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OTHER-WORLDLINESS AND APOCALYPTICISM.

“THE expectations of vindication and judgment to come, the imagery of the Messianic Feast, the ‘other-worldliness’ against which so many eloquent words were said in the nineteenth century, are not to be regarded as regrettable accretions foisted on by superstition to the pure morality of the original Gospel. These ideas are the Christian Hope.” With these words Dr. Burkitt has welcomed the results of Dr. Albert Schweitzer’s re-examination of the life and teaching of Jesus in the light of the findings of many scholars during nearly 150 years. Father Tyrrell was one of the first English scholars to detect and seize upon the value of the “transcendent” or “other-worldly” principle which the modern apocalyptic movement has rediscovered as an essential, or rather the essential, feature of the Christian faith. His last book, flashing and piercing, like a rapier in a desperate swordsman’s hand, is the work of a man wholly under the sway of those new ideas of Weiss and his colleagues that seem to carry us right back to those oldest ideas which throbbed at the very heart of the Founder of our faith. And since *Christianity at the Cross Roads* appeared, other British theologians, such as Dr. J. Hope Moulton, have not hesitated to take up a like position and charge us all to find salvation for the new century in the eschatological ideas which bulk so greatly in the teaching of Jesus.

It is not to be denied that there is something that mightily fascinates us in this restatement of an old idea that many had thought slain beyond recovery, and we are all doubtless ready enough to listen to the admonitions which are becoming steadily more insistent that we take the other-worldliness of the Gospel in greater earnest. May we not indeed say, without further ado, that if this new eschatological move-

ment, as represented by Weiss and Wrede and Schweitzer, can make us realise how imperiously our Lord denies the present world, it has its definite providential function? On one point, however, it is well we should be clear. The practical lesson of other-worldliness, and insistence upon the fact that the chief blessings of Christianity are conferred upon us by way of its other-worldliness, are not the only, or even the most characteristic elements of this apocalypticism. We cannot come to the simple conclusion that "other-worldliness is good, this movement promotes other-worldliness, and therefore we must accept its argument and press its conclusions." For, in that case, what is to be our attitude to Schweitzer and Tyrrell and, apparently, Dr. Burkitt, when they insist that we also accept the whole argument upon which their view of the essential other-worldliness of Christianity is based? The Germans have a proverb: "Who says A; says B." And if it be true that when you affirm any proposition you also affirm that which can be deduced from it, it may be plausibly argued in inverse order that if you say Z you have said the whole alphabet—if you accept Schweitzer's conclusion, you accept all the reasoning which leads up to it. But can we do this? Ought we not rather, like Professor Inge, to regard this alphabet of Schweitzer's as blasphemous? May it not be that to welcome the modern apocalyptic theory for its other-worldliness is like drinking a cup of poison in order not to lose the pearl dissolved in it? Let us look into the matter.

Schweitzer's position is the latest stage in a process which has now been going on for several generations of scholars. This process is the critical investigation of the life of Jesus. It begins with the Wolfenbüttel Fragments of Remarus published in 1778, ten years after the death of their author, and it moves steadily on, to what goal no one can definitely forecast, until at the present it hesitates between the nihilism

of Professor Drews and the apocalypticism of Schweitzer. We cannot here trace the development of this process. It will be sufficient to remind ourselves of its course by reference to such outstanding names as those of Herder and Strauss, of Bruno Bauer and Keim, of Kalthoff and Wernle, of Harnack and Bousset, and by the general statement that the aim of the whole movement has been to distinguish between the Christ of faith and the Jesus of history. This distinction can only be set up in one way—by the criticism of the Jesus of history. The Christ of faith we know. He is set forth in the New Testament, glorified in the Creeds, and tasted in personal experience. But what of the Jesus of history? The church has always maintained, through good report and ill, that the Christ of faith and the Jesus of history are one. But has not this assertion itself been an act of faith? How far then ought we to expect historical research to establish the Christian doctrine of the historicity of its central figure, Christ? This, however, is a metaphysical question only to be answered with great deliberation. But if, apart from speculation as to the possibility of historical research serving the full purposes of faith, we turn ourselves to look at the actual achievements of historians, we find ourselves in a less perplexing region. The succession of scholars to whom I have referred, a veritable galaxy of talent, learning, industry and devotion, have assumed that historical investigation could settle the matter, and have set themselves the definite and momentous task of rescuing the figure of Jesus from the domain of faith. With what result? With the result that they have passed from one negative position to the next until they have come to the points occupied respectively by Drews and Schweitzer. That is to say, until they conclude either that there never was any historical figure to be related to the Christ of faith, as does Drews, or that the actual Jesus from whom the

Christ of faith is strangely derived, was a being quite incomprehensible to men equipped with modern knowledge—including, of course, a knowledge of history as construed to-day. This is in itself a most important fact—a fact that will well repay the most particular investigation, the fact that the effort to take Jesus wholly out of the world of faith and to put Him into the natural historical setting of the world as conceived by the evolutionist, results in complete failure, for it results either in denying the existence of Jesus, or in denying His intelligibility. For to say that Jesus never existed is simply to hold all scientific method up to mockery, while to say that He is incomprehensible to science is for science to abdicate—for science is *knowing*. There is therefore here a problem for the metaphysician. We cannot however in this paper do more than indicate the line of its solution, namely, that the historian's claim to take Jesus out of the world of faith is a pretence. We shall see as we go along that historical science never does act *in vacuo*. Every historian operates in the atmosphere of some belief—if not Christian belief, then some other. But this will become clearer as we go on.

With Drews we need not concern ourselves. His position is a nihilism—Jesus is a myth and never really lived. And Drews has been received with mockery. Theologians of the religious-historical school like Gunkel have taken the platform against him. And yet all that Gunkel and his fellows can affirm is that a man named Jesus of Nazareth did exist and was intimately concerned in events which led up to the formation of the Christian religion. For them too in the main the Christ of faith is a myth, and has little or nothing in common with the Jesus of history. And as for Schweitzer and the apocalypticists, they seem to be essentially nearer Drews than they are to the religious-historical school pure and simple. They do indeed affirm *something* about Jesus.

But what is that something? This is what Schweitzer says: "There is nothing more negative than the result of the critical study of the life of Jesus. The Jesus of Nazareth who came forward publicly as the Messiah, who preached the ethic of the kingdom of God, who founded the kingdom of heaven upon earth, and died to give His work its final consecration, never had any existence." This whole figure, according to Schweitzer, belongs to the domain of faith; it is a theological fiction. But if so, what is the historical truth? Schweitzer's answer is that the historical truth is almost as incredible as the theological fiction. Over and over again he warns us that the historical Jesus is bound to be an enigma to us moderns. "Jesus," he says, in a passage of extraordinary force, "as a concrete historical personality remains a stranger to our time." Why? Because He belonged completely to His own time, and in that was dominated by one idea which has lost all credibility and meaning for us to-day, and which, therefore, we never can truly appreciate. He was a man eaten up by the Messianic eschatology of His day. He had imbibed the apocalyptic ideas of His race until He had become obsessed by the notion that He was the "Son of Man" and that, after He had died to make up for the slackness and sin of His countrymen, He should come again in the clouds as the Messiah foretold by Daniel. This was a secret which Jesus cherished in His own breast but never uttered publicly until His trial. Schweitzer asserts that Jesus never proclaimed Himself Messiah, but was sentenced to death because Judas betrayed this secret to the priests. This secret conviction that He was the Danielic Son of Man is then to Schweitzer the key by which we must interpret the whole life and teaching of Jesus. Did Jesus concern Himself with morals? No, says Schweitzer, His so-called ethic is simply a series of warnings that men may be prepared for the Second Coming which He foresaw. Did

Jesus seek to found a kingdom of heaven on earth? No, for His whole interest was absorbed in anticipating that miraculous cataclysm which should put an end to this age once and for all. Did Jesus die that sinners might be saved? No, but merely in order to hasten the end of the age. Did Jesus rise again? No, for His own Messianic hope was after all an illusion. These are the words with which Schweitzer finishes his sketch of the life of Jesus: "At midday of the same day—it was the 14th Nisan, on the evening of which the Paschal lamb was eaten—Jesus cried aloud and expired. He had chosen to remain fully conscious to the last." What then is Dr. Schweitzer's view of Jesus? We do him no injustice if, putting aside those reverent phrases which sometimes obscure the issue, and breaking those silences which may be as blasphemous as any speech, we say that in his view Jesus was a fierce fanatic, gripped by a superstitious fancy which thrust all moral and humanitarian notions aside; afflicted with a pathetic if noble *idée fixe*, and going down swiftly into the grave which He schemed for Himself, never to rise again. Indeed and indeed, such a being we cannot understand; and indeed and indeed, though we might pity, we could never worship Him or His God.

We see then that the other-worldliness of this movement, however good it might be in itself, is not *in itself*. It is bound up with a series of historical negations than which nothing surely could be less calculated to commend the other-worldly spirit. If Schweitzer is right, then it is not the other-worldliness of Jesus, but the will to live of Nietzsche, that will triumph. Let a man preach *this* other-worldliness either in Mayfair or in Houndsditch, and will any man lift his hand, let alone dedicate his life, to the service of such a Christ? Indeed, who among us, unless still unconsciously dominated by the ideas of Jesus, loving and yet kingly, dying for us and yet reigning in heaven, that we learnt in

childhood's simplicity, would waste more than a curious moment upon the weird and superstitious bigot who died by the outraged sense of decency of his compatriots 1,900 years ago? Yes, Christianity is at the Cross Roads, as Father Tyrrell said, but it is not the crossing of the roads of worldliness and other-worldliness: it is not a mere crisis in apocalyptic theory, or even in theology generally: it is the uncompromising radical cross roads of life and death: "To be or—not to be." If Schweitzer and his friends win the day, it is not only the Jesus of history who becomes strange and incomprehensible to our time, but the Christ of faith. And this Schweitzer at least sees clearly enough: "The greatest achievement of German theology," he says, "is the critical investigation of the life of Jesus . . . In the history of doctrine its work has been negative; it has, so to speak, cleared the site for a new edifice of religious thought." Cleared the site! Yes, indeed, torn down the ancient edifice of apostolic doctrine and swept the lumber away. Good work! and all we want now is—a new religion. Who shall give it us? It is said that during the years that followed the French Revolution a philosopher came to Talleyrand. "I have made a new religion," he said, "but no one will accept it. What must I do?" And Talleyrand made the immortal answer: "Get yourself crucified and rise again the third day: then people will believe." Yes, that would make people believe. And the wonderful fact, which many of our moderns seem not rightly to appreciate, is that people did believe in Jesus, not merely because He got Himself killed—which any man may do—but because He rose again. Men believed that once, not because it was incredible, or because only thereby could they preserve the other-worldliness of the Church, but because they had witnessed it.

Let us, however, be quite clear that sheer reaction from this apocalyptic theory does not disprove it, and will not serve

Christianity at this juncture. It will therefore be worth while to examine the matter somewhat closely. For we are challenged to accept this new view of Jesus in a very confident, not to say imperious fashion. Men like Dr. Schweitzer have a very "big magic" to conjure with. They speak in the name of science. And the word "science" has got itself somehow into a privileged position. Call a thing "scientific" and, whether it be a patent medicine, or a new variety of bread, or a phase of scepticism, it will immediately find hosts of folk to accept it. There is nothing nowadays so calculated to attract the gullible and to make even people of shrewd intelligence temporarily credulous, as the claim to be "scientific." This is true also in matters theological. There is nothing that so readily paralyses the Christian's power of criticism as the claim of the critics to be "scientific." And this is the more regrettable, and the more to be guarded against, just because science is of such immense value, to the theologian as well as to every one else. So then let us look more closely at this new apocalypticism. We shall find good reason to conclude that we are not by any means called upon to accept it, but, in the interests of biblical science itself as well as in the interests of theology and religion, to reject its main contentions, even while we may learn much from some of its secondary results.

We have already noticed that a chief result of Schweitzer's summing up of the conclusions of historical research in relation to Jesus, is to show that the Jesus of history is an incredible person from our modern point of view. He eludes our grasp. That is, when you try to eliminate the presuppositions of positive faith, you fail to find a credible historical Jesus at all. Now one, if not the sole, reason for this is, that Schweitzer, like the great majority of those who lead the critical movement in Germany, if not in England, makes

certain assumptions on purely philosophic grounds (that is to say, assumptions based ultimately on an element of *faith* !) which play a decisive part in all his historical investigations, while at the same time pretending to superiority on the ground that he has excluded all such assumptions. It seems certain that no historian can do his work without these assumptions. The mischief comes in when he is not aware of them and, perhaps, blatantly decries them in others while he hides them in himself.

The first of these assumptions in the case of Schweitzer is that miracles do not happen now and did not happen in relation to Christ. This is not the place for the reiteration of any of the well-worn arguments in apology for the miraculous. All that we need be careful to assert here is, that we accept and reject the miraculous in the last resort upon general philosophic grounds, and not upon historical or even scientific grounds. Neither natural science nor historical science can prove the impossibility of the miraculous. And, on the other hand, if a man put aside all preconceptions and simply estimated historical evidence, he would be bound to accept certain miracles at any rate—such as the resurrection—as proven. But this Schweitzer and his colleagues ignore. They set about the “Quest of the Historical Jesus” having made up their minds that there was nothing miraculous about Him. No wonder that, when they find Him, they fail to identify Him with the Christ of faith, but shake their heads and say, “He is an enigma.”

The second assumption is this : That a moral and religious movement can spring from historic events or persons, not only incommensurate with it, but actually in contradiction of it. This second assumption is perhaps not so clearly realised as is the anti-miracle dogma, but it is just as actual. A few words of explanation are necessary here. Nothing can explain away the Catholic faith. It came into existence,

and it came into existence very early. However largely the apocalyptic elements still bulked, in the apostolic age we already have the great doctrines of the Fatherhood of God, the atonement and the resurrection, and the wonderful edifice of the ethic of love. Now Schweitzer's doctrine of Christ would not have been adequate to all this. A mere dead fanatic could not have built this faith. Something else must have built it. It were unthinkable that the greatest series of moral and religious ideas and forces humanity has known (and, for my part, can know !) can have come out of the air, so to speak. That were a bigger miracle than any in the New Testament. What is it that, according to that very doctrine of *uniformity of causes* to which the scientific historian constantly appeals, is adequate to the production of a great spiritual and moral movement ? It is experience, generally, indeed, terrible experience. It is such trenchant, cogent, and explosive events as shall be adequate to check, and destroy, or divert existing spiritual and moral movements, and also adequate to the creation of a new religion. Some vital and tragic historical phenomenon, generally a person, commensurate with any spiritual movement is necessary to the creation of that movement. But the Jesus of the apocalypticists is not commensurate with the apostolic faith. With what is He commensurate ? He is commensurate with a Messianic expectation which would go on until disappointed and then die and never come to life again. To meet this, it is suggested that this Messianic expectation carried the Church over the period during which its real faith, the Catholic faith, was being formed, and that the positive contribution which Jesus made by means of this ultimately futile apocalyptic hope, was the bridge by which the Church crossed over to faith in the risen Christ. But if we are to take this argument seriously, we must conclude that Christianity was not the creation of Christ, but of some

other. Who was this other? Was it Paul, or Peter, or John the presbyter? It matters little, for the historian that can put forward any or all of these as creators of Christianity will have a difficult task in explaining the psychology of these men and their contemporaries. They were not only strangely misled, but they effected a colossal deception upon their fellows and upon posterity. And this in a perfectly incredible way. For although they were the greatest moralists, religious geniuses and theologians the world has ever known, they were quite ignorant of any virtue in themselves, imagining in their simplicity that they had received their doctrine from one far above themselves, Jesus. Strange unanimity in mistaken modesty! Baconians assure us that the works of Shakespeare, Beaumont and Fletcher, Burton, Massinger, and many others, were really written by Bacon. It is hard to believe that one genius should be so modest. But it would be still more marvellous did all these writers unite in ascribing their own works to Bacon. Yet in some such way Schweitzer would have us believe the makers of Christianity called Jesus the author and perfecter of their faith.

The new apocalypticism then invites us to see Christianity as rising from a source utterly incommensurate with itself. It would have us expect to "gather figs of thistles." But that is not all. It actually invites us to see the origin of Christianity in a set of facts that would actually be destructive of Christian faith. According to the apocalypticists, what they regard as the real history of Jesus (reconstructed by "scientific" methods) would have been, if known to the disciples of Jesus, quite inimical to the faith they proclaimed. It is not necessary for me to labour this point, or even to establish it. For Schweitzer himself presents it to us with the utmost candour when he says that when once historical criticism has done its work we must set about

building a new religion. What does this mean? If historical criticism has done its work right, it has given us the actual facts as they operated in the lives (not only the minds) of the disciples; it has given us at second hand just those facts which the early Church experienced at first hand, and which made that early Church, with all its range of doctrine. But if those facts make it impossible for us (as Schweitzer asserts) to accept apostolic Christianity, how could they have nourished that marvellous apostolic faith itself, from which ours is derived? Human nature has not utterly changed in these nineteen hundred years. Psychology may be a new science, but the mind of man is not a modern invention any more than is his body. If prussic acid kills him who drinks it to-day, we may be quite sure it would not have been a good substitute for mother's milk in Nero's time; and if it be true that a knowledge of the real facts about Jesus upsets a high Christology to-day, it is quite certain that those real facts themselves could not have fashioned the Christologies of Paul and John. Indeed, in this matter the apocalypticists have surely proved too much—they have shown that whatever else Jesus may have been, the one thing He can *not* have been was the mere apocalyptic figure they depict.

We may conclude then that the method of the apocalypticists is vitiated, first by their unbelief in the miraculous—and for most of us it seems clear that the startling, joy-giving, peace-creating, heaven-expounding doctrines of the Fatherhood of God, the forgiveness of sins, and the life everlasting could never possibly have been made known to men but by miracle, for they have no obvious place in the natural order which would make them discoverable and believable by mere induction or even speculation—and, secondly, by their very vague and doubtful historical psychology, involving, as it does, a readiness to see, in the

most naïve fashion, things as causing Christianity which are really inimical to it.

We may now turn from the assumptions of the apocalypticists and consider the question of exegesis. Here we have the great advantage of the work of Professor von Dobschütz, who furnishes us with an admirable caution against the alacrity with which many scholars have acquiesced in much if not all of Schweitzer's findings. I do not propose to follow him, however, in his detailed examination of Schweitzer's exegesis. All that I propose to do is point out that the detailed and subtle criticism of the New Testament upon the cumulative effect of which Schweitzer and his friends rely, is not convincing because it seems to leave out of account some very big and important things. We will take one. It is said that ultimately the New Testament represents Jesus as standing for the one claim that He was to come again in fulfilment of apocalyptic prophecies concerning the Son of Man. Now let us grant that this is very prominent, this linking of Jesus with the apocalyptic Son of Man. But obviously it is not the only thing of its sort in the New Testament. Jesus is linked up with other great mythical ideas alongside of this one. The writer of the Fourth Gospel, whom many modern critics are beginning to place much nearer the Synoptists than used to be done, links Jesus with the Logos. The writer of "Hebrews" classes Him along with, but transcending, Moses, Joshua and Aaron, and sets Him forth as the Mediator of the promised new covenant. Paul in some of his epistles expounds Jesus as the sharer of God's power in the creation of the world. In others he takes the notion of angel hierarchies from the Jews or of the æons and demiurges of the mysteries and asserts that Jesus sums up in Himself all that these depict. Now looking at these and similar facts—such as Paul's citation of the inscription on the altar, and his quotations

on Mars Hill and his obvious drawing upon Stoic doctrine—we come to this conclusion : that the apostolic evangel had one message but a variety of languages. At Jerusalem this was so—every dweller heard the apostles' preaching in his own familiar tongue—and it was so everywhere. The apostles were all things to all men : to the Hebrews they talked in Hebrew ideas, while to the Gentiles they discoursed in Gentile terms. The religious-historical school is eager enough to assert this when they wish to trace a Christian doctrine to a heathen source. Well, the important fact is, that the apostolic preachers were careless what figures, mythical, historical or literary, they applied to Jesus, provided one principle was observed : Jesus must always be presented by means of the highest category known to the people they addressed. To the Greek philosopher, Jesus was the Logos, the divine reason operative to illumine and purify the world. To the Orphic worshipper, he was the mystery of mysteries who, once discovered, explained everything. To the angel worshipper, he was the highest of the æons—that emanation from God who summed up in Himself all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. To the Jew chiefly concerned in Templeism, He was the absolute High Priest after the order of Melchisedek. And to the Jew fed on apocalyptic literature, and that means to the great majority of the Jewish populace, He was the Messianic mystery, the Son of Man coming on the clouds. A variety of ideas, we see, but all agreeing in this—the highest categories of thought alone must be applied to Jesus. He was commended to each race or civilisation under the figure of the highest and most godlike thing that race or civilisation could conceive.

The method of Jesus Himself was in harmony with this. He was continually driven to parabolic speech, both on account of the profundity of His message, and the simplicity

of His hearers. The most remote and mysterious element in His message, as well as the most momentous, was His own self-consciousness, and His most effective means of expressing this, was the Messianic idea. But this idea, though expressing His self-consciousness, did not exhaust it. Further, discourses were as easily forgotten as parables and metaphors were remembered. A mythological term like "Son of Man" at once established contact with the naïve minds He addressed—minds incapable of grasping the abstruse or reasoned. We may conclude then that our evangelists have not put all that Jesus said to them about Himself into their writings, but chiefly what He expressed figuratively. And more than that : if Jesus could not express all He knew, the evangelists could not express all they received. So we have not the fulness of their impressions in their records, but only as much as they could put into words. And in view of all this, we are not surprised that the apocalyptic figure should loom large in the Gospels : but at the same time we have no right to assume that that figure exhausted either the Master's teaching or His disciples' understanding.

Of course, we are at once under a disadvantage if the Fourth Gospel is ruled out. But why should we rule it out ? On the contrary, this document seems to contain at least a certain body of genuine reminiscence of the Lord, and that body of reminiscence emphasises our Lord's difficulty in making Himself understood, while it also testifies to the fact that the disciples knew Him to be far more than they could clearly utter. And are we not, in view of all the facts, justified in saying that what really told upon the disciples, and told till death, forming that from which their essential evangel came, was not the Messianic figure, more or less clear cut, but the rich *MOÏÈ*, the wonderful if mysterious depth of the personality of Jesus, which was a religious experience of God steadily unfolding itself until it bloomed

in the light of the resurrection ? It was this that had come out of contact with the personality of Jesus, and not the mere notion of the Son of Man coming in the clouds ; and it was this that constituted their essential equipment when they began their propaganda, and that enabled them to go forward with unchecked determination even after the expectation of the Parousia had died away. Schweitzer says that " the historical knowledge of the personality and life of Jesus will not be a help, but perhaps even an offence to religion," and quotes Paul's famous saying about from henceforth not knowing Christ after the flesh. Well, we may grant that if we must accept Schweitzer's view of Jesus, it is an offence to religion, but that must only add to our conviction that his view is false, for the life of Jesus was not an offence to the early Church, but its inspiration and power.

But how about that other-worldliness which is Schweitzer's gospel ? If we reject the apocalyptic account of Christ and the Gospels, must we also reject that ? Frankly, if our experience of human nature has any validity, no doctrine of other-worldliness can be sustained unless we can see in Christ a Saviour and not a dupe. What chance has a denial of this world to serve us if it have with it no revelation of any other world ? What chance has a gospel of the Second Coming of combatting modern materialism if it be a Second Coming that never came and never will come ? What right have we even to call people to self-denial for its own sake, in the name of a dead visionary who did *not* teach righteousness and had nothing but scorn for social regeneration ? How can we commend a faith, if at the same time we have to say that its originator was tortured to death for an empty and superstitious dream ? In short, what has a mere doctrine of other-worldliness to give to hungry and weary souls ? It can only fall back upon a Buddhistic doctrine of Nirvana, but with this handicap, that it is promulgated by one who

thought Himself vastly more than Buddha claimed to be.

We may surely agree with Father Tyrrell, Dr. Burkitt, and Professor Moulton that it is all to the good that the essential other-worldliness of Christianity should be revived. But other-worldliness is nothing and less than nothing in itself. It is only valuable if we have another world to offer because we love and worship the Father with whom we had been reconciled through the death of Christ.

Now, is there no room for this other-worldliness unless we adopt the apocalyptic theory? Other-worldliness is surely that spirit which enables us to sit loose to all worldly goods because we so delight in heavenly goods; that conviction which makes this world a matter of little importance because the heavenly world has such great importance: the expectation that the world will sooner or later—it matters nothing how much sooner or later—come to an utter and irremediable end, but at the same time the kingdom of Christ endures for ever. Well, this spirit of other-worldliness was strong in the apostles, ultimately not by virtue of their belief in the Messianic office of Jesus, but by virtue of their complete homage and subordination to His person—a homage and subordination which we cannot exercise towards a dead Galilean dupe, but which we may and (please God) we do feel towards our Risen Lord who is the historic Jesus. Schweitzer is right when he says that the ethic of Jesus was not the centre of gravity, or the essence of His ministry. But he is wrong when he explains that essence by the apocalyptic expectation. It is the Person of Jesus that was mighty then and will be mighty to-day to make us live for the world beyond. “The Lord’s disciples,” says Professor Gwatkin, “went not forth as preachers of morality, but as witnesses to His life and of the historic resurrection which proved His mightiest claims.”

Yes, it is well we should remember that the Lord cometh, but we can never believe this unless it be because we know the Lord hath come.

NEWTON H. MARSHALL.

HISTORY AND THE GOSPEL.

THE modern mind, as represented by certain well-known types, is obviously baffled by the claim of the Christian faith to rest on and revolve round events in time. It asks in tones of sincere mystification how eternal truth—the love of God or human victory over moral evil—is anywise dependent for its hold upon our intelligence on actual incidents in the past. Is there not even a grossness in the idea? If the Gospel is in itself true, no fusion or coalescence of it with special portions of the time-series can make its truth any less or more. Faith is the soul's adhesion to the living God; why then perplex the simplicity and candour of its attitude by insisting that the attitude in question is one which necessarily implies a specifically intellectual posture towards events of history? Why not rather concede that the protest against this is at bottom a religious one, as demanding only that honest men should be encouraged to remain in fellowship with the Church while yet as critics of tradition they suspend judgment on the historicity of alleged occurrences in the first century? Such is the argument in brief. It is remarkable, by the way, that an intensified disinclination to implicate religion with history should have become thus specially manifest in an age which gives to historical research, and to examination of the principles of evidence, a quite unprecedented proportion of time and energy. The more men know of the past, and its human ways, the less, apparently, they will allow it to mean for the present. But while in part this hesitation may be