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The Origin of Matthew i. 18-25.

It seems to be generally agreed that the account of the Incarnation given in this passage is to be traced back to Joseph, the husband of the Virgin. It is also generally supposed that Joseph died at some time during the youth of Jesus. Both suppositions are not improbable, and may be true. But if they are true, how are we to bridge the gap between Joseph and Matthew? Joseph was certainly not the type of man who would say much of so private a matter as his betrothal and the ensuing experiences. But no matter how 'privily' he may have been willing to act, Mary's position could not be concealed. Joseph would feel it necessary, after the vision, to say something in vindication of his wife's character, if only to members of the family.

Both Edersheim and Farrar, in their Lives of Christ, mention different ancient traditions that would tend to make Matthew a first cousin of the

Lord. Edersheim, indeed, does not make this identification: he considers Alphæus the father of Levi to be different from the other Alphæus mentioned in connexion with Apostles. I do not know what value these ancient traditions have. But we know that eleven of the Apostles were Galilæans, that some at least were related; so it can hardly be said to be impossible that Matthew, like John the son of Zebedee, stood in some relationship to Joseph. Did Matthew, then, obtain his account of the Incarnation from Joseph through Alphæus? Perhaps even directly? If there is anything in this supposition, we have a further reason to explain Matthew's readiness to leave all at the call of Jesus. He knew something of the divine mystery behind the life of Jesus. It would also explain why Jesus called Matthew. He was, in a peculiar sense, one of His own to whom He came, and came not in vain.

ROBERT B. POCKOCK.

South Australia.

Entre Nous.

Poetry Old and New.

Robert Nicoll.

MR. GARDNER of Paisley has published a centenary edition of *Poems and Lyrics by Robert Nicoll* (2s. 6d. net). The volume is worthy of the occasion. It is well printed and illustrated. Besides the poems, it contains a biography of the poet and a reprint of Charles Kingsley's appreciation. It contains also a letter from the poet's sister, written on the 4th of June 1913, at the age of ninety-three.

Dora Sigerson Shorter.

A clear, startlingly clear and unforgettable, picture is that which Mrs. Shorter draws of Madge Linsey in her new volume *Madge Linsey, and other Poems* (Maunsell; 1s. net). Of the other poems in the book take this for example:

THE THREE FATES.

Up in the cave of the wind,
All bent and crabbed with their years,
In endless chatter they sit,
Old Distaff, Spindle, and Shears.

And they caught a mother's song
Going by them on the breeze,
As she hushed her pretty babe
To sweet slumber on her knees.

'Oh, you shall be great and proud,
And you shall be strong and fleet,
For fame to your call will come,
And captive Love to your feet.

'And life for you shall be long,
All full of your heart's desire'—
She sang as she rocked her babe
To sleep by the golden fire.

Up in the cave of the wind,
Bent with their difficult years,
In mocking laughter they sit,
Old Distaff, Spindle, and Shears.

Sheila Kaye-Smith.

In *Willow's Forge, and other Poems* (Erskine Macdonald; 2s. 6d. net), there is plenty of imagination, enough to carry off even so well worn a theme as this of the girl who loved her lover still though he had been put to death for evil-doing:

My love was hanged for stealing sheep,
 'Twas that which sent me mad—
 He was a liar and a thief,
 But O I loved my lad!
 I've wandered wildly ever since,
 And last night, 'neath the Wain,
 I saw my love at Willow's Forge,
 At the bottom of the lane.

Then

'O kiss me, lad, before you go!
 I cried, and raised my head.
 He stooped his scarlet lips to me,
 The living kissed the dead.
 But O his mouth was all on fire,
 And burned my cheek and hair,
 I screamed aloud, and he had gone,
 And left me waiting there.

Lewis Spence.

Is this anything? There is much more like it in *Songs Satanic and Celestial*, by Lewis Spence (Elkin Mathews; 1s. 6d. net).

THE HATE TITANIC.

O for a soul outstripping Samson's might,
 As the great sun outstrips the strengthless stars!
 Then not the puny temples of the earth
 Would I demolish in my giant spite.
 Gods! could I grasp the pillars of the world
 Within the circuit of my hate-strong arms,
 Into the infernal fires that leap beneath
 I'd spurn this rounded infamy of fate,
 Blow out the stars, spit out the sun itself,
 And trample e'en the darkness into dust!

J. Wells Thatcher.

A second edition has appeared of *Poems and Miscellaneous Verse*, by J. Wells Thatcher (Taylor; 3s. 6d. net). It is a large collection and very varied both in manner and in matter. This is one of the shortest and simplest of the poems:

PATIENCE.

The years glide swiftly by
 With noiseless feet;
 They hear the wistful sigh
 Their shadows greet;
 'Be patient,' is the message they would leave;
 So we'll be patient, though we fain would grieve.

The Great Text Commentary.

The best illustration this month has been found by the Rev. H. W. Morrow.

Illustrations of the Great Text for April must be received by the 20th of February. The text is Ro 13¹ along with 1 P 2^{13, 15}.

The Great Text for May is Ph 1⁶—'Being confident of this very thing, that he which began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ.' A copy of Charles's *Studies in the Apocalypse*, or of Allen's *Introduction to the New Testament*, or of Sayce's *Religion of Ancient Egypt*, will be given for the best illustration sent.

The Great Text for June is Ro 1¹⁸—'For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold down the truth in unrighteousness.' A copy of any volume of the *Great Texts of the Bible*, or of Winstanley's *Jesus and the Future*, will be given for the best illustration sent.

The Great Text for July is Ac 21¹³—'Then Paul answered, What do ye, weeping and breaking my heart? for I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus.' A volume of the *Greater Men and Women of the Bible*, or three volumes of the 'Short Course' Series, will be given for the best illustration sent.

The Great Text for August is Ro 15¹³—'Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, in the power of the Holy Ghost.' A copy of Durell's *The Self-Revelation of our Lord*, or of Walker's *Christ the Creative Ideal*, or of Briggs' *The Fundamental Christian Faith*, will be given for the best illustration sent.

Those who send illustrations should at the same time name the books they wish sent them if successful. More than one illustration may be sent by one person for the same text. Illustrations to be sent to the Editor, Kings Gate, Aberdeen, Scotland.

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