, and the verse before us does not assert, endless suffering.

A still more tremendous vision of punishment is found in Revelation xiv. 9-11: "If any one worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, also he shall drink of the wine of the fury of God." These last words describe the stupefying effect of this punishment. The strange collocation of words following, "which is mixed unmixed in the cup of His anger," suggests a combination of different elements together with undiluted intensity. This terrible description of suffering is then strengthened by a change of metaphor: "they shall be tormented with fire and sulphur." A visible memento of suffering is seen in "the smoke of their torment"; and we are told that "for ages of ages" it "goes up." Even this does not close the awful picture. A few more words take us almost into that sulphurous flame, and reveal the ceaseless unrest of the sufferers there: "and they have no rest day and night." An announcement of suffering so terrible requires careful specification of the sufferers: "who worship the wild beast and his image, and if any one receives the mark of his name."

This passage suggests perhaps, but does not expressly assert, the endless suffering of the persons whose doom is thus described. For the smoke may go up even when the suffering of which it is a visible memento has ceased.

Age-lasting torment is asserted in Revelation xx. 10: "The devil was cast into the lake of fire and sulphur, where are the wild beast and the false prophet: and they shall be tormented day and night for the ages of the ages." But these words refer not to men, but to persons or abstractions whose active sin has been age-lasting. These two

passages, in highly figurative language, from the most obscure book in the Bible, a book whose origin is veiled in insoluble mystery, are a very unsafe foundation for important Christian doctrine.

It may be admitted that the above passages, or some of them, suggest, if they do not assert, the endless suffering of the lost. We now ask, Are they sufficient to justify a confident assertion that those excluded from the City of God will undergo endless suffering? For the following reasons, I think not.

We find in the New Testament other passages which, taken by themselves, suggest, or seem to assert, doctrines which we are compelled to reject. To thousands of devout men, Romans viii. 29, ix. 14-23, Ephesians i. 4, 5, John xv. 16, have seemed to assert the doctrine of unconditional election and predestination, now almost universally repudiated. And Matthew xvi. 27, 28, xxiv. 34, seem to assert that Christ would come to judge the world during the lifetime of those around Him. These passages are quite as clear, in a sense we cannot accept, as are any which seem to assert the endless suffering of the lost. They warn us not to accept, especially in proof of a doctrine open to serious objection, a few texts from the Bible. All the great doctrines of the Gospel are supported by abundant and decisive teaching of holy Scripture. And no doctrine ought to be asserted with confidence unless thus supported.

Moreover, against this doctrine may be set other passages as clear and as numerous as those quoted above.

In Matthew iii. 12, the Baptist says, "The chaff He will *burn up* with fire unquenchable"; similarly v. 10, "cast into the fire." This teaching is confirmed by Christ, who says in chap. xiii. 30, "At the time of the harvest I shall say to the reapers, Gather first the tares and bind them into bundles to *burn* them *up*." Notice here twice and again in v. 40 the strong word *κατακαύσει*. It suggests irresis-

tibly the extinction of the objects *burnt up*. For no process known to us is more like annihilation than is the destruction of vegetable matter by fire ; whereas it has nothing in common with endless suffering. The same metaphor is found in John xv. 6, Hebrews vi. 8. These passages, I do not quote in proof of the ultimate extinction of the lost ; but only to show how serious are the consequences of building important doctrine on a few verses of the Bible.

Equally opposed to the traditional doctrine of the endless suffering of the lost is another group of passages, viz. those which assert or imply the universal reign of Christ. So Isaiah xlv. 23, quoted in Romans xiv. 11 as including both Jews and Gentiles : " As I live, says the Lord, to Me every knee shall bow ; and every tongue shall confess to God." This great prophecy, a categorical and solemn assertion, refers evidently to the willing homage of happy souls. It cannot be fulfilled in the endless wail of the lost. The same may be said of the purpose expressed in Philippians ii. 10 : " That at the name of Jesus every knee may bow, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth ; and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Similarly 1 Corinthians xv. 28 : " The Son Himself shall be subjected to Him who subjected all things to Him, in order that God may be all things in all." These two passages describe the ultimate aim of the work of Christ. And, although the accomplishment of this purpose of infinite blessing is contingent, in reference to each individual, on his own personal submission to Christ, it is in the last degree unlikely that this Divine purpose of universal homage to Christ will be for ever frustrated.

Certainly these two groups of passages, from all four Gospels and from the undisputed Epistles of Paul, are equal in number and weight to the passages from the Synoptist Gospels only and the Book of Revelation which suggest or seem to imply the endless suffering of the lost. Viewed in

the light of the two other groups, this last group is an altogether unsafe foundation for confident assertion in God's name that those condemned in the great day will undergo endless suffering.

Notice now the extreme seriousness of the doctrine which in this series of papers I have discussed. If we accept as indisputable truth, as it has been accepted during fifteen centuries, the doctrine of the endless permanence of all human souls, the few and uncertain passages, quoted above, which suggest or seem to assert the endless suffering of the lost are reinforced by the more numerous and much more decisive passages which assert or imply the finality of their doom, e.g. Philippians iii. 19, 2 Corinthians xi. 15, Hebrews vi. 8, 1 Peter iv. 17, Matthew xxvi. 24, Mark xiv. 21, and those which compare the doom of the lost to the destruction of vegetable matter by fire. In other words, the doctrine before us leaves open only one alternative, either the endless suffering of the lost or their ultimate restoration to the favour of God and eternal life.

Not only against the endless torment of the lost, as our fathers taught it, but against any form of endless suffering, or of an endless prolongation of an existence which is only a helpless consciousness of utter ruin, the moral sense of thousands of intelligent and devout men and women is in stern revolt. The more carefully they consider it, the less are they able to harmonize it with the infinite love, or even with the justice of God. To such men, it is useless to say that they are unable to estimate the evil of sin, and the punishment it deserves. For, amid human fallibility and error, there is in man an inborn sense of justice and of the due proportion of sin and punishment which, in all ages, has been recognized as a reflection, imperfect but real, of the justice of God. There are children of ten years old who, if told that their father had punished another child, however naughty, by burning him to death, would at once

and justly repudiate the statement with indignation. Moreover, the picture of Christ in the New Testament, and His teaching as recorded there, claim and secure the homage of the moral sense of man, and this homage paid by that in us which is noblest and best to the teaching and character of Christ is the most powerful proof of His divine excellence. A doctrine which, instead of gaining the homage of our moral sense, drives it into revolt, has no moral authority over us. Man's sense of right and wrong needs to be educated; and at best is fallible. But, as taught by Paul in Romans ii. 14, 15, it is a divine transcript of the Law of God; and as such, it cannot be silenced even by quotation from holy Scripture.

The practical consequence is that not a few, assuming as not open to question, that every human soul will think and feel for ever, have been driven to hope and expect that all men will ultimately be received into the abode of the blessed. Thus, as with Origen, the doctrine of the immortality of the soul has been the parent of universalism. In other words, this doctrine closes a way of escape from a great difficulty which the Bible leaves open to us. By so doing, it has driven many to force a way violently through a door which the Bible has closed.

We will now, after eliminating the doctrine of the Immortality of the Soul, restate briefly the teaching of the New Testament about the future punishment of sin.

The various writers of the New Testament and Christ as His words are there recorded divide the human race at the last judgment into two widely separated classes. The one class will be received into a glory on which falls no shadow; the other will be banished into a darkness in which we look in vain for one ray of light. Between these classes stands an impassable barrier. To our view, this dual division presents serious difficulties. It finds no place for a large number of persons who seem to us unworthy of either

blessedness or destruction. This difficulty, the New Testament does nothing to remove or mitigate. Christ promises to all who put faith in Him eternal happiness ; but, having said all that is needful for our salvation, He does nothing to satisfy our curiosity about the destiny of the persons just referred to. We must leave them to the wisdom and love of our Father in heaven.

The various writers of the New Testament describe the punishment to be inflicted on the great day as ruin, utter, hopeless, and final. The Synoptist Gospels also represent Christ as teaching, and the Book of Revelation teaches, in plain and awful language, that the lost will suffer acute and continuous pain. This actual suffering is implied in the teaching, by Paul and other writers, that retribution will be according to works. For proportionate retribution involves degrees of punishment : and degrees of punishment imply consciousness ; for unconsciousness is alike to all. Moreover, consciousness of endless and glorious life forfeited through our own inexcusable folly and sin involves remorse and mental anguish beyond conception. To be compelled, in the unsparing light of eternity, to contemplate our own past sins, when all fascination of sin has worn away, and our rejection of the infinite love of God and our consequent and deserved loss of the glories of heaven, and this without room for amendment or hope of restoration, will be an undying worm and unquenchable fire. In other words, the vivid pictures in the Synoptist Gospels and in the Book of Revelation do but delineate a necessary inference from teaching permeating the entire New Testament.

Of this acute suffering, the writers of the New Testament see no end ; nor do they teach anything which logically implies that it will ever end. On the other hand, they do not go so far as expressly and indisputably to assert the endless permanence of these ruined and wretched ones, and the consequent endlessness of their torment. The curtain

is raised for a moment, revealing the anguish of the lost ; and then falls, hiding them from our view.

This picture of judgment reveals to us intelligent persons created by God in order that they may share His endless blessedness, yet, through their own sin and their rejection of salvation from sin, shut out, without hope of return, from the glory and happiness for which they were created.

To this teaching, no objection can be made on the ground of the character of God. It cannot be objected that His purpose will be defeated. For His purpose in creating man was to surround the eternal Son with later-born sons who by their own free choice have accepted Him as their Lord. This purpose will find eternal and glorious realization. Nor can we object to the doom of the lost as unjust. For of no one case are all the facts before us. We know not the greatness of the sins which will be punished by exclusion from the glory of God ; and therefore cannot compare the sin and punishment. The analogy of parental and royal love forbids us to say that the love of God is inconsistent with severe punishment of sin, or indeed with the final exclusion of sinners from the happy family of God. On the other hand, the principles of human justice warn us not to put into the threatenings of the New Testament more than its words legitimately convey.

The above teaching may be traced by decisive documentary evidence to the pen of the Apostles and Evangelists and to the lips of Christ.

This teaching has, in ancient and modern times, been supplemented or limited in three directions by other teaching about the ultimate destiny of the wicked.

1. To the pictures of actual suffering found in the New Testament, the traditional teaching of the Church has added the assertion that this suffering will be endless. This addition is a necessary consequence of the doctrine of the

immortality of the soul unconsciously borrowed, as we have seen, from Greek philosophy.

From the days of Tertullian to days remembered by men still living, imagination ran riot in depicting the physical sufferings of the lost and comparing them to the excruciating bodily pain caused by fire. In recent days, others have recoiled from bodily *torment* and have put the word *suffering* in its place. But the word *torment* is found in the New Testament as a description of the future punishment of sin. Moreover, it is difficult or impossible to conceive a lost and ruined soul, in full possession of consciousness, knowing itself to be finally shut out from the City of God in just punishment of inexcusable sin, otherwise than as in unspeakable misery.

Now all will admit that no theory about the future punishment of sin ought to be put forth as revealed truth unless supported by clear and abundant teaching of the Bible. This theory, which in many minds lies open to most serious objection, has, as I have endeavoured to show, no adequate support in holy Scripture. And, from the nature of the case, it can have no adequate support elsewhere.

2. Others, especially in recent times, have added to, and limited, the teaching of the New Testament by endeavouring to prove that the suffering therein depicted will ultimately, after different degrees of suffering in proportion to different degrees of guilt, be lost in unconsciousness. This theory maintains the finality of the punishment of the wicked, and at the same time avoids the difficulties involved in the endlessness of their suffering and the consequently endless permanence of evil. It finds some support in the metaphor, not uncommon in the New Testament, of the destruction of vegetable matter by fire to describe the doom of the ungodly, and indeed in Plato's frequent use of the word *destruction* to describe the extinction of the soul,



which he denies. But this metaphor and this use of the word *destruction* seem to me an altogether insufficient ground for definite assertion. This second theory is but a human attempt to remove a difficulty which the New Testament leaves unsolved.

3. Others have, not only gone beyond the New Testament, but have as I think contradicted it, by asserting with more or less confidence that all men will ultimately be saved. This last theory has found some support in passages which speak of the ultimate and universal triumph of good, taken in connexion with the traditional assumption of the indestructibility of the human soul. But, as we have seen, this assumption is without foundation. And this theory, destitute of solid foundation, is, in various ways, directly and indirectly contradicted in the New Testament.

The theory of a probation beyond death, of which we have no reliable indication in the Bible, has no practical bearing on the ultimate destiny of those who die in sin. For a further probation involves a possibility of further failure. And this brings back, in full force, the old difficulties.

Retribution beyond the grave and especially the future punishment of sin are to us, reason about them as we may, insoluble mysteries. The entire teaching of the Bible, abundantly sufficient as it is to guide us safely along the way of life, is altogether insufficient to enable us to anticipate the sentence which the great Judge will pronounce on the men and women around us. But to every careful student of the New Testament two doctrines stand out as clearly and frequently taught there: (1) that eternal life in infinite blessing awaits all who put trust in Christ and walk in His steps; (2) that ruin, complete and final, awaits those who reject the salvation He offers and persist in what they know to be sin. These doctrines may be traced by decisive documentary evidence to His lips as part of the

message from God which He announced to men. As His servants, we are bound, especially those who are recognized teachers in His Church, to announce these solemn truths to all who will hear us. To go further is to overstep the limits of the revelation given to us in Christ, and to announce in His name that which He has not spoken. To add to, is as perilous as to take away from, "the words of the prophecy of this Book." We have no right to assert in God's name anything more than we can trace by abundant and decisive evidence to the lips of Christ and the pen of the Apostles and Evangelists. And the teaching which can be so traced is all that we need.

JOSEPH AGAR BEET.

*THE AUTONOMY OF JESUS: A STUDY IN THE  
FOURTH GOSPEL.*

THE Fourth gospel is a study rather than a biography of Jesus, and not so much even a study of his actual life as an artistic and symbolic exposition or application of great Christian ideas, which are conceived for the most part under the categories of Jewish Hellenism and presented in an historical form already current throughout the Christian communities. On page after page we have an interpretation of Jesus. Besides being an implicit refutation of the pretensions and criticisms advanced by contemporary Judaism, as well as of certain phases in Jewish Christianity, the book possesses a peculiar inward aspect; its primary aim is not to instruct outsiders upon the elementary facts and principles of Christianity, but to edify people who are already members of the church (xix. 35; xx. 31),<sup>1</sup> in view of certain widely diffused modes

<sup>1</sup> The latter passage is not quite unexampled (cf. Josephus, *Vita*, 76); but, taken with others (e.g. i. 14, etc.), it corroborates the internal evidence of the book. Here we have to do with a Christian preacher and his audience of