

the prophet Jesus, from Nazareth of Galilee"—a myth within a myth. The passage cannot have been in the early Gospel, which, as we have seen, had no previous mention of Nazareth; and it is quite certain that no Galilean prophet could thus have been acclaimed at Jerusalem.

There remains in the first Gospel the solitary passage (xxvi. 71) which, in conformity with the superimposed second chapter, speaks of Jesus the *Nazarite*.¹ Here, again, to say nothing of the fact that the whole narrative is unhistorical, the passage in question is impugned by the immediately previous occurrence of the same episode, in which the phrase is "Jesus the Galilean." One maid having said that, another must be made to say "Jesus the *Nazarite*" or Nazarene. The whole passage is either one more late interpolation or a series of such, and we shall see reason to regard the similar passage in Mark as the original.

In the fourth Gospel, again, while Jesus is thrice called "the *Nazarite*," he is never called "the Nazarene"; and the only passage in which Nazareth is mentioned (i. 45, 46) is plainly interpolated in the same fashion as the early allusions in Matthew and Luke. Philip is made to tell Nathaniel that "we have found him of whom Moses in the law, and the prophets, did write, Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph"; whereupon Nathaniel asks, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" The whole episode, which is nakedly fictitious, is alien to the synoptics; and its spuriousness lies on the face of the text. The narrative runs that "on the morrow," after John has been approached by the priests (v. 29), Jesus goes to John; that "again on the morrow" (v. 35) John sees Jesus and calls him the Lamb of God; that yet again "on the morrow" Jesus goes into Galilee—meeting Philip; while finally (ii. 1) "*the third day* there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee." *A day*

¹ The Revised Version unjustifiably reads in this place "Nazarene," when the Revisers' own Greek text reads not *Ναζαρηνος*, but *Ναζωραῖος*, the standing term for *Nazarite* in the Old Testament.

*has been interposed.*¹ At the close of the fourth Gospel, finally, the addition of "the Nazarite" to the inscription on the cross is admittedly the last stroke in the creation of that particular myth, since none of the synoptics have it, though John alleges that "this title therefore read many of the Jews."

Thus, then, "Nazareth," to begin with, disappears from the corrected text of the first and fourth Gospels, and from one passage of the third. There remain in Luke only (1) the mention of Nazareth in the purely mythical prelude, which represents a later stage of Jesuism than even the prelude grafted on Matthew; and (2) the mention in the late myth of the child's visit to the temple—neither of them admissible as an instance of any early biographical datum. We are left facing the occurrence of "Nazareth" and the use of the cognomen "Nazarene" in Mark; the use of both "Nazarene" and "Nazarite" in Luke; and the use of "Nazarite" in the Johannine story of the capture. Mark, in the Greek text agreed upon by the English revisers, has "Nazarene" four times—a significant circumstance, since in two of the instances Matthew, and in the others Luke, fail to correspond, though in one Luke is interpolated in Mark's terms.

In (*a*) Mark i. 24 the demoniac cries "thou Jesus the Nazarene" (not "of Nazareth," as the revisers translate); (*b*) in x. 46 the blind beggar, being told that "Jesus the Nazarene" is passing, cries "Jesus thou son of David"; (*c*) in xiv. 67 the maid says "the Nazarene, Jesus"; and (*d*) in xvi. 6 the angel says "Jesus the Nazarene." In *a*, Luke textually duplicates Mark, and the others have nothing. In *b*, Matthew (xx. 30) has no mention of Nazarene or Nazareth; while Luke (xviii. 37) has "Jesus the Nazarite." In *c*, where Mark at the outset makes the maid say "Nazarene," and does not repeat the episode or the term, Matthew as above noted makes one maid say "the Galilean," and another "the Nazarene"; while Luke (xxii. 56, ff.) has

¹ That this was later recognized is shown by the fact that in xxi. 2 Nathaniel is suddenly made "of Cana in Galilee," in order to make one day of this episode and that of the marriage miracle.

the maid and a manservant, but no mention of Nazareth or of Jesus with any cognomen, though Peter (*v.* 59) is called a Galilean. John, on the other hand, has two uses of "the Nazarite" in his story of the capture (*xviii.* 5, 7), where the synoptics have no such passage. Finally, Luke stands absolutely alone with the Emmaus story (*xxiv.* 13, ff.), in which (*v.* 19) some MSS. have "Nazarite," and some "Nazarene." This being unquestionably a late addendum, the Gospel evidence for "Nazarene" is now narrowed down to Mark.

The peculiar consistency of that Gospel in using the term "Nazarene" may stand *prima facie* either for special biographical knowledge or for a deliberate adjustment, which has been only slightly imitated in the others. And when we note that in *every instance* the cognomen is used in a mythical narrative, leaving only the bare solitary dictum in the first chapter that "Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized of John," how can we hesitate between the alternatives? The fact, shown by Tischendorf, that the form "Nazarene" is supported mainly by the Latin MSS., points to a deliberate control, a reduction to quasi-consistency of the chaos that had been set up by the epithet "Nazarite" and the place-name Nazareth. Even Luke does not conform save in one instance to the redaction; a circumstance which excludes the plea of "special biographical knowledge" for the second Gospel. We come down then to the following facts and inferences:—

1. The earliest texts told only of a Jesus, knowing nothing of Nazareth, and saying nothing of his being a Nazarite. Such is the position of Paul.

2. After Paul, Jesuism appears to have become associated with the old sectarian or ascetic usages of Nazarism. It is doubtful whether, to begin with, the forms Nazarene and Nazarite had the same force, or whether the name Nazarene was set up, on the basis of the "Netzer" or Nazareth myth, to distinguish non-Nazarite Christians from Nazarites.

3. After a time, anti-ascetic groups (see below, *Second Division*, § 1) probably sought to counter-check Nazarism by giving a new quasi-historical basis to the term Nazarene:

that is, they invented the myth of the upbringing of Jesus at Nazareth. This then is probably a later and not an earlier myth than that of the birth of Bethlehem, arising in the order in which the narrative develops in Matthew. It is systematically imposed on Mark by (probably Roman) methodizers, who here ignore the Bethlehem myth, simply because that retains the old confusion by suggesting that Jesus was *Nazoraïos* rather than "of Nazareth." If "Nazareth" or "Nazaret," the common form, be the proper spelling, the adjective should have been *Nazaretaios*, or something similar retaining the *t*. The modern name of the village (Nasrah), which drops the *t*, and the occasional reading "Nazara," may stand for the mere phonetic decay that is so common in names. But if, as Keim argues, the true Hebrew place-name was *Netzer* or *Nezra*, then the general adoption of the form Nazareth points to a deliberate attempt to make a new basis for "Nazarene" without coming too close to the Hebrew *Nazir* = Nazarite, or *Netzer* = "the branch," forms which would always suggest that the geographical pretence was spurious or mistaken.

This view of the process appears to be confirmed by the phenomena of the text of the book of Acts. There there occur (1) six mentions of "Jesus the Nazarite," and (2) one mention of Nazareth (x. (37) 38):¹ there is no instance of "Nazarene." And the mention of Nazareth is plainly spurious, being thrust into an invertebrate sentence over and above a previously complete characterization of Jesus—all in a mythical (though early) discourse by Peter. The book of Acts, then, throughout calls Jesus the *Nazarite*, as Mark throughout calls him the Nazarene; and the probable solution² is that the compilers of the Acts made Jesus a Nazarite because for them his following were now known as Nazarites; while the methodizing redactors of Mark, having decided to ground that term on the place-name Nazareth, took the form Nazarene as being more

¹ The revisers, as usual, obscure the evidence by using the form "of Nazareth" throughout.

easily dissociated from the known historical class of Nazarites.

The problem as to how the Jesuist cult, which for Paul has no connection with Naziritism, came to be associated with that institution, belongs strictly to the later historical part of our inquiry. It may here be pointed out, however, that while the Jesuists might develop into "Nazarites" by way of using as their symbol the prophetic "Nazar" or Davidic "Branch" of Isaiah, taken in a general Messianic sense, there is a very important special clue to such a departure in the Old Testament legend of Jesus the High Priest, who in Zechariah (iii. 1-8; vi. 11-13) figures as "the Branch" (lit. "the sprout") and plays a quasi-Messianic part, being doubly crowned as priest and king. Here arises a fresh problem. The crucial text, Matt. ii. 23, refers to a prophecy that the Messiah shall be called *Nazoraios* (Heb. *Nazir*); and the only prophetic saying to which it can be attached is that in Isaiah, xi. 1, predicting that "a Branch" (*nazar*, or *netzer*) shall come from the roots of Jesse. In Zechariah the Hebrew word is not *netzer*, but *tsemach*; but it is perfectly possible that the word *netzer* was commonly used in reference to that, and that in the lost Aramaic paraphrase the same word may have been used to render the two passages.¹ That the *tsemach* of Zechariah was held to point to the Messiah equally with the *netzer* of Isaiah is made certain by the Chaldean exegesis of Zechariah, which in ch. iii. 8 gave "a Messiah," and in vi. 12 "a man whose name is Messiah."² Here then was an early Messianic Jesus who could specially be described as *Nazir* or Nazarite, in the sense of being the mystic "branch" of Isaiah. It may then have been an express reversion to the symbolism associated with this priestly and Messianic Jesus that Paul denounced as the introduction of "another Jesus whom we did not preach." And the fact that there are signs of tampering with the passage Zech. vi. 11, which would appear to have originally made Zerubbabel wear one

¹ See this argued by Mr. Nicholson, *The Gospel according to the Hebrews*, 1879, p. 33.

² Cahen, *in loc.*

Note | of the two crowns,¹ points to some special pre-Christian movement associated with the Jesus of Zechariah. What its nature was we cannot tell;² but the fact that the Mazdean item of the "seven eyes" is associated alike with the Jesus of Zechariah (iii. 9) and the Judaic Jesus of the Apocalypse (v. 5-6) suggests some continuous Messianic idea. For the rest, it is arguable that the rise of a special type of "Nazir," professedly named after the *netzer* of Isaiah and Zechariah, may have been the true origin of the form *Nazarene* as distinct from Nazarite.³

Whether or not this theory of the line of evolution be sound, there can be no pretence that there remains any tolerable foundation for the belief that the Gospel Jesus was a person born at Nazareth. Even if he had been, it is obviously unlikely that his late followers (his disciples are not so named anywhere, and Paul never uses the term) would be called after the small village of his birth, when practically none of his teaching had been done there. The known historical use of the term "Galilean" to describe certain sectarian or fanatical groups, excludes any such proceeding; and as there were already the numerous Nazarites, the alleged geographical name for the Jesuists would have been a most gratuitous confusion, quite alien to popular habit. But there is positively no reason to believe that any prophetic and cult-founding Jesus was born at Nazareth. To adhere to that view is merely to defy all the critical tests.

¹ Cp. Robertson Smith, *The Old Testament in the Jewish Church*, 2nd ed. p. 446.

² It is noteworthy that Josephus names four Jesuses who were high-priests. Of these, one was deprived by Antiochus Epiphanes, and another by Herod.

³ A special connection between Nazaritism and the Messianic belief, however, is indicated by the fact that vows were made "to be a Nazarite when the son of David will come," and that such vowers appear to have been free to drink wine on Sabbaths, but not on week-days. Tract. *Eiruvin*, fol. 43, col. 2, cited by Hershon, *Genesis with a Talmudical Commentary*, Eng. tr. p. 472.

§ 10. *The Temptation.*

I.

While the birth of the God is seen to be part of the folklore of Europe as well as of Hindostan, the Temptation of the God is a myth of a specifically Oriental stamp, and is not to be found in that form in Hellenistic mythology before the rise of Christism. The latter myth, however, turns out to be at bottom only a variant of the former, different as the stories are; and the proof is reached through certain Hellenic myths of which the origin has not hitherto been traced. There is, however, no more instructive instance of myth-evolution.

In its Christian form, the Temptation story is a fairly close analogue of part of the Temptation of Buddha;¹ and it has a remoter parallel in the Temptation of Zarathustra,² both of which myths have been accounted for by M. Darmesteter as originating independently from the nature-myth of the temptation of Saramâ by the Panîs in the Rig Veda.³ As the first part of the Buddhist story has every mark of a nature-myth representing the Sun-God as assailed by the storm-spirits at the outset of his career, this or some other Hindu derivation for that idea seems likely enough: and the Christist myth might fairly be regarded as a later sophistication of the same fancy. There are decisive reasons, however, for concluding that the Christian story was evolved on another line; and in tracing that we may see some reason to surmise a non-Vedic origin for the Zoroastrian form.

The first clue lies in the detail of the "exceeding high mountain" of the first and third Gospels,⁴ for which we have a marked parallel in a minor Greek myth. In a story of the young Jupiter given by Ennius in his translation of the *Sacred History* of Evemeros, and preserved for us by

¹ Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, pp. 36-37; *Buddhist Birth Stories*, i. 84, 96-101, 106-9.

² Zendavesta, *Vendidad*, Farg. xix. § 1.

³ *Ormuzd et Ahriman*, pp. 195-203.

⁴ Matt. iv. 8; Luke iv. 5. In the Revised Version the "high mountain" is deleted from the passage in Luke, as not being in the oldest MSS.

the Christian Father Lactantius, "Pan leads him [Jove] to the mountain which is called the pillar of heaven; whereupon he ascended it, and contemplated the lands afar; and there in that mountain he raises an altar to Coelus [or Heaven]. On that altar Jupiter first sacrificed; and in that place he looked up to Heaven as we now call it," etc.¹ This myth itself, as we shall see, is in all likelihood framed to explain a picture or sculpture; but taken as a starting-point it would clearly suffice, when represented either dramatically or in art,² to give the Christists the basis for their story.

Pan, being figured with horns and hoofs and tail, represents the Devil as conceived by Christians from time immemorial. As the Terror-Striker, Pan had already even for the Pagans a formidable side, which readily developed itself. Satan showing Jesus all the kingdoms of the world, and asking to be worshipped, is thus merely an ethical adaptation of the Greek story. Any representation of that would show the young God standing by the Demon and the altar on the mountain top; and to a Christian eye this could mean only that the Devil was asking to be worshipped in return for the kingdoms of the earth to which he was pointing; though, for a Pagan, Pan was in his natural place as the God of mountains.³ The oddest aspect of the Christian story is the naïf recognition of Satan's complete dominion over the earth—another of the many illustrations of the perpetual lapse of Semitic and other ancient monotheism into dualism. But as such an extreme conception of the power of Satan is not normally present in the Gospels, the episode in question is the more likely to have been fortuitously introduced.

It would further connect with the zodiacal astrology of the period; for just as Jesus at the fatal turning-point of

¹ Lactantius, *Divine Institutes*, i. 11.

² No monument described by K. O. Müller in his *Ancient Art* is strictly identical with the description just cited; but, as we shall see below, Pan is pictured as the teacher of *Olympus*, the mountain of Zeus, and personified as a youth, and again as beside Apollo on Mount Tmolus. It was all the same myth-cycle; and Pan with Zeus on Olympus could easily be conceived as Pan beside the personified Olympus.

³ Homeridian *Hymn to Pan*.

his career appears on the two asses of the sign of Cancer, so he would be associated at the outset with Capricorn, which "leads the sun from the lower places (*ab infernis partibus*) to the highest," and, in virtue of the goat nature, proceeds always "from low places to the highest rocks."¹ With Capricorn, Pan "the Goat-God" was primarily identified through his goat-legs; but he is further directly associated with the constellation in the myth in which he strikes a Panic terror into the Titans when they fight with Jupiter, and in the other in which Pan expressly takes the form of a goat.²

But the symbolic clue leads us further still. In Attica and Arcadia Pan had his special mountains, called by his name; and the rocks in one of their caves were called Pan's goats.³ And as Pan (originally Paon,⁴ the Pasturer) was himself by word-play "the All," Pan's mountain and "the mountain of the world," whence all the kingdoms could be seen, were mythically the same thing. This precise duplication occurs earlier in the Semitic mythology. There the Babylonian God Azága-súga was "the Supreme Goat," his name going back to the Akkadian word for Goat, *Uz*. The Akkadian Sacred Goat was at once a God and the Capricorn of the Zodiac; and on early Chaldean cylinders the goat and the gazelle alike frequently figure as standing beside a deity⁵—the probable artistic origin of the Pan myth preserved by Ennius, as *Uz* approximated to Pan in being named "the (Great) Spirit," and in being a name for the Sun-God. Now, the Hebrew demon Azazel, who is identified with the goat,⁶ is clearly a variant of the Babylonian Goat-God; and concerning Azazel there is an old dispute as to whether the name meant a goat or a mountain.⁷

¹ Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i. 21, *end*.

² Erasthenes, c. 27; and *cp.* Diodorus Siculus, i. 88, as to the attributes of the Goat-God in Egypt, which identify him with Pan.

³ Pausanias, i. 32, *end*; viii. 36, 38.

⁴ Preller, *Griechische Mythologie*, i. 581. So K. O. Müller, Welcker, and others, previously.

⁵ Sayce, Hibbert Lectures, pp. 284–286.

⁶ Lev. xvi. 8. A. V., and R. V., marg.

⁷ Spencer, *De Legibus Hebræorum*, Lib. iii. cap. i. Dissert. 8 (ed. 1686, ii. 451).

Here we seem to have the clue to the whole sequence. In the ancient Akkadian folk-lore the Sun was called "the Goat," *Uz*, because he was *par excellence* the Climber, the High One; and the same name was given in the usual mythological way to the zodiacal constellation which marks the beginning of the sun's upward climb in the heavens. The astronomical idea is curiously clear in the Babylonian sculptures which show the God, clad in a goatskin robe, the sacred dress of the Babylonian priests, "watching the revolution of the solar disk, which is placed upon a table and slowly turned by means of a rope."¹ That the word *uz* was primordially connected with "height" is made probable by the fact that the Semitic Chaldean word *uzzu* meant "glory."² But for the Semites in general the word *uz* came to signify a goat; and in Hebrew and Arabic alike *uzaz* meant or could mean a pointed or steep mountain³—the root again being evidently one signifying "height." Thus anciently were involved at once the concepts of Goat-God, mountain, "pillar of heaven," and leading up of the sun on high.⁴ The whole complex is but a variant of the birth of the new Sun at the winter solstice.

It seems not unlikely that this may be the true solution of several otherwise unintelligible Greek myths, as well as of that of Pan leading Jupiter to the top of the high mountain. For instance, Ovid in the *Metamorphoses* represents Pan as competing in music (like Marsyas) with Apollo on the mountain Tmolus in Lydia, the personalized mountain acting as judge.⁵ We have here probably just another variant of the pictorially-based story of Pan taking Jupiter to the mountain-top. Any foreign picture or vase or sculpture which showed a figure like Pan with his syrinx and a figure like Apollo with his lyre—the symbols of identification⁶—standing together on a mountain, would

¹ Sayce, p. 285.

² *Id. ib.*

³ Spencer, as cited.

⁴ Thus at Mendes the Apis bull = the Sun-God was identified with the Goat-God. Plutarch, *I. and O. c.* 73, *end.*

⁵ *Metam.* xi. 146–169.

⁶ That for the Semites to begin with the Sun-God is the bearer of the lyre is made probable by the fact that David, who has so many features of the Sun-God Daoud (Sayce, Hibbert Lectures, pp. 52–57), figures in that light. See Amos vi. 5; and cp. Hitzig, *Die Psalmen*, 1836, ii. 3–4. The Goat-God would bear the syrinx in his capacity of shepherd.

set up a speculation as to what they were doing; and the satisfying Greek guess would be that they were competing as players. In this way even the more developed story of the satyr Marsyas,¹ like the stories of Pan and Jupiter, Jesus and Satan, probably came from the same old Akkado-Semitic astronomical picture of the Goat-God standing beside the Sun-God on the height which was common, as it were, to Goat and Sun. Mount Tmolus, being already personified in Lydian myth, would quite naturally be represented, as in Ovid's verses, as listening and judging; and ass-eared Midas doubtless played an intelligible symbolical part in the original work of art.

Yet again, the old Babylonian symbol-scene may very well be the root of the later Greek stories and pictures of the God Dionysos and his companion Silenus, the latter being, as above noted, a variant of Marsyas, who is a variant of Pan. In late art Silenus has become a comic figure; but in higher forms of the myth he is the young God's worthy teacher and guide, "arousing in him the highest aspirations," and to him it is that Dionysos "owed much of his success and his fame."² He is moreover "the first king of [Mount] Nysa, of an ancient line, concerning which nothing is any longer known."³ From this point of view his tail is respectfully treated as a mysterious peculiarity. In all likelihood this is but another way of explaining the Goat-God who in the symbol stands like a teacher beside the young Sun-God, pointing out to him his course in the heavens; and the subsidiary myth which makes Dionysos, raised to a higher status, give "Olympus" as tutor to the young Zeus when he makes him "king of Egypt,"⁴ is another complication of the same primary idea. Silenus the Goat-God is mountain-king and friend of the Sun-God, even as the goat-like Marsyas of Phrygia, in his

¹ Originally, Marsyas was apparently a Phrygian variant of Pan, figuring as Silenus (Herodotus, vii. 26), and the story of his flaying probably grew out of the fact that his symbol was a wineskin. Müller, *Ancient Art*, as cited, p. 450; *Introduction to Mythology*, p. 54; Preller, i. 578.

² Diodorus Siculus, iv. 4. Cp. Preller, i. 577, and citations.

³ Diodorus, iii. 72 (71).

⁴ *Id.* iii. 73 (72).

serious and human aspect, was the true friend and companion of the "Mother of the Mount," the Virgin Goddess Cybelê, who took little children in her arms and healed them with magical songs¹—a blending, for once, of the myths of the Sun in Capricorn and the Sun born of the constellation Virgo at the same astronomical moment. In this myth, too, Silenus teaches men the use of the flute as an improvement on the primitive pastoral syrinx. His later degradation is a sample of the normal play of artistic fancy in religious myth.

It may be, again, that in a symbolic scene of the same order as that under notice lies the clue to the odd myth of Hercules bearing the load of the world for Atlas while Atlas gets for him the Hesperidean apples.² Mount Atlas, obviously, was a "pillar of heaven" = "the mountain of the world" (for Atlas bears the pillars of heaven *and* earth);³ and we have only to suppose a sculpture representing Atlas on his mountain, *holding out the earth-ball to the Sun-God*—another way of showing him all the kingdoms of the earth—in order to get a basis for the otherwise meaningless myth under notice. In one account it is specially affirmed of him that he "first taught men to regard the heaven as a sphere;"⁴ and here again the same kind of pictorial representation would suffice to motive the myth. And there are yet other connections between the types of myth before us. Atlas being father of the Pleiades would be apt to have a place in the constellations; and as he figured as a Sea-God⁵ he had a further aspect in common with Pan, since the sign of Capricorn ends in a fish's tail,⁶ and Pan carries a shell in his hand. Finally, the Hindu mythology preserves record of the mythic Goat "whose office is to support the worlds"⁷—a virtual identification of Pan with Atlas.

¹ *Id.* iii. 88.

² Apollodorus, ii. 5, § 11. See below, § 24.

³ Cp. Preller, i. 438.

⁴ Diodorus Siculus, iii. 60.

⁵ *Odyssey*, i. 52.

⁶ Eratosthenes and Hyginus, as cited. This detail also goes back to the Babylonian symbol, for the Euphratean sign Capricornus is a "Goat-Fish"—a fish-tailed goat. See R. Brown, jr., in *Proceedings of the Society of Biblical Archaeology*, Jan. 1890, pp. 148–151, and March, 1891, pp. 22–23.

⁷ Oldenberg, *Die Religion des Veda*, 1894, p. 72.

But these are remoter analogies; and the myth of Atlas and Hercules brings us back towards our starting-point; for a representation of half-bent Atlas on a mountain-top, holding out the earth-ball to the Sun-God, might conceivably also serve to an early Christian as a figure of the Evil One offering the kingdoms of the earth to Jesus. In any case, Pan on the mountain pointing to the world below was exactly such a representation. For Judæo-Christians, Pan on the mount was just Azazel the Goat-Demon and Mountain-Demon;¹ and since Azazel was for Origen simply the Devil,² whose typical function in Israel was "temptation,"³ the early Christians had in their sacred books and glosses every inducement to see their Satan in any figure of the Goat-God.⁴ Knowing nothing of the astronomical meaning of the symbols, they turned such a representation into history as they did every other piece of symbolism in their primary documents. We shall see the same process taking place again in the story of the "Sermon on the Mount."

Curiously enough, the goat of the Hebrew ritual-mystery, which has perplexed so many commentators, is really a myth-duplicate of the other ritual-mystery of the red heifer,⁵ which in the Egyptian mythology stood for Typhon,⁶ the Evil One. In one form or other, the idea of the Evil

¹ The Evil Spirit seems habitually to have been figured by the Jews as goat-like. Cp. J. C. Wolf, *Manichæismus ante Manichæos*, 1707, pp. 36-37; Selden, *De Diis Syris*, Proleg. cap. 3. The word translated *satyr* in Isaiah xxxiv. 14, meaning "hairy one," signifies either *goat* or *dæmon sylvestris*, and evidently has the latter force there (Buxtorf, s.v.). But the Sun too was "the hairy one"—*e.g.*, Samson, and long-haired Apollo. Everywhere the ideas converge.

² *Against Celsus*, vi. 43. Cp. Spencer, as cited, ii. 453; and note the development of the myth in the *Book of Enoch*, viii. 1; ix. 6; x. 4; xiii. 1.

³ See Strauss, *Leben Jesu*, Ab. ii. Kap. ii. § 56, for illustrations. Satan signified at once the "prince of this world" (John xii. 31; xiv. 30; xvi. 11)—that is, the *cosmocrator* or ruler of the heathen kingdoms—the bringer-in of all idolatry, and the inspirer of sexual cults in particular.

⁴ By the early Christians the "temptation" was probably understood as sexual, in terms of that side of the Goat-God's character in Egypt and Hellas. The temptation of Eve was so conceived originally. See the argument of J. W. Donaldson, *Jashar*, 1854, p. 46 sqq. And see Bigandet, *Life of Gaudama*, i. 132, as to the secondary temptation of Buddha by a spirit of concupiscence. Cp. Lillie, *Influence of Buddhism on Christianity*, p. 45; *Buddhism in Christendom*, 1889, p. 111.

⁵ Numbers xix.

⁶ Plutarch, *Isis and Osiris*, c. 50.

Spirit was thus irremovable from the monotheistic systems, though he is ostensibly introduced only to be formally repudiated. But the most instructive aspect of the case is the final mythological lesson, which is, that the Demon, the Tutor, the God, and the Mountain are all mere variants of the one original idea of the Climbing Sun in Capricorn; the High One who rules the world. The same process took place in Egypt, where Osiris and his enemy Typhon are alike forms of the Sun, and where the symbol of the pillar beginning in the lowest and ending in the highest heaven stands for Osiris and his tree.¹ Even so, in the Hebrew ritual, "the Lord" gets his sacrificial goat as well as the Goat-God. All reasoning, a logician tells us, takes place by way of "substitution of similars."² The old myth-makers, then, were reasoners, albeit not very deep ones.

If the case be admittedly made out as regards the "exceeding high mountain," thus traced to its mythic origin, it follows that the introductory idea of Jesus going "into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil" has a similar derivation. "The wilderness" was the typical home of the Goat-God, of the Hebrew demons in general,³ and of mountain-haunting Pan. Dionysos goes with his guide Silenus on a far journey through a waterless land, passing through a waste region where wild beasts dwell, and thereafter he fights with his demon foes the Titans, slaying one and raising "a high hill" over his body.⁴ To the neighbouring folk he explains that he is come to punish sin and make men happy. The myth has here become ethical with a difference; but the Christians had a Judaic lead also. It was to the desert that the Hebrew ritual mystery sent Azazel, the scapegoat-God, the sin-bearer; and the desert was the visible home of evil. In the second

¹ Tiele, *Religion of Egypt*, pp. 46, 47, 50. In the Greek form of the Typhon myth he is born of the Earth, half-man half-beast, towering "over all the mountains, his head often touching the stars," and his hands could reach "from the rising of the sun to its setting." "Fire raged from his eyes." He is a Sun-God disestablished and disliked by a new race, or else the hot sun figured as an evil power.

² Jevons.

³ Spencer, as cited, pp. 454, 459, 461. Cp. Isaiah, as cited in note above.

⁴ Diodorus, iv. 72 (71).

Gospel, only the desert is mentioned ; there is no mountain or temple-pinnacle ; and it may have been that this was the first form of the Christian story ; since Luke also originally lacked the special detail of the mountain, merely making Satan "take him up." But the simplest form of the myth is again traceable to probable art-representations. The myth of Goat, God, and Mountain takes among other forms that of Pan teaching the young Olympus,¹ who elsewhere, as we have seen, is himself the teacher of the young Zeus—an inversion assisted by Zeus's cognomen, the Olympian. In this case the mountain is still mythically present, but Olympus figures as a youth ; and the scene is represented in sculpture, with a circle of mænads and satyrs as spectators.² This scene in its turn could give Christists the due suggestion of "temptation" ; and the further detail of the demon's simply "taking up" the God might be equally well motivated by the sculpture of Heliodorus representing "Pan and Olympus wrestling" (*luctantes*)³—itself probably a result of a misconception of some earlier symbolic scene in which the Goat-God carries the Sun-God to the top of the cosmic "mountain." The connection is unfailing ; and we have now good cause to see in such misreadings of ancient symbols the source of myths innumerable.⁴

For the rest, the "pinnacle of the temple" is only a

¹ As does Marsyas. Pausanias, x. 30 ; K. O. Müller, *Ancient Art*, as cited, p. 502.

² Müller, as last cited.

³ Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* xxxvi. iv. 22 (v.).

⁴ It may be well to note in conspectus all the myth-forms which we have seen arising more or less clearly from the primary symbol of ancient Chaldæa, the Sun as Goat ; (1) A constellation figured as the Goat, because there the Sun begins his climb ; (2) the Goat = the Sign Capricornus, separately deified ; (3) Goat-God and Sun-God together "on the height" ; (4) the Mountain as God ; (5) the Mountain (= Goat-God) as companion and leader of the Sun-God ; (6) the Goat-God himself as (a) tutor of the Sun-God, and (b) tutor of the Mountain-God ; (7) the Mountain-God as judge between Goat-God and Sun-God ; (8) the Goat-God wrestling with or lifting the Sun-God ; (9) the Mountain as (a) pillar and (b) pinnacle of the temple ; (10) the Goat-God as Devil, (a) tempting the Messiah-Sun-God, and (b) carrying him to the Mountain-top ; (11) the Sun-God, with the Goat-God, building up the Mountain as grave-mound over the Adversary ; and possibly (12) the Goat-God, as showing the Sun-God the earth-ball, figuring as Atlas trying to get rid of his load. Making a table of the names we get out of the primary pair four pairs : Pan and Zeus ; Marsyas and Apollo ; Silenus and Dionysos ; Jesus and Satan.

variant of the mountain or the "pillar of heaven"—another substitution of similars; and the forty days of fasting are a mythic pretext for the (also Pagan-derived) forty days of fasting in Lent, which proceeded also, however, on the sacred precedents of the forty-day fasts of Moses and Elias—Sun-Gods both. It is not impossible that the myth of the "horned" Moses communicating with the God on the mountain-top was in its turn one more derivative from the old Akkadian symbol of the Goat-God and the Sun-God; for Dionysos, who at various points duplicates with Moses,¹ is, as we have seen, often connected with the goat.² And here, perchance, we have in Babylonia the true primary derivation for the ritual usage which lies at the root of a great literary evolution; for Greek drama seems to begin with Dionysos and his goat; the word and the thing "tragedy" deriving especially from the "goat song" or "satyr chorus" sung at the Dionysiak festivals.³ Hebrew religion may possibly owe as much to the Dionysos myth as does Hellene art. But the Moses myth as it stood would not suffice to motive the introduction of Satan into the Jesuist myth; and we are accordingly left finally at our first and last points of comparison—the picture of Pan and the young Jupiter on the mountain-pillar-top; or of Pan and the young Olympus with the nymphs and satyrs around; or of Pan and Olympus apparently wrestling; or of Dionysos with Silenus fighting the Titan in the desert before raising the "high hill" that haunts the whole interfluent dream. From the foursquare parallel there is no escape.

There remains, however, one item of the myth to be accounted for—that of Satan's suggestion that the God shall turn stones into bread. On the face of the matter, it is implied that for the God to break his fast would be a fatal surrender: why? Here there occurs a coincidence

¹ See above, p. 83.

² Zeus changes the infant Dionysos into a kid to save him from Hêrê. Apollodorus iv. 3, § 2.

³ Donaldson, *Theatre of the Greeks*, 7th ed. pp. 40, 68. The old view that *tragos* in this word stood for the goat which at a later period was the prize for the chorus is set aside by Donaldson, who derives the term from the fact that *tragos*, "he-goat," was a name for the satyr-attendant of Dionysos.

of the Jesuist and Buddhist myths so marked that we must either assume one to have copied the other or regard both as copying another cult. The question of priority becomes the more difficult in this case because in both systems the detail under notice is evidently a late addition. In the Gospels we find the first form of the Christian tale in Mark, where there is a bare mention of the forty days' temptation in the wilderness, followed by the ministry of the angels—probably evolved from the pictured Muses or mænads of Apollo or Dionysos. Here there is not even a mention of fasting. In the first and third Gospels we have the elaborated myth—the forty days' fasting, *after* which the God is hungry; the invitation to turn stones into bread, the temptation on the pinnacle, and the duplicated temptation on the mountain-top. The fourth Gospel ignores the whole narrative.

In the Buddhist literature, on the other hand, we have first the simple nature-myth of the demons of the tempest assailing the young Sun-God; and only in the late Lalita Vistara is there interpolated the highly sophisticated account of Siddârtha's previous self-mortifications. He practises the severest austerity for six years, till his mother comes down to earth to implore him to spare himself. He consoles her, but does not yield, whereupon the Evil Spirit attempts to persuade him; and the Buddha replies with an elaborate classification of the emotions, regarded as the soldiers of the Demon. They are graded as desires; wearinesses; hunger and thirst; concupiscence; indolence and sleep; fears; doubts; anger and hypocrisy (making eight); and further ambition, flatteries, respects, false renown, self-praise, and blame of others; all which soldiers of the burning demon subjugate the Gods as well as men, but cannot conquer the Buddha. The demon being thus discomfited, the "sons of the Gods" come to suggest that Siddârtha shall pretend not to take any food at all, allowing them to instil strength into him by the pores of his skin; but he resists this temptation also. Then follow an attack in force by the armies of the demon, and a fresh temptation by his daughters, the Apsaras; then the mere verbal

affirmation by the demon of his power as the spirit of concupiscence;¹ and lastly another vain attack in force.² Here we have an obviously late literary development, partly the work of religionists who saw in the demon of the old temptation myth a mere symbol for human passions. In a still later development of the tale, Buddha reclaims and baptises the Evil One and his daughters.³

What connects the Buddhist and the Jesuist myths is the idea that the Divine One must not yield to the temptation of hunger, though he can be fed supernaturally if he will. Which, then, copies the other? The true answer is, I think, that both cults here drew from a third. The Gospel myth, as we have seen, is evolved from scenes in Pagan art, themselves developments from an early symbol-scene of which the meaning was lost; and the bare item of the temptation to make bread out of stones would be an unintelligibly slight adaptation from the luxuriant Buddhist myth if the Gospel-interpolators knew it. On the other hand, the Buddhist myth makes no use of the items of the mountain and pillar, and turns the idea of food-temptation to a quite different account. We must look for the common ground outside.

In all likelihood, then, this detail is in both myths an adaptation either from the Mithraic cult or from one on which that was founded. We know that among the trials of the later Mithraic initiation were those of hunger and thirst;⁴ and as the Adversary, the Tempter, is a capital figure in all stages of the Mazdean system, it would be almost a matter of course that the initiate should figure as being tempted by him to break down in the probation. The temptation would presumably take the form of a simple offer of food; and in the normal course of myth-making such a ritual episode would be almost inevitably accounted for as a repetition of one in the life of the God.

¹ Given by Bigandet, as cited above.

² Saint-Hilaire, *Le Bouddha et sa Religion*, 3e édit. pp. 60-64.

³ Lillie, *Influence of Buddhism*, p. 45; *Buddhism in Christendom*, p. 112.

⁴ See the author's lecture on *Mithraism in Religious Systems of the World*, p. 205.

In the so-called Temptation of Zarathustra, the only tempting done is in the offer of Ahriman to the prophet that if he will renounce the good religion of the worshippers of Mazda he shall have a thousand years' dominion; and Zarathustra refuses; predicting the coming of his yet unborn Son, the Saviour Saoshyant, who at the end of time is to destroy Ahriman and raise the dead. Further, though there is no hint of fasting, Zarathustra goes "swinging stones in his hand, stones as big as a house"; and he tells Ahriman that he will repel him by the Word of Mazda, the sacred cups, and the sacramental Haoma or wine. Of these data the first has every appearance of being derived from an old nature-myth¹ of the strife between the Sun-God and the Evil Powers, while the "Word of Mazda" is a later sacerdotal item. Seeing, then, that Mithra in the late cult appears practically to have superseded Zarathustra for most purposes, he is likely to have had transferred to him the temptation-motive and the "stones," which were his own symbol. We may thus reasonably infer that Mithra, in the later growths of his myth, fasted and was tempted of Ahriman; and the God's all-potency would easily suggest the detail that he should be asked to make bread of the stone which typified his own body. Such would be a sufficient ground for the Christists' adaptation of one more Pagan detail in their gradually pieced-out story, when belike they were bent on attracting the Mithraists to their cult.

It does not necessarily follow that the Buddhist myth of the Temptation was borrowed from Mithraism in its later form. When we have once realized what an immense mass of mythology had been accumulated in the cults of ancient Babylon, and how much they influenced later systems in Persia and in Greece, we are forced to admit the likelihood of an early dissemination eastwards of all manner of myths and practices which later appeared in the Mediterranean region. The ethical ideas involved in the Buddhist temptation-myth, however, are beyond doubt relatively

¹ So Darmesteter, *Ormuzd et Ahriman*, as last cited.

late; and if they were not adapted directly from the Persian cult they were presumably, like that, an evolution from an earlier Asiatic system which gave the groundwork. In a Chinese Life of Buddha,¹ the Buddha fasts for forty-nine days; and such fastings were probably features of many Asiatic systems. We are thus finally left questioning whether many of the striking parallels of ritual and emblem and implement between Buddhism and Christism may not have been independently derived from intermediate cults that flourished in Mesopotamia.

In any case, we are entitled to affirm the rise of the Gospel myth of the Temptation as a theological fantasy from the mere misunderstood symbols of the old Babylonian astrotheosophy, poetically modified in a slight degree by Greek art. A process which is often philosophically misconceived as primarily one of ethico-philosophical imagination² is thus seen to have been a growth by way of concrete guesses to explain concrete phenomena. The astronomical "allegory" primarily involved had been entirely lost sight of; and only for the later and more educated Christists, apparently, did any new aspect of allegory arise; the immediate framers of the Jesuist myth, presumably, regarding the story as a historical episode, though even here there may have been deliberate trickery at the outset.

§ 11. *The Water-Wine Miracle.*

This, as was long ago pointed out by Dupuis, is certainly an adaptation from the cult of Dionysos. At the nones (the 5th) of January, during the festival of the God, a fountain in the isle of Andros was said to yield wine; and at Elis, at the same festival, there was a custom of publicly placing three empty flagons in a chapel, the door of which was then sealed, with the result that next day, on its being

¹ By Wung Puh, cited by Lillie, *Influence*, p. 44.

² Cp. Bruno Bauer, *Kritik der evangelischen Geschichte*, 2te Aufl. 1846, i. 219-244, and his citations, with J. Estlin Carpenter's *The First Three Gospels*, 2nd. ed. pp. 171-6.

reopened, the flagons were found full of wine. This ritual-miracle is certainly very ancient, an account of it being quoted by Athenæus¹ from Theopompus the Chian, who flourished about 350 B.C. The meaning of the ritual is obvious. Dionysos, as Sun-God and Wine-God, was the maker of wine, and was also that force which in Nature actually changes water into wine by transmuting sap into grape-juice. And there is reason to suppose from a passage in Pausanias that some such quasi-miracle was regularly performed in the Eleusinian mysteries. At the end of his long account of the paintings of Polygnotus at Delphi we have this: "There is also a wine-jar in the painting, and an old man, and a boy, and two women, a young woman under a rock, and an old woman near the old man. Some men are bringing water, and the old woman's water-pot appears to be broken, and she is pouring all the water in the pitcher into the wine-jar. *One is inclined to conjecture that they are people making a mock of the Eleusinian mysteries.*"² That can hardly have been the intention; but it is clear that the mysteries involved some procedure with water and wine-jars,³ and the Christian myth is a bold appropriation of the heathen God's prestige. The fact that the Catholic Church places the Cana miracle on 6th January tells its own tale. Twelfth Night in pre-Christian as in Christian times was a date of crowning festivity; and it is to be noted on the mythological side that the "first miracle" is wrought when the Sun-God is twelve days old, even as his appearance in "the temple" is made at twelve years. As we have seen,⁴ the one date stood for

¹ B. i. c. 61. Compare Pausanias, vi. 26; and Pliny, *Hist. Nat.* ii. 106 (103), xxxi. 13. Diodorus Siculus, iii. 66 (65), tells also that in Teos at fixed dates a richly odorous well flows with wine, which the people say is proof that Dionysos was born there. Cp. Horace, *Odes*, ii. xix. 10; Euripides, *Bacchæ*, 704 ff. The idea occurs again in the Homeridian Hymn, where wine flows through the ship in which the God is captive.

² Pausanias, x. 31.

³ Mr. Frazer, in his admirable commentary on Pausanias, does not deal with this implication, but very appositely cites Plato (*Gorgias*, 493b) as saying that in Hades the uninitiated carry water in a sieve to a broken jar. This does not alter the presumption that Pausanias knew of a procedure of pouring water into *wine-jars* in the mysteries.

⁴ Above, p. 173.

four kinds of Epiphany or manifestation of the God—the miracle, the star of the Magi, the baptism with its dove, and the nativity itself, so long held by the Eastern Church to be on 6th January. All four ideas were alike Pagan.

§ 12. *The Scourging of the Money-Changers.*

It has often been shown that this story is wildly improbable as a piece of history. It may be further urged that in all probability it was invented, like so many other narratives, to explain a myth. In the Assyrian and Egyptian systems a scourge-bearing God is a very common figure on the monuments; and though the scourge is an attribute of the Egyptian God Chem,¹ it is specially associated with Osiris, the Saviour, Judge, and Avenger, who also carries the shepherd's crook or crozier.² A sculpture of Osiris menacing or chastising thieves, or anybody else, would suffice to motive the Gospel fiction.

§ 13. *The Walking on the Water.*

Here too the concrete basis of the myth is easily found. Poseidon, as God of the Sea, was frequently represented as "draped, and swiftly but softly striding over the surface of the sea, a peaceful ruler of the realm of billows."³ Even the association of Peter, "the Rock," with the Christian myth might be due to the occasional representation of the Sea-God as resting his foot on a rock.⁴ Yet again Dionysos, whose popular cult supplied the Christists with their water-wine miracle, is represented in myth as passing over the sea to return to his followers.⁵ This episode too was likely to be represented in religious art. And finally there is the story of Hercules crossing the sea in the cup of the Sun, going to Erythea: "And when he was at sea,

¹ Sharpe's *Egyptian Mythology*, Fig. 5 and 81.

² *Id.* Fig. 13, 23, 63, 70, 71, 72.

³ K. O. Müller's *Ancient Art*, as cited, p. 432.

⁴ *Id.* pp. 432-3.

⁵ Diodorus Siculus, iii. 65.

Oceanus, to tempt him, appeared to him in visible form, tossing his cup about in the waves; and he then was on the point of shooting Oceanus; but Oceanus being frightened desired him to forbear."¹ In the context, more appropriately, it is Hercules who is afraid; and this would be the natural purport of the episode in art. To the child-like imagination of the early Christists, or to the cult-building ingenuity of their leaders, all such representations were so much natural matter for the construction of their own mythology.

§ 14. *The Healing of Two Blind Men.*

It is needless to cite pre-Christian miracles of raising from the dead, since such miracles were recorded not only among the Greeks (chiefly in connection with Æsculapius), but in the sacred books of the Jews. It is more to the purpose to point out that the healing of the two blind men is probably a Jesuist plagiarism from the cult of Æsculapius. There is extant an inscription found in the ruins of a temple of Æsculapius at Rome, which proclaims that that deity had among other cures in the reign of Antoninus restored two blind men to sight.² Similar tales must have abounded in Æsculapian temples. This prodigy, thus originated, is related twice over in Matthew, with a curious difference. In one telling (ix. 27–31), Jesus is represented as “sternly threatening” (the translations dilute the force of the Greek words) the healed men, and commanding that they shall let no man know of their cure. In the other version (xx. 30–34) Jesus performs the miracle in the presence of a multitude, and there is no pretence of their being ordered to keep silence. In all probability the latter version, based on some story about

¹ Athenæus, xi. 39, citing Pherecydes.

² See the whole inscription in Boeckh, No. 5980; Gruter, *Inscr. Antiq.* ed. 1707, i. p. lxi.; Montfaucon, *Antiq. Expliq.* T. ii. pt. i. p. 247. Four cures are mentioned, those of the blind men being first and last. In the first case the populace are said to have seen the cure performed; in both, the cured men return thanks.

Æsculapius, was adopted first; and the other was interpolated later by way of providing against the cavils of inquirers who could find no local testimony to the miracle. The story of the curing of *one* blind man in the second and third Gospels¹ may easily have had a similar pagan basis; and the name, probably added late to the version of Mark, might even be copied from one of the actual votive tablets which abounded in the pagan temples.²

probable

§ 15. *Other Myths of Healing and Resurrection.*

There are obvious reasons for surmising, further, that other miracle stories in the Gospels were adapted in the same way from Pagan originals. The fact that the most remarkable miracles of all, the raisings of dead men, are each found in one Gospel only, points to their late interpolation, and strongly suggests non-Jesuist precedents. The raising of the Widow's Son at Nain, it has been already urged,³ is in all probability a variant of the common myth of the raising of the slain young Sun-God, reduced to the status of a private prodigy, as in the myths of Elijah and Elisha. On this view, it will be observed, the gospel-makers are absolved from the charge of fabrication; for had they been bent on invention they could easily have framed many more miracle-tales. The fact that they specify so few raisings from the dead goes to prove that they set down in unreasoning good faith simply the narratives they found current concerning Hebrew and pagan prophets, giving Jesus the glory as a matter of course. The story of Lazarus, indeed, like other parts of the Fourth Gospel, seems to be in part a newly-planned fiction; but the synoptics were compiled on less original lines. It is needless to point out to the rationalist reader that if the compilers of Luke had heard of the story of Jesus raising one Lazarus from the dead, or of Jesus' acquaintance with him (John xi. xii.), they could not conceivably have told

¹ Mark x. 47-8; Luke xviii. 38-9.

² Pausanias ii. 28; Strabo viii. 6, § 15.

³ Above, pp. 259-260.

the parable of Lazarus and the rich man (xvi. 20) or the story of Martha and Mary (x. 38-42) without alluding to the miracle. On the same principle, we may decide that the story of the raising of the widow's son was added late to Luke.

The story of the raising of Jairus' daughter raises a more complex problem. A closely similar story is found in Philostratus' Life of Apollonius of Tyana,¹ the girl in each case being spoken of in such a way as to leave open the question of her having been dead or cataleptic. It is of course impossible to demonstrate that Philostratus, who wrote after the Gospels existed, did not take the story thence; but there are good reasons for thinking that he found it in the earlier Life of Apollonius which he professedly followed, and that it had been connected with Apollonius after having been told of other thaumaturgs in Rome. The girl in that story is a Roman, and is described as being of a consular (*ὑπάτους*) family. In Matthew,² the statement is that there came to Jesus "a ruler" (*ἄρχων*) or "a certain ruler" (*ἄρχων εἰς*) who worshipped him and besought him to restore his daughter to life; and that Jesus did so by simply taking the girl's hand. In Mark³ the father has become "one of the rulers (heads) of the synagogue, Jairus by name"; while in the sequel we have three times over "the ruler of the synagogue" *without* the name Jairus; and now Jesus uses the formula *Talitha coum*. In Luke, again,⁴ the father is "a man named Jairus, and he was ruler of the synagogue," though here again the designation is repeated without the name. Now the simple form preserved in Matthew reveals the derivation from the story in Philostratus. The *archon* is just the ancestral *ὑπάτος* of that story brought a stage nearer biographical identification. And seeing that such a story was unsatisfactorily vague for Jerusalem, where there were no archons proper, it was necessary to secure local colour by making the father *εἰς τῶν ἀρχισυναγώγων*, one of the chiefs of the synagogue. In Luke he is simply

¹ B. iv. c. 45.² ix. 18 ff.³ v. 22.⁴ viii. 41.

ἀρχων τῆς συναγωγῆς, “chief of the synagogue,” as if there were no others—an evident Gentile blunder, which had to be rectified in Mark. The addition of the name Jairus is evidently the last touch of all. And after all the God is represented as having “charged them that no one should know this,” the usual judicious precaution against the cavils of the unbelievers who found that nobody in the district could verify the miracle. Arnobius,¹ reciting a series of Jesuine miracles, some of which are not found in the Gospels, makes no mention of this one: and Lactantius,² in a similar list, describes neither the miracle of the widow’s son nor that of Lazarus, and has no allusion to any such case as the raising of Jairus’ daughter.

Note

§ 16. *The Feeding of the Five Thousand.*

By all save believers in a supernatural Christ, the story of the feeding of the five thousand or four thousand is taken either as pure myth or as a grafting of miracle on a perfectly natural episode. Count Tolstoy and others have pointed out that the detail of the twelve (or seven) baskets plainly implies that food supplies had been carried by the crowd, since they certainly would not have gone into the wilderness with empty baskets. On this view, the original form of the story was something like that of John, vi. 9: “One lad here has five loaves and two fishes”—with the implication, “and so on throughout the crowd.” In the same fashion the semi-rationalizing critics would reduce the five thousand men, to whom Matthew (xiv. 21) adds a host of “women and children,” to a mere uncounted crowd, besides putting aside the “three days” (Mk. viii. 2) of previous fasting in the story of the four thousand. The stories being, further, so obviously identical in all save the numbers, the two are by such criticism reduced to one. But while this last step is obviously right, the story remains a myth even as regards the bare act of teaching a multitude in the desert.

¹ *Adversus Gentes*, i. 45, 46.

² *Div. Inst.* iv. 15.

It is notable that, while a discourse is put in the mouth of Jesus on the mount, not a word is given of the "many things" he taught the multitudes fed in the wilderness. So nugatory, on the face of the case, was the machinery for preserving the teacher's utterances. To retain, out of such a self-confuting record, the bare datum that the teacher *did* teach crowds something in the wilderness, would seem a sufficiently idle procedure. There is in reality no reason to regard any part of the story as aught save an attempt to parallel, or an unthinking adaptation of, the stories of Dionysos passing through the desert with *his* followers. As we have seen in tracing the myth of the Temptation, Dionysos in the Libyan lore led his army through a waterless desert against the Titans—a procedure which would involve his supernatural production of liquids—and in this connection it is told¹ that the friendly Libyans gave his army food "in superfluity." But it is part of the Dionysiak myth that the God gave the power of miraculously producing, by touch, corn and wine and oil;² and he must needs have been held to have the same power in his own person for the feeding of his host. Pictures of such a distribution of food, with or without a representation of Dionysos in the act, would sufficiently suggest the Christian story, in which, significantly enough, the multitude are described in the second and third Gospels as sitting down "by companies" or "by fifties," in military fashion. In the earlier form of the story, however, as in Matthew, this would not appear: because for the Christist purpose the miracle is not an excrescence but the primary motive. Without it, there is nothing to tell; and the doubling of the story tells of the capital made of such "evidence."

§ 17. *The Anointing.*

As a non-miraculous episode, the story of the anointing of Jesus by a woman has been accepted by some Naturalists as historical, for the sake of its peculiar dramatic and moral

¹ Diodorus Siculus, iii. 72 (71).

² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, xiii. 650-4.

interest. Yet a moment's comparison of the different versions¹ shows that we are dealing with at least a measure of fiction. In Matthew and Mark we have the same story, almost word for word: a woman pours precious nard over the teacher's head: the disciples—or some other bystanders—murmur at the waste; and Jesus commends the woman. He speaks prophetically in his Messianic capacity, not as a human being: the utterance is mythic. In Luke, the woman, described now as "a sinner," kisses his feet, weeps over them, wipes them with her hair, and anoints the feet, not the head. In the fourth Gospel, Mary anoints the feet, and wipes them with her hair, but does not weep. In Matthew and Mark, Jesus says the woman has anointed his body for the burying: in Luke he does not. Which story is to be believed? Shall we say, with some theologians, that there were more anointings than one?

Some such bare incident, though improbable, may certainly have taken place in the life of a popular teacher or mahdi; but we have seen that on every line of investigation thus far tried the Gospel Jesus resolves into a composite of myth; and when yet another story is found to vary extensively in the hands of the different evangel-makers, we are at the very outset debarred from giving it belief as it stands. Not only might the bare story have been true of any teacher, but the comments put in the mouth of Jesus were certainly the composition of a late Jesuist. There is no ground for any specific credence. In the synoptic forms of the story the anointing is simply the act of "a woman"; and John's identification of her with Mary the sister of the mythical Lazarus has no more historical value than the later surmise that she was Mary the Magdalene.

Looking for an origin in the source of so many myths—ritual-mystery²—we have first to ask whether such an episode would be likely in such a ritual. And the answer

¹ Matt. xxvi. 6-13; Mark xiv. 3-9; Luke vii. 36-50; John xi. 2; xii. 3-8. See above, p. 260.

² See above, *Christ and Krishna*, § xiv.

is, first, that *some* process of anointing is extremely likely to have been thus set forth. Jesus was for his sectaries, as early as Paul, Messiah = Christ = the Anointed One; and even for the later Jews the term was ceremonially significant. Many times over does the term "Messiah" occur in the Old Testament in the sense of "anointed," and it is always so translated. Elisha is thus "Messiah";¹ Isaiah calls himself so;² the battle-priest,³ *sacerdos unctus ad bellum*, was duly anointed with oil.⁴ If ever a Messiah were to be nationally accepted by the Jews, he would assuredly have been anointed with priestly oil. But for the earlier Gentile Jesuists, the title of "the Christos" must have had even more concrete meaning than had "Messiah" for the Jews, who may have come to use it in a secondary sense; and for such Gentiles the problem would arise, Why was not the Anointed One really anointed? Here lay the motive for the invention.

As the Gentile Christ was anti-Judaic, he could not be anointed by priestly hands. By whom then should the anointing be done? The hint lay in the myth of the birth and the resurrection ritual; and generally in the great cult of Dionysos, whose special followers are women. Obviously, the story is Gentile, not Jewish: the disciples are disparaged as dull and avaricious: though in the fourth Gospel Judas is made especially to play the unpleasant part. On the other hand, women are repeatedly made to figure in the later interpolations as the teacher's most devoted followers; and to no one more appropriately than to a woman could the anointing be entrusted. Significantly enough, the story in its simplest form is placed as the last item in the "Primitive Gospel" by the school of Weiss. In all probability it is a late addendum, made after the movement had become pronouncedly Gentile. A Jew would have seen nothing edifying in such a performance; whereas a Hellene or Syrian was accustomed to associate women with many rites. It is possible, indeed, that the

¹ 1 Kings xix. 16.

² Isaiah lxi. 1. Cp. Psalm ii. 2.

³ Deut. xx. 2.

⁴ F. and R. Conder's *Handbook to the Bible*, p. 127, citing Maimonides.

whole circumstances of the anointing, including the detail that it took place in the house of "Simon the Leper," were expressly designed to alienate the Judaic sections of the early Church.¹

Supposing such an episode, then, to have been introduced in the primitive mystery-drama of the Man-God's life and death and resurrection, it could easily vary, very much as the story does in the Gospels. One group might make the episode curt and ceremonial, a bare anointing; another might make it pathetic and emotional, the thought of the God's approaching death moving the women to the tears which so easily flowed from them in all of the ancient cults of theanthropic sacrifice. Thus would arise the conception that the Lord was being "anointed for his burial"; the attitude of tearful adoration could readily bring about, in communities not used to the other, an anointing of the feet rather than the more sacerdotal anointing of the head; and the surmise that the weeping woman represented a penitent sinner would as easily follow at a later stage.² A hundred "pagan" myths and myth-variants arose in such wise; and Christism was only neo-Paganism grafted on Judaism.

§ 18. *The Riding on the Ass and Foal.*

As is remarked above, it has long been an accepted view that the odd detail (Matt. xxi.) of the Messiah riding into Jerusalem on "an ass and a colt the foal of an ass" is a mere verbal blunder, representing an unintelligently literal reading of a Hebrew idiom which merely spoke tautologically of "an ass the foal of an ass." Such is the wording of the "prophecy" in Zechariah (ix. 9); a passage which,

¹ See the noteworthy argument of Mr. Glanville, in *The Web Unwoven*, 1900, p. 44, as to the significance of "Simon a tanner" in Acts xi.

² It is not irrelevant to remember how the actress who personated the Goddess of Reason in one of the fêtes of the French Revolution was finally stamped as a courtesan, though there is not the slightest evidence to that effect. In this case the myth was malignant, and the votaries of the creed of the sinners of Jewry considered themselves to have disposed of the Deists by their amiable fiction.

left thus construed, would be as obscure as before. What did *it* signify, either way?

To interpret the passage as an idiomatic tautology when there is no other instance of such a peculiar tautology in the Old Testament, is a sufficiently arbitrary course. On the face of the matter, the Gospel story is a myth, whether we read it of one ass or of two. The teacher is represented as entering Jerusalem for the first time in a triumphal procession, acclaimed as the Son of David, with "a very great multitude" spreading garments and palm branches before him. Not a single item of the story is credible history. In Mark (xi.) and Luke (xix. 30) the two asses become one, the colt never before ridden by man—a detail introduced in a no less mythical fashion, the Messiah exhibiting clairvoyant knowledge, and the owner of the colt showing a mystic obedience to the formula, "The Lord hath need of him." In the fourth Gospel, again, we have simply the colt. Why, when the other three Gospels thus put aside the grotesque detail of the Messiah riding on two asses, was the reading in the first Gospel retained?

The solution lies, not in reducing the passage in Zechariah to an obscure commonplace, but in recognizing that that, to begin with, has a mythic bearing. In all probability it repeats the true reading of the description of Judah in the zodiacal chant put in the mouth of Jacob.¹ In Zechariah the passage occurs in the second of the two parts into which the book divides; but the conservative critics on internal evidence pronounce the passage before us to be very early.² However that may be, it proves the currency in Hebrew circles of a Babylonian zodiacal emblem which at a later period we find wrought into the myth of Dionysos. Among the random elements

¹ Genesis xlix. 11. The rendering "foal" follows the Vulgate, which follows the Septuagint. In this case both would readily avoid the zodiacal parallel. But the authoritative version of De Sola, Lindenthal, and Raphall (London, 1844) reads "ass," explaining that the word means a young ass fit for riding, which is not the sense of "foal." Their rendering is also given by Young, by Cahen, and by Martin. Sharpe alone, among the later translators, tries to make the passage mean "a foal, *even* an ass's colt."

² Bleek-Wellhausen, *Einleitung in das alte Testament*, § 224, 4te Aufl. p. 440.

of that myth is the story that Dionysos, when made mad by Juno, met in his wanderings two asses, mounted on one of which he passed a vast morass, or river, and so reached the temple of Dodona, where he recovered his senses. In gratitude to the two asses he raised them to the rank of a constellation.¹ Here we have a myth to explain the fact that the Greek sign for Cancer in the Zodiac was two asses (a copy of the Babylonian Ass and Foal sign), and, evidently, to explain some pictorial scene in which Dionysos rides on—or with—two asses.

To this collocation of myths the zodiacal sign gives the clue. Dionysos on the two asses is simply the sun in Cancer, the sign which marks his downward course,² as Capricorn marks the beginning of his upward climb. In the Dionysos myth the emblem signifies that the sun in Cancer is passing the period of his raging heat: in that of Jesus it signifies that the Sun-God is at his highest pitch of glory and is coming to his doom, even as the myth of Satan taking him to the mountain-top stands for Pan-Capricorn leading the Sun-God upwards at the outset of his career. The odd phrase in Zechariah and Matthew stood for a gloss of the astronomical symbol, which is at least as old as Babylon,³ where the emblem of the sun in Capricorn was of necessity complemented with one of the sun in the sign of the summer solstice.

Even the reduction of the two asses to one in the second, third, and fourth Gospels is probably no mere rationalization of the story: it is presumptively another adaptation of a symbol. In the Egyptian symbol-lore we have the record that “they make cakes also at the sacrifice of the month Payni (Paoni) and of Phaophi, and print upon them for device *an ass tied*.”⁴ Phaophi (the second month of the

¹ Hyginus, ii. 24; Lactantius, *Div. Inst.* i. 21.

² Cp. Porphyry, *De antro Nympharum*, c. 22, and Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i. 22.

³ See J. Landseer, *Sabean Researches*, 1823, pp. 284, 320. Landseer points out that the Babylonian astronomy followed the precession of the solstices, and placed that of summer in Cancer, represented by the Ass and Foal, and that of winter in Capricorn, while the Hebrews long adhered to the erroneous stations of Leo and Aquarius, the Lion and Man of Ezekiel.

⁴ Plutarch, *I. and O.* 30.

Egyptian year) in the time of Julius Cæsar began on 29th September, which brings us to the autumn equinox; while Payni, the tenth month, beginning on May 26th, would end about the summer solstice—both probable occasions of a solar allusion, but the latter in particular coinciding with the entrance of the sun into Cancer. As the reign of the Night-Sun, or Winter-God, begins from that moment, the single ass on the Egyptian cakes would presumably be his symbol.¹

In Justin Martyr² we have a form of the myth which suggests yet another Dionysiak clue, for he speaks of the ass as tied to a vine, citing the mythic description of Judah “binding his foal to the vine,” omitting, however, the following clause, “and his ass’s colt to the choice vine.” But although the new Jesus of the fourth Gospel is made to say “I am the true Vine,” the ass tied to the vine was doubtless too obviously Bacchic, as indeed is the old picture of Judah (= Leo) with wine-reddened eyes and milk-white teeth; and three of the four evangels adhered to the simple Egyptian motive, leaving the first to preserve the less obvious or more occult Dionysiak glyph, already diverted from Babylonian to Judaic use in the pre-Christian period. And so well was this form recommended to even the educated Christian world of antiquity that we find Saint Proclus, as above noted,³ endorsing the “ass and foal” version in his episcopal sermons in the Constantinople of the fifth century. Further, there is preserved a Gnostic gem representing an ass suckling its foal, with the figure of the crab (Cancer) above, and the inscription D.N. IHV. XPS.: *Dominus Noster Jesus Christus*, with the addition, DEI FILIUS.⁴ The Gnostics knew the significance of the symbol well enough, as doubtless did St. Proclus. But from the time of the framing of the Hebrew zodiacal myth of the Twelve Patriarchs (in which Judah is just the vinous sun in the sign of Leo, next to the sign of the Ass and Foal) down to

¹ See above, pp. 203-4.

² *Apol.* i. 32.

³ Above, p. 230, note 3.

⁴ I am indebted for a copy of this to Heer J. van der Ende, of *De Dageraad*, Amsterdam.

our own day, the Chaldæan symbol has clung to the two religions which claimed to have put off everything human and heathen.

§ 19. *The Myth of the Twelve Apostles.*

On the face of all the Gospels alike, the choosing of the Twelve Apostles is a fictitious narrative; and in the documents from which all scientific study of Christian origins must proceed—the Epistles of Paul—there is no evidence of the existence of such a body. In only one sentence is it mentioned, and that is demonstrably part of a late interpolation. In two passages of the First Epistle to the Corinthians (xi. 23, ff.; xv. 3, ff.) Paul is made to say that he communicated to his converts that which he “received” concerning the Eucharist and the Resurrection. In the first passage he is made to say that he received his knowledge “of the Lord”; in the second that formula is not used. Both are interpolations;¹ but in the second there is one interpolation on another. The passage runs:—

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried; and that he hath been raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; and that he appeared to Cephas; *then to the twelve*; then he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then he appeared to James; *then to all the apostles*; and last of all, as unto one born out of due time, he appeared to me also.”²

Seeing that the “five hundred” story is not found in any of the Gospels, we are forced to infer that it was not in Paul’s epistle until long after they were composed; for such a testimony, thus made current, would have been too welcome to be neglected. But the further mention of an

¹ See below, § 22. This view, first put by me in 1886, I have since found to be held, as regards the passages singly, by W. Seufert (in *Der Ursprung und die Bedeutung des Apostolates in der christlichen Kirche*, 1887, p. 46), and by Sir G. W. Cox (lecture in *Religious Systems of the World*, 3rd ed. p. 242). It has doubtless been put by others.

² It is not unlikely that the whole fifteenth chapter is an [interpolation; but I deal here only with the essential portion.

apparition before "all the apostles" is a proof that the previous phrase, "then to the twelve," did not exist in the first interpolation. Had the passage been consecutively penned by one hand, the second phrase would have run "then again to the twelve," or "to the eleven." The mention of "the twelve" is thus the last addition of all; and as this is the one occurrence of the word in the whole Pauline literature, the case is decisively clear.

Paul, then, knew nothing of a "twelve." In the Epistle to the Galatians, which is probably genuine, though frequently interpolated, he speaks of the "chiefest apostles" and the "pillars," and names Cephas,¹ James, and John, but nothing more. Nowhere, again, does he speak of the other apostles as having been in direct intercourse with Jesus. His references are simply to leaders of an existing sect; and the opening sentence² of the Epistle to the Galatians, speaking as it does of apostles sent out by "a man," has presumptive reference to the twelve apostles of the Patriarch, of whom he must have had knowledge. In fine, the word "apostle" for Paul had simply its general meaning of "messenger" or "missionary"; and in all his allusions to the movement of his day he is dealing with Judaizing apostles who preached circumcision—a practice not once enjoined in the Jesuine discourses in the Gospels. To the Gospels then we next turn, only to find palpable myth.

In the Fourth Gospel, supposed to come from "one of the Twelve," Jesus is represented as having collected five disciples, two of them taken from John the Baptist, within three days of his first public appearance (the mythic baptism), and as being there and then "bidden with his disciples to the marriage in Cana of Galilee." Whether or not there was ever a teaching Jesus with twelve disciples, this is fiction. And here it is that we are told how Jesus told Simon on the instant that henceforth his name should

¹ In ii. 7, 8, we have mention of "Peter," though "Cephas" is named immediately after. The former passage is to all appearance a late Gentile interpolation.

² This may or may not be spurious: on either view the argument against the early currency of the "twelve" story is the same.

be Cephas, which being interpreted is Petros (= the Rock). Soon after (vi. 60) we find that the disciples are "many"; and yet in that very context Jesus is suddenly made to address "the twelve." There has been no previous hint of the choosing of that number. The twelve are as mythically presented as the five.

In the synoptics the case is no better. In Matthew iv. 18-22, Mark i. 16-20, and Luke v. 1-11, we have one ground-story—nearly identical in the two first, embellished in Luke by a miracle, which in the fourth gospel (xxi. 1-14) figures as an episode after the resurrection—of the election of certain fishermen, who, without a word of instruction, and without the slightest preliminary knowledge of the Messiah, follow him on his bare command, to be made "fishers of men." In Matthew these are four; "Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother," and James and John, sons of Zebedee; in Mark the same, save that Simon is not called Peter, this surname being given him only on his election to the twelve (iii. 16); while in Luke there are only three, Andrew being excluded. From these circumstantial beginnings we advance all along the line by a leap to the appointment of "the twelve"; and even here we have significant variations in the MSS., some reading, in Luke ix. 1, "his twelve disciples," some "the twelve," some "the twelve apostles." Again, Matthew ix. 9 has an isolated story of the call of Matthew the publican; who in Mark ii. 14 becomes Levi the son of Alphæus, and in Luke v. 27 simply Levi; the story being substantially and in large part verbally the same, though the name varies. Between these quasi-circumstantial details, each bringing the others into discredit, and the collective mention of the twelve, there is no pretence of connection. In Matthew x. 1 we have the abrupt and fragmentary intimation: "And when he had called unto him *his twelve disciples*," followed by the list. In Mark iii. 13-19 the hiatus is filled up in a fashion still more suspicious: "And he goeth up *into the mountain*, and calleth unto him whom he himself would. *And he appointed twelve*"; while in Luke vi. 12-13 Jesus prays all night; "And when it was day, he called his disciples: and

he chose from them twelve, whom also he named apostles." It is surely plain that, whatever may have been the source of the stories of the fishermen and of Matthew, the introduction of the twelve is arbitrary and unhistorical all over the ground. The slightness of the variations in the lists given in the synoptics only proves community of source to begin with, and therefore collapse of evidence; the variations further proving the degree of freedom with which the texts could be treated if any reason seemed to arise for altering them.¹

The critical presumption from the documents, then, is that all four Gospels alike, or at least the first, second, and fourth, originally had no mention of twelve disciples. In John the number is thrust in with a suddenness which is conclusive; but the slightly more considerate introduction of it in the synoptics only proves a little more concern to make the statement plausible. Luke, if not interpolated at this point, either proceeds on Mark or upon a mystery-drama which may have been the first Jesuist form of the myth. But for such a mystery, or for a first specification of twelve disciples, the obvious motive lay in the actual Jewish institution of Twelve Apostles of the Patriarch or High Priest, an institution which preceded and survived the Christian myth;² and the point at which the myth grows out of the Jewish historical fact is demonstrably the all-important ancient document entitled *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, recovered in 1873 by Monsignor Philotheos Bryennios, Metropolitan of Nicomedia, and published by him in 1883.

As to that document, of the genuineness of which there is no doubt, it is certain that at least the first six paragraphs are purely and unmingledly Judaic,³ since they have not a

¹ *E.g.*, the tampering with the names Lebbaeus and Thaddeus in Matt. x. 3. Such insertions may have been made by way of flattering certain families or dignitaries with a show of apostolic heredity.

² Cp. Basnage, *Histoire des Juifs*, ed. 1716, liv. ii. ch. ii. §§ 7, 8, and liv. iii. ch. ii. §§ 10, 11; Milman, *History of the Jews*, 1-vol. ed. p. 453; Mosheim *Commentaries on the Affairs of the Christians*, Vidal's trans. i. 121; Jost, *Geschichte des Judenthums*, 1850, ii. 159-60; Kitto's Cyc. of Bib. Lit. art. *Apostle*.

³ See the author's articles in *National Reformer*, May 8th and 15th, 1887.

syllable about Jesus, or the Messiah, or the Son of God; and it has been further shown¹ that in all reasonable probability this document represented the teaching carried to the dispersed Jews by the twelve Jewish Apostles aforesaid, who were commissioned by the High Priest to collect tribute from the scattered faithful. No other explanation will square with the remarkable facts of the case. Let the student try to find an escape in any of the following hypotheses, which seem to be the only ones open on the Christian side: (1) That the twelve disciples of the Christian legend drew up a "Teaching" which proceeded for six paragraphs, nearly half its length, in detailed ethical exhortation, without a word about Jesus or the Christ or a Son of God, and then suddenly plunged into a formula of baptism, naming the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, without saying who the Son was; (2) That such a document, after being widely circulated, was allowed by the Church to fall into oblivion while believed to be genuine; (3) That post-Apostolic Christists, seeking to forge a "Teaching of (*their*) Twelve Apostles," took the course of making the first six paragraphs absolutely Christless, as aforesaid. All three of those hypotheses being plainly untenable, we are shut up to these conclusions: (1) That at least the first six chapters went to form a document originally entitled *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, and that the document was non-Christian; (2) That the Twelve Apostles were strictly Judaic, and that this was an official teaching promulgated by them; (3) That the Jesuist sect adopted this teaching in the first or second century, founded on it the Christian myth of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus, and gradually added to it; and (4) that after a time the organized Church decided to drop the document because its purely Judaic origin and drift were plain on the face of it. Only one MS. has come down to us, though there are various references, in Athanasius and elsewhere,

Compare Dr. C. Taylor's lectures on the Teaching (Cambridge, 1886) and the admissions of the Rev. J. Heron, *Church of the sub-Apostolic Age*, p. 57, and Dr. Salmon, cited by Mr. Heron (p. 58).

¹ *National Reformer*, November 20th and 27th, and December 4th, 1887.

showing that in the fourth century the document was still familiar.

We may now, then, trace with some confidence the course of the myth. In the earliest form of the Gospels, by the admission of the school of Weiss, there was no naming of any special disciples, though they assume mention of disciples in general. On this view it is plainly inconsistent to set forth as part of the "primitive" text the phrase, "And when Jesus had called unto him his twelve disciples," with what follows.¹ The message given to the twelve is conspicuously mythical; and the number twelve is demonstrably a late item. The first stage was the mention of the suddenly enlisted fishermen, itself quite unhistorical, but possibly motivated by a late memory of the circumstance that men so named were among the leaders of the Jesuist community in its pre-Pauline days. Concerning the story of Simon being mystically surnamed Cephas, there can be no conclusion save that we are in contact with a purposive myth. On this head there is no help from the Talmud, which ascribes to the early Jeschu ben Pandira *five* disciples, named Matthai, Nakai, Netzer, Boni, and Thoda.² Here there is reason to suspect a late Rabbinical myth, loosely based, as regards four of the five, on the names Matthew and Mark, and on the sect-names of the Nazarenes and Ebionites. And as John names five primary disciples, Matthew and Mark four, and Luke three, we have no sign even of a tradition as to any ancient group of Jesuist disciples.

That the primary myth sufficed for generations is clear from the fact that even the late Fourth Gospel had not incorporated the myth of the Twelve. That myth, in fact, could not arise until the movement had developed so far in Gentile directions that the solid historical fact of the existence and continued activity of the Jewish Twelve Apostles was practically lost sight of—that is, by the laity; for the heads of the Christian Churches must have known it well enough. To the later Gentile Fathers, of course, it would

¹ Jolley, *The Synoptic Problem*, p. 56.

² Cp. Reichardt, as cited, p. 7; Baring-Gould, as cited, p. 61.

seem quite natural that Jesus should name Twelve Apostles by way of superseding the Judaic institution—the view which recommended itself to Mosheim. But the Gospel-makers, as we have seen, could attain no more plausible adjustment than the bald pretence that Jesus suddenly chose twelve disciples out of a larger number, leaving the rest to shift for themselves. So clumsily and arbitrarily was the work done that the list leaves out the Levi mentioned in Mark and Luke.

In the first chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we meet with another crude fiction of the same order in the statement that after the death of Judas the eleven decided to make up their number by lot, the choice falling upon Matthias. It is hardly necessary to dwell on the fictitiousness of the detail. Had there really been twelve Apostles whose number was to be kept up, it ought to have been renewed after the first deaths in the circle; but it is not even pretended that this happened; and most of the Twelve thenceforth pass out of all scriptural notice, to be supplied with martyrdoms, however, by the credulity and the imagination of later ages. The election of Matthias was simply an expedient to meet the difficulty that the Judas story took away from the number of the Twelve Teachers. The "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" being long an accredited document among Christists, the list had to be ceremonially completed in the fictitious Apostle-history, after Judas's exemplary death. Thus do the "twelve respectable men" of Paley's apologetics finally melt "into thin air"; and the mythic Founder, deprived of his mythic cortège, is once more lost in the mists of antiquity, there being now no documentary foothold left for the theory that his teachings were preserved by followers.

If the reader still scruples to believe that such a myth could be thus imposed on the Gospel history, let him ask himself for an explanation of the story of the mission of "the seventy." That story occurs in the third gospel only (c. x.), and is as certainly mythical as any item in the New Testament; so obviously so that even orthodox

scholarship is fain to abandon it; and semi-conservative criticism accounts for it as "an allegory of the preaching to the Gentiles."¹ It visibly connects with the Jewish idea that there were seventy nations in the world, with the myth of the "seventy elders," and with the number of members of the Sanhedrim.² More clearly is this the case when we note that many MSS. have the reading "seventy-two," adopted in the Vulgate; for the later Jews varied between seventy and seventy-two in their legendary arithmetic.³ There is reason to suspect, however, that for the seventy myth, as for that of the twelve, there lay a motive in the actual practice of the Jewish Synagogue before and after the rise of Jesuism. There is evidence that the flow of tribute to Jerusalem from the Jews scattered throughout the Asiatic and Roman empires was great and constant;⁴ and to collect such a revenue Twelve Apostles way well have been inadequate. In that case the High Priest—or later the Patriarch—was likely enough to appoint seventy or seventy-two apostles of lower grade, answering to the accepted number of the "nations," to do the primary work of collection;⁵ and the later gospel-makers had a motive to exhibit Christ as duplicating or superseding such a Jewish institution as well as that of the Twelve.

But whether the Gospel myth be thus based, or framed merely on the theoretic basis of the seventy or seventy-two nations, myth it certainly is. If, then, such a circumstantial fiction of seventy apostles could be grafted on the narrative, and if yet later fiction could supply a list of the names of the seventy, where is the improbability of an earlier and similar grafting-on of a myth of Twelve Apostles? That it *could* be done is clear; and there

¹ J. E. Carpenter, *The First Three Gospels*, 2nd ed. p. 331.

² Strauss, *Leben Jesu*, Abs. ii. K. v. § 75, end. Cp. Carpenter, as cited.

³ Lightfoot, *Horæ Hebraicæ: in Luc.* x. 1.

⁴ Josephus, *Antiquities*, b. xiv. c. x. §§ 1, 6, 8, 12, 13, 14, 17, 21, 23, 24, 25; b. xvi. c. vi. §§ 3-7. Cp. Philo, *Legation to Caius (On Ambassadors)* cc. 31, 36, 40.

⁵ Philo (as cited, c. 31) expressly speaks of sacred officers (*hieropompoi*) as being sent every year to convey to the temple the gold and silver collected from all the subordinate governments, and he describes the process as being highly laborious.

remains nothing but to accept the clear proof that it was.

§ 20. *The Characteristics of Peter.*

One of the more pressing perplexities of the Gospel narrative, from any point of view, is the peculiar status accorded to Peter, and the striking discordance between some of the Gospel accounts of him and his later standing, as well as between the different parts of the Gospel accounts themselves. He, the leading apostle, said to be chosen by his master as the foundation of his Church, is represented in all the Gospels as having denied that master in a cowardly and discreditable fashion. Early in the Acts, again, we find him not only holding a foremost place in the new movement, but working a miracle-murder on two members whose offence, on any possible view, was much less heinous than his own recent treason. The Acts story is of course clearly unhistorical; but even as a fiction, it raises the difficulty as to how any one who knew the cock-crow story to be current could have written it without a word of misgiving. Still more difficult is it to suppose, however, that if the Gospel Peter were the Cephas of Paul's epistles the latter would not have made some use of the treason story by way of resisting Peter's pretensions. In the Gospels the story is of a most damning kind: why is it never heard of outside these? Paul avows his sins as a persecutor; Peter never once mentions his as a renegade. It is impossible, in all the circumstances, to believe that the treason story was in existence in Paul's time. Once more we find that for Paul there is no trace of any personal connection between the apostles and the Founder.

In seeking to account for the invention of the story, I do not attempt to solve the problem of the historical existence of Peter—a problem still left open after the able demonstration by Baur and his school of the existence of a conflict between a Petrine and a Pauline body in the early Church. The present inquiry has shown reason for rejecting as fictitious many data which Baur accepted

as historical; and in particular the legendary conception of the Twelve Apostles has had to be parted with. Further, however, it is impossible to connect the historical Cephas at any point with the legendary Simon Peter of the Gospels and Acts, or to connect either with the writer of the First Epistle of Peter—not to speak of the presumptively forged Second Epistle. Paul's Cephas is simply one of the apostles of a Judaic cult that preaches circumcision, not one of the pupils and companions of the crucified Jesus. Finally, there is found to exist an obvious Pagan basis for the main features of the Petrine myth as developed in the Gospels.

To begin with, there is decisive evidence that one important item in the myth, the appointment of Peter by the Christ as foundation of the Church, was added late to the Gospels as they stand. The use of the word *ecclesia*, which appears nowhere in the Gospels save in this and one other interpolated passage in Matthew (xvi. 18; xviii. 17), is a clear proof of late fabrication; and the passage appears not to have existed in Tatian's Diatessaron. There can be little doubt that this peculiar myth is motivated by the doctrine of the divine rock in Mithraism, which system, as we shall see, furnished to Christianity its doctrine of the Lord's Supper and a large part of its resurrection legend. And the mythical bestowal on Peter of the keys of heaven and hell, the power of binding and loosing on earth and heaven, points still more pressingly to the same source, seeing that Mithras in the monuments bears two keys, which clearly connect with the further symbols of raised and lowered torches, standing for life and death. Here in Mithraism, it may be conjectured, lies the point of union between the Christist myth of Peter in its earlier form and the developed forms given to it at Rome.

It is one of the many valuable solutions long ago advanced by Dupuis, that Peter's legend is substantially constructed on the basis of the Roman myth of Janus. Janus, like Peter, bears the keys and the rod; and as opener of the year (hence the name January) he stands at the head of the twelve months, as Peter stands at the head

of the Twelve Apostles. The name of Janus doubtless caused him to be reputed the God of doors (*janua*, a door); but he is historically an ancient Italic Sun-God, and he held a very high place in the Roman pantheon, being even paired with Jupiter as the beginning of things, while Jupiter was the highest.¹ He was indeed a "God of Gods,"² and in this view was the Cause as well as the Beginning, though his cultus lost ground before that of Jupiter. Originally Dianus,³ the Sun-God, as Diana was Moon-Goddess, he came to hold a subordinate though always a popular place in the God-group, and was for the later Roman world especially the Key-keeper, the Opener (*Patulcius*) and Closer (*Clusius*).⁴ Doubtless these attributes are originally solar, as Preller decides, the sun being the opener and closer of the day;⁵ only they become specialised in Janus. He is *Deus Claviger*, the key-bearing God; and as *coelestis janitor aulae*, the gate-keeper of the heavenly palace, he looks *Eoas partes, Hesperiasque simul*, at once on the eastern and the western parts; hence his double head in his images.⁶ Not only does he thus control the downward and the upward ways, but it is given to him, as Ovid makes him say, to govern, to bind or loose, open or close, all things in heaven, on earth, on the seas, and throughout the universe:

" Quidquid ubique vides, coelum, mare, nubila, terras ;
 Omnia sunt nostra clausa patentque manu.
 Me penes est unum vasti custodia mundi,
 Et jus vertendi cardinis omne meum est."⁷

It is he who makes peace and lets loose war. Jupiter himself only goes forth and returns by his functioning. To him, therefore, are paid the first offerings, as controlling the means of access to the Gods.⁸ There could not be a more exact parallel to the Petrine claims; and the

¹ Varro, quoted by Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, vii. 9. See all the other ancient data as to Janus in Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, 1865, pp. 57, 148, 164. Cp. Keightley, *Mythology of Ancient Greece and Italy*, 2nd ed. pp. 521-3.

² Macrobius, *Saturnalia*, i. 9. ³ *Id. ib.*

⁴ Ovid, *Fasti*, i. 129-130; Macrobius, as cited.

⁵ Cp. Horace, *Carmen Sæculare*, 9-10.

⁶ *Fasti*, i. 228, 139-140; Macrobius, as cited.

⁷ *Fasti*, i. 117-120.

⁸ Macrobius, as cited.

correspondence is extended to minor attributes. As the mythical Peter is a fisherman, so to Janus, on coins, belongs the symbol of a barque,¹ and he is the God of havens. Further, he is the source or deity of wells, rivers, and streams. It is not unlikely, by the way, that a representation of Janus beside Poseidon, in his capacity of sea-regent, may have motived the introduction of Peter into the myth of Jesus walking on the waves, though, as before suggested, the Rock may have given the idea.

Now, if we assume the first elements of the Petrine myth to have come from Mithraism, it becomes easy to understand how, thus started, it should be closely assimilated in Rome to the myth of Janus. Of all the foreign cults of the empire, none seems to have made more headway in official Rome than the Mithraic; and whether before or after the decline of Mithraism, as being the religion of the Persian enemy, the adaptation of the Mithraic features to the strictly Roman cult of Janus would be both natural and easy. Christism, by embracing both, would secure a special hold on the all-important army, since Mithra and Janus were pre-eminently the military deities. Such a combination in the person of the mythic founder of the Church of Rome was an obviously telling stroke of strategy.

These origins of the Christian myth lie on the face of the cults; but it has not been noticed, I believe, that the two-faced image of Janus connects alike with the dual aspect of Mithra, who is two-sexed, and the myth of Peter's repudiation of Jesus. The epithet *bifrons*, two-faced, does not seem to have become for the Romans, as it is for us, a term signifying treachery or duplicity; doubtless because Janus, to whom it belonged, was a benign God. For minds, however, which were about the business of forming myths in explanation of old ritual and old statuary, but doing so in connection with a new cult which rejected the old theosophies, nothing could be more natural than the surmise that the personage with two faces, looking forward and backward, had been guilty of some act of double-dealing.

¹ *Id.* 229-230.

The concoction of such explanations was the life-work of the later Pagan mystics as of the Talmudists; and the rise of the Christian Gnostic sects was only the inevitable extension in the new system of the tendencies which had been at work in the old ones, and which had affected it from the first. It is impossible to overrate either the simple-mindedness or the ignorance of the early Christians; in whose intellectual life the influence of their Pagan surroundings is a constant feature. It is no longer disputed that their early art is wholly a reflex of the Pagan; and their culture was certainly on a lower plane. "Faults of language and of orthography abound in the Christian inscriptions more than in those of Paganism which belong to the same epoch."¹ We have seen how they appropriated to their Saviour-God the ancient miracles of Dionysos and Æsculapius, and the attributes of Poseidon: it was only another step in the same process to identify with the chief of their Twelve Apostles the at once subordinate and pre-eminent Janus of the Roman world, who (himself Winter) led the three seasons of the year as well as the twelve months.

Precisely how the attributes of a Roman deity came to be ascribed to the Jesuist apostle it is of course impossible to show in detail. But the first point of contact may conceivably have been the Greek myth of Proteus, who passed as the Hellenic equivalent of Janus. He, too, singularly enough, bears the keys of things, and, being "first," is entrusted by Nature with the power over all.² As Sea-God he walked on the waves, and as the ever-changing one he stood for fickleness—this being doubtless the characteristic which, with his keys, made him for the Romans the parallel of Janus; like whom, further, he knew things past and to come. The very name of Proteus, with its connotation, might serve for a hostile sect as an antithetic name to Petros, the rock.

There are two ways, then, in which the story of Peter's

¹ Raoul Rochette, *Tableau des Catacombes de Rome*, 1853, Introd. p. iii.

² See the Orphic hymn to Proteus, the date of which does not affect the point of his attributes.

treachery may conceivably have entered the creed. It might be that his identification with Mithra or Janus, or both, led to the invention of the story as a way of explaining the "two faces"; or, on the other hand, it might be that an early charge of tergiversation against the memory of Peter by a hostile faction in the Church was the cause of his being identified with the two-faced Janus or the fickle Proteus; and that the attributes of key-holding and general vice-gerentship were added later. But there are, as I have shown, insurmountable difficulties in the way of the assumption that the treason story was current in the time of Paul. It is thus certainly a myth; and when we find the other characteristics of Peter obviously borrowed from the attributes of Mithra and Janus and Proteus, it would seem reasonable to suppose that the treason story arose in the same way. As to this, indeed, there can be no certainty. If invented by way of damaging Judaic Christianity, it would still be a myth; and it may have been so invented: though it must have been at a comparatively late period. Had it been floated in the early days of the Church by an anti-Petrine party, the Petrine party must needs have opposed it; but we find it inserted in all the Gospels. Everything points to a late origination, on some basis which raised little or no question of extreme partizanship. That basis, I submit, is found in the two faces of Mithras and the figure of Janus Bifrons, with whom the mythic Peter is otherwise so closely identifiable. On such a basis the story would find easy entrance; and it could well be that an anti-Judaic bias, still surviving in the form it is seen taking in the Acts—that of a sacerdotal tactic of separation from the Judaising Christians—would be gratified by putting a certain blemish on Peter in his pre-Gentile aspect, even while he was retained as head of the Roman Church.

It need only be added that the figure of Janus was one which would meet the Christians of the second and third centuries in many parts of the Empire. The old Janus coins, with the double head on one side and the ship on the other, are said by some writers to have been last struck

in Rome by Pompey; but we have evidence that similar coins were in use in Sicily and Greece; and they are found to have been struck by at least one Emperor, Gallienus.¹ They must have been abundant, for Macrobius tells² how the boys of Rome in tossing pennies always cried "heads or ships," as we cry "heads or tails."

§ 21. *The Myth of Judas Iscariot.*

While the solution of the myth of Peter is complicated and uncertain, that of the myth of the betrayal by Judas lies on the face of the narrative, studied in the light of the established mythopoeic conditions. No non-miraculous detail in the Gospels is more plainly mythic, though none has been more generally accepted as historical.

Broadly stated, the myth of the betrayal is to the effect that the Lord expected and predicted his execution, knew in advance all the details, and went about openly teaching in Jerusalem while his capture was being decided on; yet, nevertheless, Judas secretly arranged with the high-priests to "betray" his master, whom they could easily have seized by day, or followed up by night, without any such assistance. In the normal way of tentative progress, criticism has put aside the supernaturalist details and ignored the practical incredibility of those which remain.³ The Gospel narratives, as usual, are full of discrepancies and divergences, from the point as to the degree of premeditation of Judas's act to that of the manner of his death; but still the myth passes for biographical fact.

Looking for outside corroboration, we find in Paul's Epistles only the interpolated passage describing the establishment of the Lord's Supper (1 Cor. xi. 23-27), where

¹ Athenæus, xv. 46; Preller, as cited, p. 164; K. O. Müller, *Ancient Art*, as cited, p. 549.

² *Saturnalia*, i. 7.

³ While many have argued the injustice of blaming Judas for the fore-planned sacrifice in which he is merely a chosen instrument, I have noted only in Derenbourg (*Essai sur l'histoire et la géographie de la Palestine* 1867, Note ix.) any remark on the complete factitiousness of the narrative of events of the betrayal and trial.

there is allusion to a betrayal, but no mention of Judas. In the recently-recovered apocryphal *Gospel of Peter*, the narrator is made to tell how after the crucifixion "we the twelve disciples of the Lord wept and grieved," no hint being given of any defection by any one of the group. At the stage of the composition of this Gospel, then, the Judas myth was not current. It is true that the later Cainites defended Judas; but here there is not even a hint of the action later disputed over. In the "Primitive Gospel," as restored by conservative criticism, the narrative ends before the period of the betrayal and capture is reached. In fine, Judas, like the Twelve of whom he is one, is a late myth; but the Judas myth is the later of the two.

important

note.

A probable solution, which would dispose of every detail in the problem, lies in the hypothesis of the primitive mystery-play. *There*, where all was poetic and mythic, a "betrayal" of the God would be almost a matter of course, given the primary myth that he died as a sacrifice among the Jews, who would not receive him as their Christ. In the *Gospel of Peter* "the Jews" figure as equivalent factors with Herod and Pilate in the crucifixion; and in a ritual-drama written for an audience so prepared, unnamed Jews would figure as the God's enemies and captors. At a later period, the anti-Jewish animus which led to the presentment of the whole twelve in the Gospel story as deserting their Lord at the supreme moment, would easily develop the idea of the actual treachery of one of the twelve, and to him would be allotted the part of the leading captor, who, to start with, had simply been *Ioudaios*, "a Jew." A bag to hold the reward would be a natural stage-accessory: in this way would arise the further myth that the traitor who "carried the bag" was treasurer of the group, and a miser and thief at that; while out of *Ioudaios* would grow the name *Ioudas*. Details which, presented as biography, are a mere tissue of incredibilities, could thus arise spontaneously as effective episodes in a mystery-drama. There the God would fitly exhibit foreknowledge of his betrayal, and could yet go through the form of asking the betrayer for what he is come. There he could acceptably say to

his captors, in the phraseology of the solar cults, "This is your hour, and the power of darkness." To glose the inconsistencies of the story thus fortuitously framed was left to the compilers: for the uncritical spectators of the primitive mystery-play there was nothing that needed explaining. They believed in the treachery of Judas because they had seen it, and there an end.

§ 22. *The Lord's Supper.*

That the "Lord's Supper" was an imitation of a pre-existing ritual practice lies on the face of Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians (x. 21) and of the earliest patristic evidence. Father Garucci argues¹ for the priority of the Christian rites on the score that, "instead of recognizing that the Christians had copied the usage of the sectaries of Mithras, the Fathers complained that the latter had imitated the Christians"; and that "it is in this way that they explain their [the Pagans'] austerities, their bathings of regeneration, and their symbols of the resurrection of the body." What the Fathers did say in some of the very passages he himself cites was that "the devil" or "devils" had introduced into the religion of Mithra usages similar to those of the Christians.² The very nature of the reproach shows that there could be no pretence of ordinary historical imitation (for in that case there need be no question of the action of devils), but an assumption that the Evil One had conveyed divine secrets to the worshippers of false Gods. Tertullian indeed, in a characteristic passage,³ tells how, when the Christians preached of judgment and heaven and hell, they were scornfully reminded that these things had been already set forth by the poets and philosophers. "Whence is it, then," asks the Father, "that you have all this, so like us, in the poets and philosophers? The

¹ *Mystères du Syncretisme Phrygien*, 1854, p. 53.

² Justin Martyr, 1 *Apol.* 66 (86). Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, 40.

³ *Apol.* 47.

reason simply is, that they have taken from our religion." And his answer to the Pagan claim of originality is a mere reiteration of that of his own side: "If they maintain their sacred mysteries to have sprung from their own minds, in that case ours will be reflections of what are later than themselves, *which by the nature of things is impossible.*" In other cases, the devout Father avowedly believed things *because* they were impossible. Here, however, he is asserting that the Pagans imitated not Christian but Judaic doctrines; and similarly, long before Tertullian, Justin Martyr¹ accuses the Mithraists of having borrowed their doctrine of the divine rock from Daniel and Isaiah; going on to explain that "the deceiving serpent counterfeited" the story of Perseus being born of a virgin—a legend much older than Isaiah. Above all, after giving the story of the Christian Eucharist as he had found it in the "Memoirs of the Apostles" used by him, he writes: "Which the wicked devils have imitated in the mysteries of Mithras, commanding the same thing to be done." In the same way Tertullian, in the passage before cited, declares that the devil "by the mystic rites of his idols vies with even the most essential things of the sacraments of God." Their pretence of Christian priority is thus discredited by their own language; and when they do allege Pagan imitation they reveal their incapacity to judge. Justin goes about to show that Plato got his ideas concerning the Logos from Moses; and that it was the demons who started the idea of setting images of Korê on fountains, by way of perverting the doctrine of Genesis as to the Spirit of the Lord moving on the waters²—a proposition which chances to possess a permanent importance as showing that Justin conceived the Holy Spirit as feminine.) It is after a series of philosophic exploits of this description that he sums up³ that "it is not we who take our opinions from others, but they who take theirs from us."

But even if it were not thus plain from the puerilities of the Fathers that they knew nothing of the history of religious

¹ *Dialogue with Trypho*, 70.

² *1 Apol.* 64.

³ *Id.* 60.

ideas, and that they simply swore to whatever seemed necessary in the interests of the faith, we have the decisive evidence of Paul as to the existence of a Pagan Lord's Supper in his day. "Ye cannot drink," he tells his Corinthian flock, "the cup of the Lord and the cup of dæmons: ye cannot partake of the table of the Lord and of the table of dæmons." Here there is no pretence whatever of imitation on the Pagan side, whether by the providence of the devil or otherwise: there is simply an implicit admission that some Jesuists were disposed to eat a Gentile Lord's Supper. It may be left to the defenders of the faith to say whether it is likely that, in the very beginnings of the Church at Corinth, the Gentiles had already set up an institution originated by a poor and despised sect of Jews.

Paul's position on the Lord's supper, however, has been obscured by tamperings with his text. It is evident that the passage in which he is made to state the origin of the rite (1 Cor. xi. 23-27), or at least the first part of it, is an interpolation—in part a late insertion of the words in Luke (xxii. 19-20), which vv. 24-25 closely follow. No one pretends that the third Gospel was in existence in Paul's time; and the only question is whether Luke copied Paul or a late copyist supplemented Paul from Luke. But to the former view the internal evidence is entirely opposed. As the passage in the epistle stands, it is an obvious parenthesis between the 22nd verse, in which, in his most characteristic style, Paul tells his converts he cannot praise them for their scandalous way of eating the Supper, and the 26th or 28th, in which last he goes on, in natural continuation, "But let a man prove himself," etc. The passage has admittedly been tampered with. The Revised Version drops the words "take, eat" (v. 24), which are lacking in all the most ancient manuscripts; and also the word "broken," mentioning that the latter word is found in "many ancient authorities," but saying nothing whatever about the abandonment of the two others. They were clearly taken from Matt. xxvi. 26; probably at the same time that the "eat" was interpolated in Mark xiv. 22,

whence also the revisers have now dropped it. We are faced by the old question, If dogmatists or copyists made interpolations even in epistles at a comparatively late date, how can it be doubted that they sometimes interpolated successfully in earlier times? Now, the passage in question has every appearance of being an interpolation. It introduces in a strangely abrupt manner Paul's one written description of the origin of the rite, hurriedly yet minutely summarized in the middle of an exhortation, where it was not needed if, as he is made to say, he had already "delivered" the doctrine; and this is done after he had spoken of the communion of the body and blood (x. 16) without any historic allusion. What is specially remarkable is that he is made to say he "received of the Lord" the doctrine he has "delivered." That, save for the words "of the Lord," is precisely the formula which he is made to use in 1 Cor. xv., where either the whole or a part of the chapter is clearly interpolated. Paul's "gospel" elsewhere does not include these details which he there puts forward as specially characteristic; and the double use of the phrase "according to the scriptures," which cannot refer, in the second case at least, to the Old Testament, is eminently significant of intermeddling. According to what "scriptures" save the gospels did Christ rise on the third day; and what scholar now argues that Paul had read the Gospels?

Indeed, all of these closing chapters of First Corinthians, with their abrupt paragraph transitions, their allusions to "the churches" (xiv. 34, 35) at a time when the sect cannot conceivably have had "churches" in Corinth; their oddly obscure direction as to "prophets" (*Ib.* 37); their odd injunction to the Corinthians to do as the Galatians had been ordered to do (xvi. 1-2)—all raise questions of tampering. The two passages which I have above discussed, introduced as they are by the same formula, point to systematic redaction by one hand; and the drift of both is the abnormal specification of details as to Jesus—the preoccupation of a post-Pauline period, and one noticeably absent from the rest of Paul's writings. How could he,

just after telling his converts that he had come "determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified," develop such an anxiety to rest his claim on precise details of the founder's teaching, on multiplied testimonies as to the resurrection, and on his having "received" certain of the former details "from the Lord"?

If we could accept as genuine the passage in which Paul says he had "received of the Lord" what he "delivered," the words would give fair ground for the assumption that it was Paul who introduced the Supper into the Jesuist cult, and that his pretence of supernatural tuition was an attempt to outface the plain fact that he had adopted a Mithraic rite. But nowhere does he pretend to have introduced the Christian Supper; and where he claims or is made to claim independence, it is with an implicit admission of concurrence. In the other well-known passage (Gal. i. 11 ff.) in which he claims that he had his Gospel not from man but through revelation, he proceeds to say: "Immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me: but I went away into Arabia, and again I returned unto Damascus." There are reasons for suspecting the genuineness of this passage also, since it would be somewhat idle, if the Lord's Supper were already established from the first among the Judaic Jesuists, to pretend that he had received supernatural intimation of a particular practice of which he could easily have learned the details even while he was a persecutor. On the other hand, it is quite clear that the Supper was a Mithraic institution, and that Paul recognized its existence outside his sect. As a matter of fact, Tarsus was a Mithraic centre,¹ being the headquarters of the Cilician pirates through whom, in the time of Pompey, Mithraism was introduced into the Roman empire and army.² As a native of Tarsus, then, he was doubly unlikely to pretend that the Supper was a rite

¹ Preller, *Römische Mythologie*, p. 758.

² Plutarch, *Life of Pompey*, c. 24.

established by Jesus; so that on every ground we may conclude that the narrative of the foundation of the Supper in 1 Cor. xi. is an interpolation made after the Gospels had given the myth currency. The doctrine of the communion over the body and blood (x. 16), which is simply an adaptation of the Pagan symbolism of Sun-worship, could perfectly well be current for a time without any myth-narrative of the God's institution of the practice, though such a myth was bound ultimately to arise.

That that narrative first took Christian shape in a Jesuist mystery-drama seems the most likely view of its origin. The Supper itself was a mystery-drama;¹ and to introduce the God in person was only to do what the Greeks had done long before, as in the *Bacchae* of Euripides, and what the Egyptians did in the rites of Osiris.² It is thus probable that the gospel story, interpolated in Paul's Epistle, was just a narrative adaptation of the dramatic ceremony of the Supper. The "take, eat," would merely be an attribution to the God of the words customarily used by the later priest or ministrant. That a Supper on Mithraic lines was established among the earliest Jewish Jesuists may be inferred from the references in the Apocalypse—admittedly Judaic in its origin—to "the Lamb slain for us," a symbol which the description identifies with the lamb of the Mithraists, who are known to have eaten that animal in their Eucharist just as did the early Christians.³ But they also had the sacrament of bread and water; and we know from Apuleius that in the later rites of Isis an officiating priest bore the name of Mithra⁴—presumably in imitation of a previous combination of the Mithraic cult with that of one of the Mother-Goddesses. That is to say, the ministering priest personified the God. Only at a late period, however, were such usages of the mysteries disclosed in writing. And that the insertion of the story in the Gospels was late indeed is pretty well proved by the absence of the Supper-ritual myth from the

Note.

¹ Above, pp. 230-1.

² Herodotus ii. 171.

³ See Garucci, *Mystères du Syncretisme Phrygien*, 1854, § 12.

⁴ *Metamorphoses*, b. xi.

fourth Gospel, in which there is no lack of interpolation drawn from the synoptics.

As to the varying usages of wine or water with bread in the Eucharist, it is needless here to inquire, beyond noting that the Christian practice seems to have oscillated between Mithraic and Dionysiak precedent. In the mysteries of Dionysos, God of wine, wine was sure to be drunk, though probably mixed with water, as the God was fabled to have advised;¹ and when his cult was combined with that of Dêmêtêr, the bread and wine were the respective symbols of the Goddess and the God. As regards the later Mithraic sacrament, the actual references tell only of the use of bread and water. But in the older Mazdean system the mystic *haoma*, = the Vedic *soma*, plays an important part; and it seems almost certain that a sacramental wine, following that precedent, would be used in the more important Mithraic ceremonies also. If, as Roscher concludes, Dionysos "is undoubtedly the *haoma*, which in the West would be represented by wine,"² Mithra must needs have been no less so. A uniform Christian usage of bread and wine appears to have been finally established only after a long period, in which some groups used water and some ate a lamb at the period of the vernal equinox, or substituted for the lamb a baked image of one. The probability that, further, many groups for a time ate sacramentally a baked image of a child has been discussed at length in the preceding treatise.³ All the evidence consists with the theory of a final regulation of a long-varying rite; and such regulation could best be accomplished by the insertion of the specific myth in the Gospels.

§ 23. *The Transfiguration and the Passion.*

These mythic episodes, both occurring on a mountain, may be bracketed as being alike, in all probability, derived from a mystery-drama. In the first the white-robed,

¹ Diodorus Siculus, iv. 3. Cp. Athenæus, xv. 17, as to the drinking of watered wine to the name of Zeus the Saviour.

² *Ausführliches Lexikon*, col. 3045.

³ See above, pp. 220-3.

shining Sun-God is grouped with Moses and Elias, equally solar figures, known to Jewish religionists—the first as having been similarly transfigured on a mountain, the second as being carried up into heaven. It has been suggested¹ that the actual disciples of an actual Jesus arranged some such performance by way of accrediting him; but this resort to Evemerism is visibly barred by the Gospel narratives themselves, which provide for the denials of opponents by declaring that the disciples were commanded to say nothing of the vision till the Son of Man were risen from the dead.² It is idle to seek such a historic basis for a myth unknown to Paul, and declared even by the Gospel-makers to have been kept from the Jews. To carry through a mock-transfiguration on a mountain was a task beyond the powers of the time; but in an indoors mystery-drama it would be managed as such exhibitions were by the pagans, who were wont to introduce a blaze of light at thrilling moments.

And that the Passion in the original mystery-drama may have been connected with the Transfiguration—both being enacted on the scenic mountain—is suggested by the fact that in the third Gospel the accompanying disciples in both cases alike fall asleep, as they do in the story of the Passion in the other synoptics. In the latter case the dramatic origin of the myth is especially suggested by the fact that, the disciples being repeatedly described as unable to keep awake, there is not even a pretence that the words of the Lord, who is at a distance, could be historically reported; whereas the scene, so enacted before the spectators' eyes, would leave them undisturbed by any craving for testimony. The detail of the bloody sweat, given in Luke only (xxii. 44), in what appears to be a late interpolation,³ may stand for a realistic effort in some particular performance, and was perhaps originally suggested by the effect of the crown of thorns.

The sleep of the disciples during the Passion, finally,

¹ By Mr. Vickers, *The Crucifixion Mystery*, 1895, p. 58.

² Matt. xvii. 9; Mark ix. 9. Cp. Luke ix. 36.

³ It is lacking in the Alexandrian and Vatican codices.

would seem to be one of the items in the Gentile process of disparaging them.¹ In the case of the Passion they figure as failing to give their Lord sympathy and companionship when he most needed it. On the other hand, the introduction of Moses and Elias, the two typic forerunners, in the Transfiguration scene, where also the three apostles answer to Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, points to a Judaic origin. As Strauss notes, the cloud and the voice are exact repetitions of the Hebrew myth. And the fact that Joshua is there (Ex. xxiv. 13) associated with Moses as his "minister" suggests an indefinite antiquity for the Jesuist myth even as such.

§ 24. *The Crucifixion.*

On a full survey of the data, the crucifixion remains one of the most obscure of the quasi-mythical elements in the Jesuist legend. Here even more than elsewhere the documents are invalid, seeing that in the "Primitive Gospel" as reconstructed by conservative criticism the story of the trial and execution has confessedly no place. Whatever may have been the primary facts, the Gospel story, framed long after the alleged event, and after a Jesus memoir was already current, has no evidential value. And the trial before Pilate, the story of the two thieves, and the sayings on the cross, have all the marks of circumstantial fiction. On the other hand, there are obvious reasons for supposing that this, a datum in Paul's gospel, stands for *some* historical fact. A slain Messiah was so unlikely a basis to be invented for a Jewish cult that the historical presumption must be that some teacher of Messianic pretensions had really been put to death, and that his followers had carried on the movement in the faith that he would come again. When, however, we investigate the relation of the Gospels

important

¹ Compare, however, Strauss's curious parallel of the scene of Socrates outwatching all his companions at the Symposium. *Leben Jesu*, Abs. ii. K. 10, § 107, note 19.

to the Epistles, and find not only that Paul's spectral Jesus has no traceable connection with the teaching "Jesus the Nazarite" or "Jesus of Nazareth," but that the Gospels themselves betray plain traces of a factitious connection of these cognomens, and that the original Jesus of the first Gospel had no cognomen at all, we see cause to suspect that the movement really originated with the Talmudic Jesus Ben Pandira,¹ who was stoned to death and hanged on a tree, for blasphemy or heresy, on the eve of a Passover in the reign of Alexander Jannæus (B.C. 106-79). Dr. Löw, an accomplished Hebraist, is satisfied² that this Jesus was the founder of the Essene (or Jessean) sect, whose resemblances to the legendary early Christians have so greatly exercised Christian speculation. That, however, must remain a hypothesis, since the Jesus in question is little more than a historic name. His time and place are further obscured through his being identified in the Babylonian Gemara with one Ben Sotada or Stada or Satda, who by one (doubtful) clue is put in the period of Rabbi Akiba in the second century C.E. Of the Talmudic Jesus, as of Ben Stada, it is told that he was stoned and then hanged on a tree on the eve of the Passover; but Jesus is said to have been so executed at Jerusalem, and Ben Stada at Lydda. Rabbinical commentators and later Hebraists generally take the view that two historical personages are thus indicated,³ and that it was a Rabbinical error to identify them. It seems impossible, however, to trust to the sole chronological clue in the Ben Satda story, which is bound up, as we have seen, with the name of Mary Magdala. We must be content to say that there is a Talmudic trace of a Jesus who was put to death on the eve of the Passover a century or more before the time of Pontius Pilate. The question is, then, was this

note all this

note.

important; identification in time

Note

¹ Cp. Derenbourg, *Essai sur l'histoire et la géographie de la Palestine*, 1867, Note ix.; Lightfoot, *Horæ Hebraicæ*; in *Matt.* ii. 14; xxvii. 56; in *Luc.* viii. 2; and Baring Gould, *The Lost and Hostile Gospels*, 1874, Pt. i. §§ 3, 4.

² Ginsburg's *Essenes*, p. 29.

³ Cp. Lightfoot in *Matt.* ii. 14; Derenbourg, as cited; and Joel, *Blicke in die religionsgeschichte*, Breslau, 1880, ii. 55.