

THE SOUTHERN PRESBYTERIAN REVIEW.

VOL. XVII.—NO. 3.

NOVEMBER, MDCCCLXVI.

ARTICLE I.

Origins of Christianity. Vol. I. The Life of Jesus. Vol. II. The Apostles. By ERNEST RENAN, Membre de l'Institut. Translated from the original French. New York: Carleton, Publisher, No. 413 Broadway. Paris: Michel Levy Frères. 1864 and 1866: pp. 376, 353, 12mo.

The cordon of war thrown around us on land and sea by the late civil contest, if it has kept from our knowledge much that is useful and good, has shut out also much that is evil. The first of the volumes whose title is given above, was published in Paris in 1863, and had a wide and almost unexampled circulation in France, having reached the seventh edition in 1864. It soon appeared in an English dress, both in Great Britain and America. Like the *Life of Jesus* by Strauss, it contemplates the Author of Christianity from a point of view wholly rationalistic, and is suited and was designed to unsettle the faith of men in the evangelical history as a divinely inspired record, and in Jesus Christ as any other than a merely human and fallible teacher. Joseph Ernest Renan, the author, we learn from other sources, was born of humble, it is said of Jewish parents, at Treguier, in Brittany, Feb. 27, 1823, and was educated for the

VOL. XVII., NO. 3.—1.

Romish priesthood in the Seminary of St. Sulpice, at Paris. Before taking orders he was compelled to leave the institution on account of religious difficulties. He then turned his attention to philological studies, and in 1847 and 1848, gained the Volney prize for essays, one of which was expanded into his celebrated "*Histoire Comparée des Langues Sémitiques*," in which he attempted to do for the Semitic languages what Bopp had accomplished for the Indo-Germanic. His contributions* also, to the "*Revue des Deux Mondes*," brought him into notice; and he was elected in 1856, (in place of Augustin Thierry,) a member of the Institute of France. Under the appointment of Napoleon III., he was the director, in 1860 and 1861, of a scientific commission for the archæological exploration of the sites of supposed Phenician cities, and on his return published a large collection of monumental inscriptions from the times of the Assyrian rule to that of the Seleucidæ. He was, at the same time, appointed Professor of Hebrew in the College of France, but lost his position by attacking, in his inaugural address, the clerical party, and the doctrine of the divinity of Christ. While residing on the frontiers of Galilee in which our Saviour dwelt, he was led to traverse it frequently. He visited also Jerusalem, Hebron, and Samaria; scarcely any locality important in the history of Jesus escaped him. "He had before his eyes in the landscape around him," to use his own language, "a fifth gospel, torn but still legible, and thenceforth, through the narratives of Matthew and Mark, instead of an abstract being, which one would say had never existed, he saw a wonderful human form live and move." At Ghazir in Mt. Lebanon, in a Maronite hut, with but five or six volumes around, he sketched the "*Life of Jesus*," which, after his return, he labored incessantly to test and verify. "To the pure spirit of" his "sister Henriette, who died at Byblus, September 24th, 1861," of a disease which struck them both, but from which he arose, is the book dedicated. "You sleep now," says he, "in the land of Adonis, near the

* The best of these were collected into a volume under the title "*Etudes d' Histoire Religieuse*."

holy Byblus and the sacred waters where the women of the ancient mysteries came to mingle their tears. Reveal to me, O my good genius, to me whom you loved, those truths which master Death, prevent us from fearing, and make us almost love it."

There may be human tenderness and poetry in such, as it were, votive offerings, but it is pagan, not Christian in its spirit, and would have comported well with the character and times of Celsus, Porphyry, or Jamblicus, those early opponents of Christianity in the third and fourth centuries.

"A history of the 'Origins of Christianity,' " he says, "would consist of four books." The first which he presents to the public, treats of the person of its founder. The second treats of the apostles and their immediate disciples, closing about the year 100. The third (not yet written) would set forth the condition of Christianity under the Antonines as it slowly developed, comprising the whole of the second century. The fourth would show the progress of Christianity from the Syrian emperors to Constantine. "He knows not that he will have enough of life and ability to complete a plan so vast. He will be satisfied, if, after having written the Life of Jesus, it is given him to relate, as he understands it, the History of the Apostles." Vol. i., pp. 9, 10. These two portions of the work we see are now completed; the closing chapters of the second volume indicate a manifest preparation for others to follow. And it may be "given to him" in the inscrutable providence of God, that he may show forth his shallowness and folly and afford opportunity for a further defence of Christianity against sceptical objections, to carry out his plan to its final completion.

The fundamental error of M. Renan, is the denial of every thing supernatural in Christianity. In order to this, and to prepare the way for it, he begins by casting doubt on the reliability of the four gospels. They are not true history in every part, but are "in part legendary," "since" and the reason will be noted, "*they are full of miracles and the supernatural.*" "The formulæ, 'according to Matthew,' 'according to Mark,' 'according to Luke,' 'according to John,' do not imply that

these narratives have been written, from one end to the other, by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John," but only that these were traditions coming from each of these evangelists and covered by their authority. It does not suit M. Renan to adopt the true interpretation of this phrase, viz., that the whole of these four treatises was originally called "the Gospel," that it was regarded as having a fourfold form, and that "The Gospel according to Matthew," etc., etc., is the Gospel as it came from the hand of these several evangelists. M. Renan says of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark, that "they are impersonal compositions," that "a proper name at the head of such works does not mean much," though with us it means every thing, and we have no doubt that it was so when these gospels were written; that in the first two gospels we "do not have the original compilations;" that "Matthew wrote originally a collection of discourses, and Mark a narrative of events;" that the owners of these copies, desiring to make them complete, copied the anecdotes of Mark, mingling them with the discourses of Matthew, or *vice versa*. "There was no scruple about inserting additions, combining them diversely, and completing some by others. The poor man that has but one book desires it to contain all that speaks to his heart. They lent these little rolls to each other; each transcribed on the margin of his copy the sayings and parables he found elsewhere, and which touched him. The finest thing in the world thus resulted from an obscure and entirely popular elaboration." Vol. i., pp. 17, 23.

As to the third Gospel, that of Luke, it was written, he says, after the siege of Jerusalem. This siege is alluded to in chapter xxi. 9, 20, 24, 28, 32. That these are prophetic utterances of our Lord and Saviour does not accord with his philosophy! "It is a document," he says, "of second hand. The sayings of Jesus are more premeditated. Some teachings are falsified. He has a wrong idea of the temple, which he imagines to be an oratory whither men went to perform their devotions. He tones down passages which had become embarrassing from the stand-point of a more exalted idea of the divinity of Jesus; he exaggerates the marvellous: commits errors of chronology; is totally ignorant of

Hebrew. He is a very precise devotee; he makes it important that Jesus performs all the Jewish rites; he is an exalted democrat and Ebionite, that is, thoroughly opposed to property, and persuaded that the day of the poor is at hand." Vol. i., pp. 35, 36. "We can place our finger," he further alleges, "on the places where he dislocates or mixes up anecdotes, and can perceive the manner in which he colors facts according to his personal views, and adds pious legends to the most authentic traditions." Vol. ii., p. 24. Of the book of Acts, written also by Luke, he speaks in the most derogatory terms. "The author betrays discrepancies still more remarkable than those existing in his gospel. His theory of forty days; his account of the Ascension, closing by a sort of final abduction and theatrical solemnity; the fantastic life of Jesus; his manner of describing the descent of the Holy Ghost, and of miraculous preaching; his method of understanding the gift of tongues—all are different from St. Paul: all betray the influence of an epoch relatively inferior, and of a period when legendary lore finds wide credence. Supernatural effects and startling accessories are characteristic of the author, who, we should remember, writes half a century after the occurrences he describes; in a country far from the scene of action; upon events which neither he nor his master, Paul, has witnessed; and following traditions partly fabulous." Vol. ii., pp. 25, 26.

He says of the Gospel of John, that "it discovers continually the preoccupations of the apologist, the afterthoughts of the sectary, the intention of proving a thesis, and of convincing adversaries. Not by pretentious, heavy, badly written tirades, saying little to the moral sense, did Jesus found his divine work." "On every page the intention is betrayed of showing that he was the favorite of Jesus, that upon all the most solemn occasions he held the first place." He speaks of John's "rivalry with Peter," and his "hatred to Judas;" of his "obscure gnosticism and distorted metaphysics." Vol. i., pp. 28, 29. "This style of extolling himself, and demonstrating himself incessantly, this perpetual argumentation, this scenic representation without simplicity; the long moralizing at the end of each miracle; these

stiff and awkward discourses, the tone of which is often false and unequal, and unendurable to the man of taste by the side of the delicious sayings of the synoptics:" "we have here evidently artificial pieces, which represent to us the teachings of Jesus, as the dialogues of Plato render to us the conversations of Socrates. They seem in some sort the variations of a musician, improvising on his own account on a given theme." Vol. i., p. 31.

This is the language, not of a friend, but of a bitter enemy. By others, John has been described as being not without faults as a man, but having a predominating character of singular mildness, gentleness, modesty, and love. "He is unquestionably," says Schaff, "one of the highly gifted natures, endowed with a delicate, contemplative mind, lively feeling, glowing imagination, and a tender, loving heart." "Not unaptly has Peter been styled the apostle of hope; Paul, the apostle of faith; and John, the apostle of love." If John speaks of Judas with horror, it was because he had committed a dastardly and horrid crime. He is no apologist for the traitor, nor does he say with Renan, that "he [Judas] bought for himself a field near the old necropolis of Hakeldama, to the south of Jerusalem, and there lived a retired and peaceful life." Vol. ii., p. 109; Vol. i., 360.

How differently did even a Herder regard the *writings* of John! "They are still waters which run deep, flowing along with the easiest words, but the most profound meaning." In his deep admiration he exclaims, "It is written with the hand of an angel." "He knew," says another appreciating writer, "how to communicate, in the most simple child-like dress, the profoundest truths." His inspiration did not destroy his individuality, and yet, to use the language of still another, "more than any other apostle, he formed his language on the model of Christ's manner of expression." And these are the judgments, not of any scientific commissioner for the exploration of ancient Phenicia, but of learned, polished, and truthful men, who made the writings of John and other writings of the New Testament *their life-long study*.

Renan adds that "the historical sketch of the fourth Gospel is the life of Jesus as it was known in the school of John, and

that in his opinion this school was better acquainted with the external circumstances of the life of the founder than the group whose memories made up the synoptic gospels." The whole he says "are neither biographies after the manner of Suetonius, nor fictitious legends like those of Philostratus; they are legendary biographies. I would compare them with the legends of the Saints, the Lives of Plotinus, Proclus, Isidorus." Vol. i., pp. 33, 39.

The whole reason Renan has for denouncing these writings of the New Testament, is that they represent Christianity as a supernatural revelation. "The first twelve chapters of Acts," he says, "are a tissue of miracles. It is an absolute rule of criticism to deny a place in history to narratives of miraculous circumstances." Vol. ii., p. 37. This is the key of his unscrupulous warfare against these documents so revered by the Church of God. If we could possibly imagine that this book of Renan now before us, could survive the eighteen centuries which may yet roll on, *it* might in like manner be supposed to be a work of gradual increment compiled by various sceptical men, one adding one sentence, another others, some borrowed from Baur, another portion from Strauss, another from Schleiermacher, a learned Jew, furnishing, as he acknowledges was the case, *con amore*, the various references to the Talmud, with which some portions of the work abounds. It might even be held that it had passed through many hands, and took years to reach the state in which it is now found. So fallacious is the whole matter of textual criticism. Now, if honest and ingenuous writers ever existed, these were such, having no motive but to tell the truth, and adhering to their testimony amid persecutions, loss of place, of worldly goods, and life itself,—Matthew, writing from eight to fifteen years after the ascension of Christ; Luke, from seventeen to twenty-five years; Mark, some thirty years; and John, from thirty-seven to forty-two years subsequent to the death of his Master. These are periods in which it is possible and easy to gather up all the threads of history, when the actors and spectators are yet alive, and when facts, open, striking in their character, and notorious, can easily be ascertained, and could

not be successfully falsified; for these things "were not done in a corner." They are periods too brief for the growth of legendary story, Renan's absurd hypotheses to the contrary notwithstanding. If the New Testament history is not true, then all history, even that of the last and present century, is a fable. And as to these additions and changes in the sacred books held to be written by apostles and prophets, it is an act which the common sentiment of Christian* and Jew† has alike condemned in all ages. And the most awful threatening of heaven in the closing verses of the New Testament is fulminated against it as a damning sacrilege. As to the alleged inconsistencies paraded with such an air of triumph by Renan, they all disappear before the candid eye of a true and honorable student of the Scriptures, and no such scholar can regard this laborious effort to set them forth but with a disgust little removed from contempt for his honesty of heart and discrimination of mind.

Let us consider for a moment the question whether a miracle is *possible*. To this no one can give a negative answer who believes that there is a God who is self-existent, and the Creator of all things. With God all things are possible save those which may be contrary to his own nature and attributes. Only the pantheist, who holds that every thing is God, and all phænomena are modifications and revelations of the one and only substance that exists, can deny the possibility of miracles. Were it not for certain expressions used by him, we would at once assign Renan to this class of speculative men. To deny the possibility of miracles, is to deny that God, who created man, can have access to his mind whenever he wills it.

The *probability* of the miracle rests upon the probability of a revelation. The disordered condition of human nature, the guilt which oppresses the conscience, the craving of the heart for intercourse with God, and the inadequacy of human reason to suggest

* Dionysius of Corinth, as quoted by Euseb. Hist. Eccles., Lib. iv., ch. xxiii.

† Trypho in Justin Martyr.

a remedy, all combine to render it probable that God would make a direct revelation to men, which should be authoritative and binding. This revelation must rest on a divine testimony, and that the testimony is divine, the miracle establishes. The miracle is a work involving a deviation from the known laws of nature, a direct and manifest act of God, wrought to authenticate the mission of some religious teacher, or some truth which he utters. Nicodemus felt the attesting power of our Saviour's miracles when he said to Christ, "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." And Christ himself appeals to the miracle in confirmation of his own declarations. He claimed the prerogative of forgiving sins; and to prove that he had that power, he commanded the palsied man to "arise, take up his bed, and walk." "And the multitude glorified God which had given such power unto men." "Go your way," says he to John the Baptist's disciples, "and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised."

The *credibility* or *certainty* of miracles can also be shown. If we were the *first* witnesses of a miracle, were it the restoration of a man we knew to be dead to life, or the restoration of sight to a man born blind, or the miraculous parting of the Red Sea and our own passage through it, we could believe the *reality* of what we thus saw. And if these are things cognisable to our senses, they can be made cognisable to the minds of others by the testimony of credible witnesses. Were the witnesses sincere? Can their belief be accounted for only on the hypothesis that the facts to which they bare witness really took place? If so, we are bound to believe their testimony. These criteria of miracles usually laid down, being all satisfied, the miracle is to be received: 1. That the fact be one of which the outward senses can judge; 2. That it be notorious, and performed publicly in the presence of witnesses; 3. That there be memorials of it, or monuments, actions, and customs, kept up in commemoration of it; 4. That such monuments and actions commence with the fact. Whatever has

these four marks cannot be false. To these can be added a fifth, which is peculiar to the Scriptures, that the book in which the facts are recorded should be the *law* and statute-book of that people to which it belongs.* The books of Moses have ever been the law of the Jews, and the New Testament the law of the Christians.

These points being premised in relation to miracles, the rashness and absurdity of M. Renan's "Life of Christ," and "the Apostles," will be apparent. All these criteria meet in the historic events, the miraculous and the natural alike, of the gospel history; and it requires far more faith to believe in Renan's "Origins of Christianity," than to receive the miracles of the Gospel. The one addresses itself to our reason, judgment, and moral sense. The other is but the merest romancing or poetic dreaming, and is as remote as possible from the limits of the probable.

But we proceed with the statements of our author.

"Jesus was born," says Renan, "in Nazareth, but not of the family of David, nor by any supernatural birth." "This last presumption arose from the notion generally received by the ancients, that the extraordinary man cannot be born of the ordinary relation between the sexes, and from a misunderstood chapter of Isaiah, affirming that the Messiah should be born of a virgin." "Did he by his silence authorise the fictitious genealogies which his partisans imagined in order to prove his royal descent? Did he know any thing of the legends invented to fix his birth at Bethlehem, and in particular of the feat by which his Bethlehemite origin was connected with the assessment made by Quirinius?" Vol. i., p. 218. "His legend was the fruit of a great, altogether spontaneous conspiracy, and was worked out about him while he was yet alive." Vol. i., p. 219. "Jesus had never thought of passing for an incarnation of God." "He believes himself more than an ordinary man, but separated from God by an infinite distance. He is the Son of God; but all men are so, or may become so, in different degrees." Vol. i., p.

* Leslie's Short Method.

221. As to his education, "he learned to read and write, doubtless according to the method of the East." "It is doubtful whether he really understood the Hebrew writings in the original tongue." "It is not probable that he knew Greek." "He had no knowledge of the general condition of the world." Vol. i., pp. 72, 73. Coming upon the stage of action subsequently to John the Baptist, "the two young enthusiasts, full of the same hopes and the same hates, might well make common cause and reciprocally support each other." But "during all the time he spent with him, Jesus recognised him as his superior, and developed his own genius but timidly." [!] "During some weeks, at least, he was the imitator of John." [!] Vol. i., p. 125. "The only thing he owed to John, was, to a certain extent, lessons in preaching and popular agitation." [!] "From this time, in fact, he preached with much more force, and impressed himself upon the multitude with authority." But not only does Renan represent Christ playing a subordinate part to John, and being taught by him, he represents him as mistaken in his own conceptions. "Our principles of positive science are offended by the fancies which are included in the programme of Jesus. We know the history of the earth; cosmical revolutions of the kind Jesus expected, are only by geological or astronomical causes, the connexion of which with moral powers has never been established." "But, to be just toward great creators, we must not pause at the prejudices they may have shared. Columbus discovered America in consequence of very erroneous ideas." Vol. i., p. 438. He gathered disciples around him. "Three or four Galilean women always accompanied the young master, and disputed among themselves the pleasure of listening to him and caring for him in turn. One of them, Mary of Magdala, according to the language of the time, had been possessed of seven devils; that is to say, had been affected by nervous diseases apparently inexplicable. Jesus, by his pure and gentle beauty, calmed this troubled organisation." [!] Others are also mentioned, some of whom were "rich, and by means of their fortune, placed the young prophet in a position to live without working at the trade which he had hitherto followed. Besides these,

there were men whom he gathered around him, most of whom were fishermen of Galilee. Jesus owed these numerous conquests to the infinite charm of his person and his speech. A penetrating remark, a look falling upon a simple conscience, which needed only to be awakened, made for him an ardent disciple. Sometimes he made use of an innocent artifice, which Joan of Arc also employed. [!] He would aver that he knew something intimately of him whom he wished to serve, or he would recall to him some circumstance dear to his heart. It is thus that he touched Nathanael, Peter, and the Samaritan woman." Vol. i., pp. 157, 158, 164.

The gospel was for the poor and the outcast, for the publican and the sinner. Their affections gathered around him. "Thus he traversed Galilee in the midst of a perpetual holiday." Vol. i., p. 184.

But his contemporaries required miracles and the fulfilment of the prophecies in attestation of a divine mission. "Jesus, and especially his disciples, employed these two methods of demonstration in perfect good faith." "By reason of their constant preoccupation they saw references to him in the Psalms and Prophets. The exegesis of the times consisted almost entirely in plays upon words and citations made in an arbitrary manner." And this is the proof from prophecy! Not, Renan graciously intimates, a designed deception, but yet an entire mistake, or "artifice of style."

As to miracles, "the legends of Elijah and Elisha were full of them." Simon Magus, a magician near at hand, "created for himself by his illusions a character almost divine." "Jesus had therefore to choose between these two alternatives, either to renounce his mission or become a wonder-worker." He did this with reluctance, and became "a thaumaturgist only at a late period and against his will." "Most of his miracles were miracles of healing. Medicine in Judea was in no respect scientific, but abandoned to individual inspiration. In such a condition of knowledge, the presence of a superior man, treating the sick with gentleness, and giving him by sensible signs the assurance of recovery, is often a decisive remedy. Who dare say that in

many cases, the contrast of an exquisite person is not worth all the resources of pharmacy? The pleasure of seeing him heals. He gives what he can, a smile, a hope, and that is not unavailing." "Persuaded that the touch of his garment, the imposition of his hands did good to the sick, he would have been unfeeling had he refused to the suffering an alleviation which it was in his power to accord. Epilepsy, and mental and nervous diseases, were then assigned to demoniacal possession, and the vocation of an exorcist was a regular profession. Jesus had the reputation of possessing the deepest secrets of that art. And over those unfortunate lunatics who were permitted to wander about, as now, living like other vagrants in abandoned sepulchral caves, Jesus had great power. They were told on the subject of his cures a multitude of strange stories, in which all the credulity of the time gave itself full scope. But the disorders which they explained as possessions were often very slight. At this day, in Syria, those are regarded as lunatics, or possessed, who are only somewhat singular.* A gentle word often sufficed in this case to drive away the demon. Such were doubtless the means employed by Jesus." [!] Vol. i., pp. 230-240.

And such, according to Renan, is the proof from miracles!! Christ was simply a thaumaturgist of a higher order! "In his miracles," says Renan, "a painful effort is perceived, a weariness, as if some thing had gone out of him." "It is impossible to know whether the ungracious circumstances of exertion, groaning, and other traits of *jugglery* are really historic, or are the fruit of the belief of the compilers, much inclined to magic."

We are sick at heart of such disgusting recitals, such perversions and misrepresentations, such travesties of the sacred record; such irreverent and horrid blasphemies of the person and character of one whom he sometimes praises with much sweetness, tenderness, and eloquence of language. But we will still rehearse one more, which will cap the climax of these absurd and

* So with us in figurative speech. "She" or "he is possessed." But what then? Is there nothing but figure in the possessions of the New Testament? And would gentle words cure *them*?

wicked parodies of the miracles of our Lord. It is as follows: "Wearied out by the ill reception with which the kingdom of God met in the capital, the friends of Jesus desired a great miracle which should have a powerful effect upon Hierosolymite incredulity. The resurrection of a man well known at Jerusalem would be more convincing than anything else." "In this impure oppressive city of Jerusalem, Jesus was no longer himself. His conscience, by the fault of men, and not his own, had lost something of its primitive clearness. [!] Desperate, pushed to extremities, he no longer retained possession of himself. [!] His mission imposed itself upon him, and he obeyed the torrent." "It is impossible to decide in the present case (the resurrection of Lazarus,) whether the whole is a fiction, or whether a real event occurring at Bethany served as a basis for the rumor which was bruited abroad." "We think that something took place at Bethany which was regarded as a resurrection." "The family at Bethany may have been led, almost without suspecting it, to the important act which was desired. Jesus was there adored. It seems that Lazarus was sick, and that it was indeed in consequence of a message from his alarmed sisters that Jesus left Peræa. The joy of his coming might recall Lazarus to life. [!] Perhaps also the evident desire to close the mouths of those who furiously denied the divine mission of their friend, may have carried these enthusiastic persons beyond all bounds. Perhaps Lazarus, still pale from his sickness, caused himself to be swathed in grave clothes as one dead, and shut up in the family tomb. [!] Jesus desired to see once more one whom he had loved, and the stone having been removed, Lazarus came forth with his grave clothes and his head bound around with a napkin. The apparition must naturally be regarded by all as a resurrection. Faith knows no other law than the interest of what it believes to be the truth. The end which it pursues being in its view absolutely holy, it makes no scruple in invoking bad arguments in behalf of its proposition when good ones do not succeed." [!!!]

And thus this Jesus, whom Renan elsewhere represents so pure and holy, and his followers, whom he characterises as simple-

hearted and true, lend themselves to these vile, impious, and awful impostures, and he who is "the truth and the life," practised deception, and acted falsehood, to bring in the kingdom of that God who "is of purer eyes than to behold evil, or to look upon sin with allowance" !!!

Shall we accompany the profane feet of this *Membre de l'Institut*, this Director of the Scientific Commission for the exploration of the antiquities of Phenicia, to the sacred garden of Gethsemane? This scene he describes, but cannot refrain from throwing a veil of doubt over the time of its happening, and casting dirt upon the fair fame of the sacred historians. "By virtue of that *instinctive art* which presided over the compilations of the synoptics, and which often makes them obedient to considerations of propriety or effect in the arrangement of events, it *has been assigned* to the last night of Jesus, and to the moment of his arrest. Were this the true version, we could hardly understand how John, who must have been the intimate witness of so moving an episode, should not have spoken of it." "The immense burden of the mission he had accepted weighed cruelly upon Jesus. Human nature awoke for a moment." But does M. Renan have any conception of what it was that made him exceeding sorrowful even unto death,—caused him to pray the more earnestly, and sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground? No. "He began," says he, "to doubt of his work. Terror, hesitation seized upon him, and threw him into a dejection worse than death." But mark the poor unworthy thoughts he presumes may have agitated him. "Perhaps some one of those touching recollections which even the strongest souls preserve, and which at times pierce them like the sword, came upon him at this moment. Did he recall the clear fountains of Galilee where he might have refreshed himself, the vineyard and fig tree under which he might have been seated, *the young maidens who might perhaps have consented to love him?* Did he curse his bitter destiny, which had forbidden to him the joys conceded to others? Did he regret his too lofty nature, and, the victim of his own grandeur, did he weep because he did

not remain a simple artisan of Nazareth? We do not know." Vol. i., p. 318.

Ah yes, we do know. The awful load of our redemption rested on him. He was to endure the curse, to bear the load of our guilt, to wrestle for us with the Father's wrath.

M. Renan describes the trial of Jesus, the scene of the crucifixion and his death, and as a poor atonement for the grievous wrongs he has done him, or perhaps, as a cloak to cover the dark deeds he has perpetrated in this vile romance, apostrophises in exalted language "the noble founder whose work is finished, whose divinity is established!" He follows him to the tomb, and in reference to the story of his resurrection, asks "what had taken place?" He says, "In treating of the history of the apostles, it is that we shall have to examine this point, and seek the origin of the *legend* relating to the resurrection." "Had his body been taken away, or did enthusiasm, always credulous, afterwards generate the mass of accounts by which faith in the resurrection was sought to be established? This, for want of peremptory evidence, we shall never know. We may say, however, that the strong imagination of Mary Magdalene here enacted a principal part. Divine power of love! sacred moments," he exclaims, "in which the *passion* of a hallucinated woman gives to the world a resurrected God!" Vol. i., 351, 357.

To this subject he recurs in his second volume, "The Apostles," after having done what he could to affirm the legendary and doubtful character of the book of Acts, the second part of Luke's treatise on the "Origins of Christianity." "The first twelve chapters are a tissue of miracles. It is an absolute rule of criticism to deny a place in history to narratives of miraculous circumstances." Vol. ii., p. 37. With this as his justification, he receives and rejects whatever suits his purposes. "Many words of their Master which they remembered might be interpreted to mean that he would rise from the tomb." "Such a belief was so natural, that the faith of the disciples would have been sufficient to have invented it in all its parts. The great

prophets Enoch and Elijah had not tasted death." "Heroes do not die." "Could they consent to allow him to the decay of the tomb? No." "The day which followed the burial of Jesus (Saturday, the 15th of the month Nisan,) was occupied with such thoughts as these. All manual labor was forbidden on account of the Sabbath. The Christian conscience had on that day only one object: the Master laid low in the tomb. The women, especially, overwhelmed him in spirit with the most tender caresses. Their thoughts leave not for an instant this sweet friend, lying in his myrrh, whom the wicked had slain. Ah! doubtless the angels are surrounding him, and veiling their faces with his shroud." "He shall live again; God will not leave his Son a prey to hell." "They had no choice between despair or heroic affirmation. A man of penetration might have announced during the Saturday that Jesus would arise. The little Christian society, on that day, worked the veritable miracle; they resuscitated Jesus in their hearts by the intense love they bore towards him." "Only let a material fact, insignificant of itself, allow the persuasion that his body is no longer here below, and the dogma of the resurrection will be established forever." Vol. ii., pp. 54-57. After speaking of the arrival of the women at the sepulchre on Sunday morning, who on Friday evening had hastily embalmed the body, he says, "that in the two most authentic accounts which we possess of the resurrection, Mary of Magdala plays her part alone." "The stone was not in its place. The vault was open. The body was no longer there." "The disappearance of this cherished corpse had taken away from her the last joy on which she had depended. She could never touch him again with her hands." "The idea of a profanation presented itself to her." "Without losing a moment, she runs to the house where Peter and John are reunited. 'They have taken away the body of our Master,' she said, 'and we know not where they have laid him.'" After the departure of Peter and John from the garden, she "remained alone at the edge of the cave." "Suddenly she hears a light rustling behind her. There is a man standing. She believes it to be the gardener. She says, 'Oh, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me

where thou hast laid him, that I may take him away.' For the only answer, she *thinks* that she hears herself called by her name, 'Mary!' It was the voice that had so often thrilled her before. It was the accent of Jesus. 'Oh, my Master!' she cries. She is about to touch him. A sort of instinctive movement throws her at his feet to kiss them. The light vision gives way and says to her, 'Touch me not.' Little by little the shadow disappeared. But the miracle of love is accomplished. That which Cephas could not do, Mary has done." "The glory of the resurrection belongs, then, to Mary of Magdala. After Jesus, it is Mary who has done most for the foundation of Christianity. The shadow created by the delicate sensibility of Magdalene wanders still on the earth. Queen and patroness of idealists, Magdalene knew better than any one how to assert her dream, and impose on every one the vision of her passionate soul. Her great womanly affirmation, 'He has risen,' has been the basis of the faith of humanity." Vol. ii., pp. 57-61.

In this style are all the circumstances connected with the resurrection of Christ explained. The other women "told of a man clothed in white whom they had seen in the cave, and who had said, 'He is no longer here.'" "Perhaps," says Renan, "it was the *white linen clothes* which had given rise to the hallucination. Perhaps again they saw nothing at all." "The news spread, they were on the watch for new visions, which could not fail to appear." "If the entire Church had been assembled, the legendary creation would have been impossible; those who knew the secret of the disappearance of the body would probably have protested against the error." Vol. ii., pp. 52, 63. One cannot help asking, why did they not have the honesty afterwards to correct it, when this rumor reached their ears?

"About the year 80 or 85, when the text of the first Gospel received its last additions, the Christians invented the circumstances of the guard of soldiers and the seal affixed to the sepulchre. This circumstance, related only in the first Gospel, is in no respect admissible." Vol. ii., p. 79. In this way he construes as legendary every thing which works in favor of the historic truth of the gospel narrative. In his first volume, he

says the owner of the tomb was probably "some believer," and refers to Matt. xxvii. 60, as giving the tradition that it belonged to Joseph of Arimathea. In his second, he says, "he was a stranger to the sect." He says, "We can scarcely admit that those who so bravely believed that Jesus had risen again, were the very ones who had carried off the body." "It is possible it was taken by some of the disciples and carried to Galilee. It is permissible to suppose its disappearance was the work of the Jews. Perhaps it was effected by the proprietor of the garden, or by the gardener, dissatisfied with this mode of taking possession of his property. The details of the fourth Gospel, of the linen clothes left in the tomb, and of the napkin folded away carefully by itself in a corner, scarcely agree with such a hypothesis. This last circumstance would lead to the conclusion that a female hand had slipped it there." Vol. ii., p. 80. He suggests that it may have been Mary of Bethany. Note 37, p. 314.

But, how clearly does the careful folding of the napkin and laying away of the burial clothes put all ideas of robbery of the tomb out of the question. He should have denounced this too as legendary, if he would carry out his hypothesis. How clearly does it indicate that our blessed Lord really assumed the life he had laid down, that he released his person from the grave clothes which bound him around, and carefully and leisurely folded or rolled up the napkin, and laid it aside. Whatever doubts John may have had hitherto, when he entered into the sepulchre and saw this, "he believed." John *xx.* 8. "The question, 'In what place did the worms consume the lifeless corpse which on Saturday evening had been deposited in the sepulchre,' surely does not admit of easy solution," as Renan confesses. Vol. ii., p. 78. It was very important also to his theory that he should make the setting of the guard and the sealing of the stone a legend. The Jews either took these precautions to prevent the robbery of the tomb, or they did not. If they did not, what hindered them, when they had such opportunity and so many motives to do it? If they took these precautions, the timid and

disconcerted disciples would not have made the attempt, or making it, would not have succeeded. It is incredible that a Roman guard, probably a large one, posted for such a purpose, should all be asleep at one and the same time. If they were all asleep, they were incompetent to testify as to the matter of theft. Christ might have risen and come forth while they slept.

Renan proceeds to explain away other appearances of Christ. "The disciples believed in phantoms; they imagined they were surrounded by miracles." The stranger, for example, who accompanied the two disciples on their way to Emmaus, "was a pious man, well versed in the Scriptures." As he brake bread with them, they *imagined* it was Jesus. Again: It was night, and they were assembled in Jerusalem, and each communicated what they had seen and heard. The story of Emmaus was told, and how Jesus was known to them in the breaking of bread. "The silence within the house was frequently profound. During a moment of silence, some slight breath passed over the assembly. At these decisive periods of time, a current of air, a creaking window, or a chance murmur, are sufficient to fix the belief of peoples for ages. At the same time that the breath was perceived they *fancied* that they heard sounds. Some of them said that they had discerned the word *shalom*, 'happiness' or 'peace.' This was the ordinary salutation of Jesus, and the word by which he signified his presence. No possibility of doubt; Jesus is present; he is in the assembly. That is his cherished voice; each one recognises it."!!! Vol. ii., pp. 67, 68. Truly it could no longer be said of them that "they were slow of heart to believe."

But they were *not* the credulous men Renan pretends. "Some doubted," and the most obstinate of these doubters was Thomas. It was not enough for him to *see* the prints of the nails, he must *feel* them, and even more, he must thrust his hand *into the Saviour's side*. But even he was compelled to believe, and uttered, in his overpowering conviction, "My Lord and my God!" It could be no myth, and no illusion. His incredulity overthrows the whole theory of Renan, and becomes to us a

convincing proof of the resurrection. *Dubitatum est ab illo ne dubitetur a nobis.**

Renan explains away the other appearances of Christ in Galilee in the most childish and absurd manner. The appearance on the shore of the sea of Galilee, for example, was a mere fancy. They had toiled all night, and had caught nothing. "It *seemed* to them that some one had told them from the shore, 'Cast your nets on the right.'" Peter *dreamed* that he heard Jesus ask him thrice, "Lovest thou me?"—*dreamed* the conversation recorded about him and John. In the same fantastic way does he deal with the scene of the Ascension. "More than five hundred persons were devoted to the memory of Jesus in Galilee. These obeyed the chief of the disciples, and above all, Peter. One day, following their spiritual chiefs, they climbed up one of the mountains to which Jesus had often led them, and they *fancied* that they saw him again. The air on these mountain tops is full of strange *mirages*. The same illusion which had previously taken place in behalf of the more intimate disciples," [the Transfiguration,] "was produced again. The whole assembly *imagined* that they saw the Divine spectre displayed in the clouds; they all fell on their faces and worshipped. The feeling which the clear horizon of these mountains inspires is the idea of the immensity of the world and the desire of conquering it. They came down from the mountain persuaded that the Son of God had commanded them to convert the whole human race, and had promised to be with them even to the end of the world." "Nearly a year passed over, during which they lived this charmed life, suspended, as it were, between heaven and earth."!! Vol. ii., pp. 75-77.

Thus does Renan dispose of the story of the resurrection and the eleven distinct appearances of Christ after his resurrection, in which he was seen by between five and six hundred persons, not including the Roman guards posted at the sepulchre. It requires a far stronger faith to believe in his theories than in the history which the evangelists have given us of these events.

* Leo the Great.

Their stories, notwithstanding the alleged discrepancies, are perfectly consistent when harmonized by arranging them in their true historic order, and are marked by a beautiful simplicity and truthfulness. That they should have attempted to deceive on an event so public, and challenge the world to disprove it, and especially the civil and ecclesiastical rulers under whose power it all was; that they should permit themselves to be deluded when the profession of the fact would expose them to the loss of all things; that they should proclaim with great power the resurrection of their crucified Master, when, if it were not so, they might have been easily silenced, exceeds our power to believe. That these trembling, despondent disciples should, after three days, be filled with hope and joy, should, at the Pentecost which followed, come forth boldly and proclaim, "Him hath God raised up, whom with wicked hands ye have crucified and slain," surpasses fable. That Paul, the disciple of Gamaliel; a man of such powers of intellect; learned in all the discipline of his day and nation; independent, bold, and proud of his own acquisitions; in favor with the Sanhedrim, holding in his hands their commission; on the high road to preferment; who might perchance some day sit in the chair of the same Gamaliel, an equally distinguished teacher; that he should receive the story of our Saviour's resurrection, if it were all a dream, is more than we can account for. But he did believe it and regard it as the miracle of miracles. "If Christ be not risen," says he, "then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified that he raised up Christ." 1 Cor. xv. 14, 15. Dr. Baur, the greatest of modern sceptics, who was the teacher of Strauss, of whom, in his turn, Renan is the disciple, was greatly stumbled at the conversion of Paul. "He acknowledged that it remained a mystery to him, which could not be solved by any psychological analysis." He speaks, in this connexion, of the *miracle* of the resurrection, "which alone could disperse those doubts of the older apostles that seemed to doom faith itself to the eternal night of death, and of the miracle of Paul's conversion, which appears the greater, since he, in the sudden change from the most violent

enemy to the most determined herald of Christianity, broke through the barriers of Jewish particularism, and dissolved it in the universal idea of Christianity.”*

Of this apostle, Renan gives a description. “He was small, ugly, stout, short, stooping, broad-shouldered, bald, sallow; with an aquiline nose, piercing eyes, heavy eyebrows joined across the forehead; timid, embarrassed, unimpressive in speech; unhealthy; badly educated, unacquainted with [pure] Greek; haughty; of exaggerated pretensions, capricious.” And yet, “his politeness was extreme, his manners exquisite, of rare intelligence, of lofty sentiment, amiable hesitations, animation, wealth of charming sayings, polite, earnest, affectionate, liberal, intelligent, tolerant, of large ideas, great, reticent,* susceptible.” Such are the terms in which, on different pages, he delineates his person and character.

He describes him on the way to Damascus. “His mental excitement was at its greatest height, and he was alternately troubled and depressed. Like all strong minds, he quickly learned to love that which he had hated. Was he sure, after all, that he was not thwarting the design of God? Perhaps he remembered the calm, just views of his master Gamaliel. Often these ardent souls experience terrible revulsions. He felt the charms of those whom he had tortured, and the better he knew these excellent sectarians the better he liked them; and than their persecutor none had greater opportunities of knowing them. At times he saw,” [in imagination] “the sweet face of the Master who had inspired his disciples with so much patience, regarding him with an air of pity and reproach.”

If, in the environs of Damascus, the ‘Paradise of God,’ “Paul met with terrible visions, it was because he carried them in his heart. Every step in his journey towards Damascus awaked in him afflicting perplexities. The odious part of executioner, which he was about to perform, became insupportable. The houses which he just saw through the trees, were perhaps those

* Baur, *Das Christenthum*, quoted by Prof. Fisher, *Essays on the Supernatural Origin of Christianity*, p. 461, and in Schaff's *Person of Christ*, p. 233.

of his victims. This thought beset him and delayed his steps; he did not wish to advance; he seemed to be resisting a mysterious influence which pressed him back. The fatigue of the journey, joined to this preoccupation of the mind, overwhelmed him. He had, it would seem, inflamed eyes, probably the beginning of ophthalmia. In these prolonged journeys, the last hours are the most dangerous. All the debilitating causes of the days just past accumulate, the nerves relax their power, and reaction sets in. Perhaps, also, the sudden passage from the sun-smitten plain to the cool shades of the gardens heightened his suffering condition and seriously excited the fanatical traveller. Dangerous fevers, accompanied by delirium, are always sudden in these latitudes, and in a few minutes the victim is prostrated as by a thunder-stroke. When the crisis is over, the sufferer retains only the impression of a period of profound darkness, crossed at intervals by dashes of light or of images outlined against a dark background. It is quite certain that a terrible stroke instantly deprived Paul of his remaining consciousness, and threw him senseless on the ground. * * * It was the state of St. Paul's mind, it was his remorse on his approach to the city where he was to commit the most signal of his misdeeds, which were the true causes of his conversion. * * * The incident, nevertheless, was not wholly unlike a sudden storm. The flanks of Mt. Hermon are the point of formation for thunder-showers unequalled in violence. The most unimpressible people cannot observe without emotion these terrible showers of fire. It should be remembered that in ancient times accidents from lightning strokes were considered divine relations; that with the ideas regarding providential interference then prevalent, nothing was fortuitous; and that every man was accustomed to view the natural phenomena around him as bearing a direct relation to himself individually. The Jews in particular always considered that thunder was the voice of God, and that lightning was the fire of God. Paul at this moment was in a state of lively excitement, and it was but natural that he should interpret as the voice of the storm the thoughts really passing in his mind. That a delirious fever, resulting from a sun-stroke or an attack of ophthalmia, had suddenly seized him; that a flash of lightning blinded him for a time; that a peal of thunder had produced a cerebral commotion, temporarily depriving him of sight—nothing of this occurred to his mind. The recollections of the apostle on this point appeared to be considerably confused; he was persuaded that the incident was supernatural, and this conviction would not permit him to entertain any clear consciousness of

material circumstances. Such cerebral commotions produce sometimes a sort of retroactive effect, and greatly perturb the recollections of the moments immediately preceding the crisis. Paul, moreover, elsewhere informs us himself that he was subject to visions; and this circumstance, insignificant as it may be to others, is sufficient to show that for the time being *he was demented.*"

"And what did he see, what did he hear, while a prey to these hallucinations? He saw the countenance which had haunted him for several days; he saw the phantom of which so much had been said. He saw Jesus himself, who spoke to him in Hebrew, saying, 'Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?' Impetuous natures pass immediately from one extreme to the other. For them there exist solemn moments and crucial instants which change the course of a lifetime, and which colder natures never experience. Reflective men do not change, but are transformed; while ardent men, on the contrary, change and are not transformed. * * * With the assistance of his companions, who led him by the hand, Paul entered Damascus. * * * For three days Paul, a prey to fever, neither ate nor drank. It is easy to imagine what passed during this crisis in that brain maddened by violent disease. Mention was made in his hearing of the Christians of Damascus, but especially of a certain Ananias who appeared to be the chief of the community. Paul had often heard of the miraculous powers of new believers over maladies, and he became seized by the idea that the imposition of hands would cure him of his disease. His eyes all this time were highly inflamed, and in his delirious imaginations he thought he saw Ananias enter the room and make a sign familiar to Christians. From that moment he was convinced that he should owe his recovery to Ananias. The latter, informed of this, visited the sick man, spoke kindly, addressed him as his 'brother,' and laid his hands upon his head; and from that hour peace returned to the soul of Paul. He believed himself cured; and as his ailment had been purely nervous, he was so. Little crusts or scales, it is said, fell from his eyes; he again partook of food and recovered his strength. Almost immediately after this he was baptized." Vol. ii., pp. 171-175.

Such is Renan's account of the conversion of Paul. It is not impossible that such thoughts passed through his mind. They are natural enough. But unless his own description of his conversion, given in the twenty-sixth chapter of the Acts, is also legendary, he saw a light from heaven, at noon-day, above the

brightness of the sun. It is not possible that a man of intelligence, reared in the East, and acquainted with its meteorology, should be unable to distinguish between the thunder-gusts of Mt. Hermon and a miraculous light from heaven, which so terrified his probably numerous escort, that they all fell to the earth; not possible that this should be a mere phantom-vision, nor these imaginary voices which he heard in the Hebrew tongue and replied to, nor that it was a distemper of body or mind which struck the whole escort suddenly to the ground. It was a real event, and the point of departure from his zeal for Judaism to his zealous labors for the Church of God. "Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision: but showed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."*

There are other suggestions in the remaining part of the second volume of more or less importance touching the progress of Christianity in its early missionary age, but the extent to which our exhibitions of the spirit of these volumes, which, notwithstanding their offensiveness, are marked often with great beauty and liveliness of style, have already been carried, forbid any further details.

The English writer, Woolston, explains all the miracles of the Scriptures as allegories, and not real facts; as spiritual truths, expressed in a historic form.† The German, Paulus, represented

* It is stated by the Rev. T. T. Biddolph, that Lord Lyttleton and his friend Gilbert West, Esq., both men of acknowledged talents, had imbibed the principles of infidelity. Believing the Bible to be an imposture, they were determined to expose the cheat. Lord Lyttleton chose the conversion of Paul, and Mr. West the resurrection of Christ, for the subject of hostile criticism. Both sat down to their tasks full of prejudice, and both were converted by their efforts to overthrow Christianity. This is the origin of two of the most valuable treatises in favor of revelation: "Observations on the Conversion of Paul, in a Letter to Gilbert West," by Lord Lyttleton, and "Observations on the Resurrection of Christ," by Gilbert West.

† Large packages of his tracts were forwarded to these American colonies between 1727 and 1731.

them as merely amplifications of natural events. The tempter of our Saviour was a cunning Pharisee; the opened heavens and the voice at his baptism, was the clouds riven by lightning and muttering thunder, of which "This is my beloved Son," was the interpretation; the dove was a real one, by chance flying near, or as Meyer explains, a meteoric form just then visible; the tribute money was the coin obtained by Peter for the fish he sold in the market. Schleiermacher held them to be *relatively* miraculous, seeming so to the observer, but yet the result of the greater insight into the powers of nature, and skill to use them, which the wonder-worker had. Strauss represents them as myths, as religious ideas clothed in a historical form, approximating thus to the theory of Woolston. Renan admits the larger portion of the New Testament to be historic, but this intermingled with legends proceeding from various sources, whose object is to honor Christianity and its Author, but which do not rise, in any degree, to the dignity of history. He is utterly opposed to the idea of a miracle. "They only exist when people believe in them." "A miracle never takes place before an incredulous and sceptical public. Credulity on the part of the witness is the essential condition of a miracle. There is not a solitary exception to the rule that miracles are never produced before those who are able or permitted to discuss and criticise them." "Why do people no longer believe in angels and demons? Simply because the existence of an angel or demon has never yet been proved."

There are declarations and insinuations in these words which we cannot allow. Miracles have not extended over the whole period of the world's history. They existed under Moses and Joshua; under Elijah and Elisha; and in the times of our Saviour. In the days of Abraham they were infrequent. In the days of David and Solomon, we almost never read of them. From the Captivity to Christ, they were unknown. They have ceased from the early ages of Christianity till now. It is true in reference to the so-called miracles of the Romish Church, that "a miracle at Paris, for instance, before experienced savans, would put an end to all doubts. But, alas, such a thing never

happens." It is true that these modern pretended miracles "only exist where people believe in them," and that "discussion and examination are fatal to them." There is no occasion for them. But when God introduced into the world his own Son, himself the greatest miracle of all, mighty works showed themselves abroad to attest his mission. They were now, miracles of knowledge, now, miracles of power. Not simply *mirabilia*, wonders wrought by art in accordance with the laws of nature, nor the deceptive tricks of legerdemain, but *miracula*, wonders, תְּפִלְאוֹת, deeds which excite wonder, because wrought by the direct and immediate power of God, the privy seal of the great King of Heaven, authenticating the commission of Him whom he sent. They were many in number, and various in kind; "infallible signs" wrought in synagogues among assembled and intelligent crowds, in private houses, in streets, on highways, at the thronged gates of cities, before the people in open day, in the presence of his disciples, before other disinterested men like Nicodemus, who acknowledged for himself and others of his class, that no man could do these miracles except God were with him. They were appealed to by Christ and his apostles in proof of their mission. They are enumerated in the Bible with other evidences of its divine origin. They caused men to forsake their homes, earthly honors, estates, and friends; to encounter countless hardships, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, and to die by the most cruel and opprobrious deaths in testimony of their faith. The miracle may be above and beyond *our* experience who now live, and yet not be beyond the experience of other men in other ages. When Christ appeared, the divine power came from behind the veil of natural laws and revealed itself in peculiar acts interposed among those which were the result of second causes, before the senses of men, so that they could not fail to own them as the acts of God attesting the mission of his Son and the apostles whom he sent. If there is a chain of natural causes and effects in the physical and spiritual world, and if sin has entered the world and death by sin, disturbing its harmony, God may introduce another and remedial system, and attest its introduction by miracles. Renan would seem to imply "that the forma-

tion of humanity itself was not a sudden, instantaneous thing." But certainly man came into existence by a direct creative act, and not by any process of development. There is a spiritual world which is beyond the ken of the philosopher; and even as in this world of sense, "lower laws are held in restraint by higher, mechanic by dynamic, chemical by vital, physical by moral; as when I lift my arm the law of gravitation is held in suspense by my will, and in a regenerate man, sin by the law of the spirit of life;"* so, may a divine power interpose amid the ordinary course of nature in support of that remedial system devised for man's salvation. "The appearances of our globe," says Dr. Thornwell, in his able article on Miracles, in a former volume of this Review,† "are said to be utterly inexplicable upon any hypothesis which does not recognise the fact that the plan of creation was so framed from the beginning as to include, at successive periods, the direct agency of the Deity. The earth proclaims, from her hills and dales, her rocks, mountains, and caverns, that she was not originally made and placed in subjection to laws which themselves have subsequently brought her to her present posture. She has not developed herself into her present form, nor peopled herself with her present inhabitants. That science which, at its early dawn, was hailed as the handmaid of infidelity and scepticism, and which may yet have a controversy with the records of our faith not entirely adjusted, has turned the whole strength of its resources against the fundamental principle of rationalism. It has broken the charm which our limited experience had made so powerful against miracles, and has presented the physical government of God in a light which positively turns analogy in favor of the supernatural. The geologist begins with miracles; every epoch in his science repeats the number, and the whole earth, to his mind, is vocal with the name. He finds their history wherever he turns, and he would as soon think of doubting the testimony of sense as the inference which the phænomena bear upon their face. Future

* Trench on Miracles, pp. 21, 22.

† Vol. X., p. 200.

generations will wonder that in the nineteenth century men gravely disputed whether God could interpose, in the direct exercise of his power, in the world he has made. The miracle, a century hence, will be made as credible as any common fact. Let the earth be explored; let its physical history be traced; and a mighty voice will come to us from the tombs of its perished races, testifying, in a thousand instances, to the miraculous hand of God. Geology and the Bible must kiss and embrace each other, and this younger daughter of science will be found, like the eastern magi, bringing her votive offerings to the cradle of the Prince of peace. The earth can never turn traitor to its God, and its stones have already begun to cry out against those who attempted to extract from them a lesson of infidelity or atheism."

The method of M. Renan would destroy the genuineness and credibility of all those ancient writings which are the study of scholars, and have been the instructors of all succeeding generations; and it would extinguish in respect to salvation all the yearnings of the anxious and guilty soul, and annihilate the hopes of man.

ARTICLE II.

THE SCIENCE OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY.*

We believe that there is a SCIENCE of Pastoral Theology; though we can hardly tell why we think so, unless we infer that it exists from its manifest necessity. There has never been made, so far as we know, a distinct enunciation of its fundamental principles, much less has there ever been a systematic combination of them in scientific form.

* These pages owe their origin to the question, "Is there such a thing as a *Science of Pastoral Theology?*" very earnestly propounded to the writer, by a young friend and relative, who was, at the time, engaged in the study of the subject under the direction of a recently appointed Professor in a Theological Seminary.