



THOUGHTS.

Simply thoughts, yet in these lives of ours.  
So full of work and worrying for material things.  
They mean so much to us, and be they grave or gay.  
They mould our lives like potter's clay;  
For thoughts are things.

Simply thoughts, yet substance have they,  
Though intangible;  
Though lowly born, they spread their wings and fly  
From sea to sea; and through each land they pass.  
Infinite men's minds, and live in after lives;  
For thoughts can never die.

Elizabeth W. F. Jackson.

Jesus of Nazareth and Modern Scientific Investigation.

— Abram Wallace, M. D., Etc.

(Concluded from last week.)

Twenty years ago two books were written from the churchman's view, which seemed my mind in regard to the question of miracles. These were the Boyle lectures of 1884, delivered by Professor George Herbert Currie, called *The Scientific Obstacles to Christian Belief*; and the Hampton lectures of 1884, by the late Archbishop Temple, *The Relations between Religion and Science*. These two books showed great breadth of view, and contained many noble thoughts, which have, however, been amplified and transcended by my spiritualistic investigations. Thus, in reference to miracle, Professor Currie said: "We may (and we must) conceive that it, too, is but the fragmentary act of some vast career, whose 'flaw' may not be known to us, but is certainly known to God; and further, in referring to investigations, he says: 'As men of sense and honesty begin to inquire to conform our ways of thinking to the new environment amid which we find ourselves, and to readjust our two narrow theories to the newly ascertained facts...'

"I wish leaders of religions and philosophies thought today would readjust their 'narrow theories' and attempt to find out for themselves by reading and personal investigation the facts of modern spiritualism. But this is rare. If they did, we could have fewer prejudiced criticisms and one-sided conclusions, derived, too, panfletarily, from second-hand and perverted evidence."

"I was astonished to observe the attitude of a well-known liberal-minded teacher in Oxford, and a writer in the *Hilbert Journal*, Professor Percy Gardner, who, in his Jewett lectures, delivered two or three years ago, in the Passmore Edwards Settlement in London, said in discussing the subject of miracle, "It is held by some that the experiments of modern spiritualism have tended to obliterate the line of distinction between the natural and the miraculous in this visible world... have shown that spiritual force may act directly on matter. And persons of sound judgment have thought that these experiments may compel us to reverse our views as to the miracles of early Christianity." So far so good, but he adds: "I do not like to speak of the phenomena of Spiritualism, because there is much difference of opinion as to what they are, and in any case they are so mingled with such absurdity and much imposture."

"I found in that somewhat advanced religious paper, *The Christian Commonwealth*, a few weeks ago, a rather long and a lecture delivered on October 2nd last by the Rev. Principal Fairbairn, D. D., of Mansfield College, on *The Miracle of Christ*. Principal Fairbairn is a very distinguished fellow-countryman of mine, and I naturally expected to find some enlightenment from such an authority. I was sadly disappointed while reading six and one-half columns to find that the extraordinary occurrence in the life of Jesus were scarcely touched upon. He admitted turned away from these and said, 'I intend now to assume that Jesus was himself a miracle.' He stated that 'Jesus never did for himself any great miracle.' He had too consciously within him the orderly elements of nature—whatever that may mean. He assumes: 'All his miracles were for men, and only for men.' The Principal seems not to be aware that this is the prevailing characteristic of sensitives today. They usually get wonderful things for other people, but little or nothing as a rule, through their own unusual powers for themselves."

Principal Fairbairn is not unique in his ignorance of present-day psychic investigation and its results, and its coming to that paper, the much-talked-of Rev. R. J. Campbell, while showing, in regard to previsions, that he is in advance of the ordinary clergyman, is apparently unacquainted with our modern psychical research methods on scientific lines.

These prominent men, and such as these, are representatives of a large class of non-investigating, non-researching, non-scientific men of all grades of life, who are ignorant of what has been observed. Instead of reading with prejudice the records of careful investigators, as Sir William Crookes, Dr. Russell Wallace, Dr. Richard Hodgson and others,

and then investigating, for themselves, they criticize the spiritualistic position without personal knowledge, or they simply ignore it."

In criticizing the statement that Jesus was himself a miracle, it is necessary to look at the story of his birth, and the belief which has for so long existed, that he was different in origin from other children of the race—that he was born of a Virgin Mother, but without an earthly Father.

Now this is the point which requires critical investigation from the scientific standpoint, because, he it remembered, we are not dealing with a matter of fact, but with statements as to a family or tribal history. Before giving any heed to a supernatural parthenogenic or virgin generation, I, as one trained in the methods of Science, must first look to the report embodying the only natural process at present known in the human species.

In reading the first chapter of Matthew, and remembering that the special object of the treatise bearing that apostle's name was to prove that Jesus of Nazareth was the expected Messiah, I find it opening with an elaborate genealogy of Jesus, tracing him from David to Abraham.

Matthew 1:1 says: "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ," and verse 16 says: "And Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ."

Mr. F. C. Conybeare, M. A., in the first part of *The Hibbert Journal*, October, 1902, discusses this 16th verse, and also writes a special article in *The Daily Chronicle* of 2nd June, last, in which he says, referring to the Virgin birth:

"The only chapter of the New Testament which attests this miracle in Matthew 1. But here the effect of the last seven verses, marred by the recent discovery of its original form of verse 16, which is this: 'Jacob begat Joseph, and Joseph begat Jesus.'"

For my present purpose it may be one or other reading. It certainly is the genealogy of Joseph, but according to the verses 18 and 25, if these contain a record of real events, the bearing of the last seven verses of Jesus, the child of Mary, far, according to verse 18, "Before they came together was found with child of the Holy Ghost."

I hold that this incarnation story and the genealogical record are distinctly at variance, and those who support this miraculous birth story are on the horns of a dilemma. I ask, as a truth-seeker, how can any Biblical scholar, in the Church or outside of it, with any show of reason pretend even to see a semblance of agreement? If he be not the son of Joseph, as the newly-discovered text shows, then the whole text is absolutely absurd in proving his descent from David and Abraham. Some say, "Oh, it is not really Joseph's at all, for according to the Jewish law, a man may marry his brother's widow, and his family, and her genealogy is legally his, therefore 'it is Mary's.' But we have to compare the genealogy given in Luke iii. 23: 'And Jesus himself, when he began to teach, was about thirty years of age, being the Son (as was supposed) of Joseph, the son of Heli.' In Matthew observe that the father of Joseph was named Jacob. Joseph could not have been the son of Heli. He is the son of Joseph, the son of Jacob, the son of David, through whom the descent is traced, as Solomon, whereas in Luke the Son of David is Nathan, therefore there are two distinct lines from David."

In striving to compare religious and mythological stories of virgin mothers are not uncommon, and these are all discarded by the Churches as historically untrue, save the isolated instance of Mary. It is well, I think, to bear in mind the admission of the paternity of her son which Mary made, as recorded in Luke ii. 48: "The father and I sought these sorrowing." And what is to be said of the contemporary belief recorded in Matthew xiii. 55: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" There is also the apparently honest statement in Luke ii. 44: "And his parents went every year to Jerusalem," and also in the thirty-third verse: "And his father and his mother were marveling at the things which were spoken concerning him." I may here note that in the Authorized Version the translators, being so imbued with the Virgin birth theory, substituted the name Joseph for "his father," which occurs in the original Greek, but it is given correctly in the Revised Version of 1881.

I have found in my investigation of sensitives that there is often a history of supernatural power occurring in successive generations. The parents of Jesus, according to the records, had a psychic experience, thus in Matthew i. 20: "Behold a messenger of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream," and in Luke i. 35: "Mary has a psychic manifestation, and the Holy Spirit came upon her, and she bears the direct voice. I am bound to point out that the sequel was not quite in accord with the terms of the message, verse 22: 'And the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David.'"

The so-called miracles of Jesus have formed a stumbling-block to the acceptance by many people of the high moral, ethical, and spiritual doctrines which he taught, and exemplified in his life, because of the incredibility of the statements in the Gospels, and because, unfortunately, they have been so mixed up with the conception that they constitute proof of a deified personality. Their investigation has, therefore, on the one hand, been avoided by scientific students, who regard them as mere legendary accounts, unworthy of critical attention, and on the other hand, so-called religious persons have regarded them as of "superhuman" value, to be accepted by faith alone, and not by intellect.

We are now living in an age of true science, and any phenomenon having been manifested on the physical plane, and a belief founded thereon, must be able to stand the strain of criticism. I hold, therefore, that we are justified in submitting the records to exact scrutiny. We shall find that the spiritualistic facts of today admit of an identity, or similarity to those ultra-spiritual phenomena in the life of Jesus. This seems to some people a blasphemous assertion, for it is often observed that mediumistic powers manifest today have an apparently identical connection with ethical or spiritual pre-eminence. We find, however, that in cases where these unusual gifts exist, if the higher phases of the mind are cultivated, the resulting manifestations are more reliable and of a more exalted order.

The large proportion of the miracles of Jesus consist of healing. In the Oxford *History of the Study of the Bible*, you will find the miracles classified, and out of thirty-six there are twenty-three records of healing. The injunctions which were given by Jesus to his twelve disciples, Matthew x. 8, after telling them to preach, saying: "The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand," included "Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out demons." Those who claim to be the successors of these primitive disciples do not attempt to carry out these commands. We have plenty of preaching, but no manifesting. In the churches, of the gifts of healing by the same spirit mentioned by Paul in *Corinthians* xii. 9, the Christian Scientists have done something to draw attention to the existence of psychic healing, but unfortunately they have too often, it seems to me, retarded the advance of truth by forgetting the difference between the two planes of manifestations. Indeed some of these enthusiastic people, with whom I have talked, try to explain the physical plane, and say there is no disease, when a scientific clinician finds, not only symptomatic indications, but actual physical evidence of pathological changes. It is useless for these folk to ignore facts, but a certain while from coming on that plane, as it leads to an untrue mode of expression, merely altering the form of expressing a fact without altering the fact itself.

I do not intend to go over these twenty-three recorded healings, because to attempt an analysis and discussion of them scientifically would require more definite records than we possess, but I desire to point out that there are many today in that noble profession who are sufficiently eclectic not to limit their means of doing good to the old methods, but recognize that the true basis is the invisible divine essence manifesting through a physical organism, and while doing the best they know of for that organism, the presence of an improved physical condition brings about changes which physical changes have been effected, and results brought about equalling some of those recorded in the early Christian documents. I may say, that I have had some notable instances of the improvement of physical condition by clairvoyant and psychometric investigation, in many cases confirming diagnoses made by ordinary methods, and in some superseding them. A necessary condition for successful psychic healing in most of the records, was what is called faith. It is a Greek word which, with an individual as the object,

means trust, and comes from a verb meaning to be prevailed upon, won over, or persuaded, thus indicating a sympathetic report between the healer and the patient. The results of Jesus the healer were interpreted by this want of faith, for in Matthew xiii. 58 it is said: "He did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief," thus showing that he demanded the existence of good psychic conditions to bring about therapeutic effects.

The word demon, often employed in the Gospels, does not necessarily mean a devil or evil-spirit, but is a term used in the literature of the time to indicate the spirit of a dead man, departed soul, that is, departed or gone away from the physical body, or the real man stripped of his corporeal envelope. Those described as obsessing or controlling individuals were no doubt undeveloped spirits. As a matter of experience today we find among sensitives that there is a large proportion of less highly evolved entities, who are the controls or "familiar spirits," giving more or less fantastic names, than highly exalted spirits. Sometimes we have, however, spirits of a high order as communicators, and in my experience I have found that these more developed spirits sometimes require to employ the less evolved as mediums, when sending messages from the other side of life, especially if a considerable interval of time has passed since quitting earth-life. You will find often expressions of disappointment among people who begin to investigate, and are henceforth repelled, because of the appearance of many of the communications. Thus the late Professor Huxley said: "Supposing the phenomena to be genuine they do not interest me. If anything would excite my interest, it would be the faculty of listening to the chatter of old women and curates in the nearest cathedral town. I should decline the privilege, having better things to do, and if the folk in the spiritual world do not talk more wisely and sensibly than their friends report them to do, I put them in the same category."

As more sinners than saints have passed the portal of death, and the less evolved apparently linger near the portals, as I know from my investigations in haunted houses, one is not astonished to find evil, malicious entities controlling, or attempting to control sensitives. I know more than one individual who has been so controlled, and in such cases it is necessary to "cast out" or prevent an evil influence taking possession of a medium, and the more sensitive and less evolved the medium, the greater is the liability to spirit influence of a low order to enter, and it is well to remember that often undeveloped entities are in groups, see Matthew xiv. 45. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more evil than himself, and they enter in and dwell there, and Mark v. 18. "What is thy name?" He said unto him: My name is Legion, for we are many. This is one of the dangers of spiritualistic practice, and a serious risk that those ignorant of the laws of spirit control run in developing mediumship. What is called the temptation in the wilderness, recorded in Jesus in Matthew i. 12, Mark 1:12, and Luke i. 13, is a very difficult subject to the ordinary readers of the records. Some time ago a medium of my acquaintance, who had a peculiar power, which gave me a clue to the understanding, in some measure, of the story of the temptation. This sensitive was about to devote more time to the investigation of the orrings guides, to psychic development, especially for the spread of the higher teachings of Spiritualism, and had manifested great powers of prevision when good conditions existed. At a particular crisis in life a strange influence assumed temporary control, and desired to utilize the powers in a lower direction, promising that much money could be made by betting on horse-racing, and he demonstrated the precognitive powers, gave the winners of every race prior to the event, during that week, but that same higher impulse which could say "Get thee hence, Satan," was paramount, and rather than prostitute psychic powers to mere material ends, the power was bravely devoted to the spread of the higher aspects of spiritual philosophy, in circumstances in which greater material control would have made ordinary life more easy.

Retrospections and previsions were given by Jesus, and in one instance at least he observed, according to the record in John ix. 16, that the same sensitive was in the same place observed with present-day sensitives. It is the story of the Samaritan woman at the well. Jesus said to her "Go, call thy husband and come here," and she answered and said, "I have no husband." Here, in her retrospection, he got on the wrong line at first, and this apparent defect in his clairvoyance is quite on a par with what occurs with our mediums now. She sets him right, and he then goes back over her life's history. This can be done by sensitives at the present day, and had I time I could relate many interesting experiences of this variety of clairvoyance. A "prevision," Luke xli. 21, that one of his disciples would betray him was fulfilled, but the statement in the same chapter, verse 30: "Ye shall sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel," has not become history. He foresaw his denial by Peter, the circumstances of his death, burial, and rising out of death. Possession, or the acquisition of knowledge regarding events which have not yet happened, are to me very puzzling, and I have had many, through various mediums, of quite a personal nature and some of public interest. What could Jesus mean by the conversation with his disciples recorded in Matthew xvii. 20: "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place, and it shall be removed; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." I know by observation and experiment, under test conditions, that ponderable matter can be transported by psychic power, having had several instances of articles conveyed from one room to another in my own house, the doors being shut, and several electric lights turned on, and several articles conveyed over half a mile on two occasions. These are technically called apparitions. Perhaps the multiplication of the loaves and fishes may have been an example of this form of manifestation.

Many of the extraordinary things done by Jesus are done today by our psychics. In Matthew xiv. 25 we find an account of Jesus walking at night on the water. This is allied to cases of levitation and transport recorded of several well-known mediums in this generation. The disciples thought that it was an apparition or phantasm. Jesus in his psychic manifestations experienced opposition and misrepresentation, just as mediums do today, and the "mighty works" performed by him were attributed to the evil of his time to diabolic spirit, by the critics of his time, and to the present day, who are ignorant of psychic law, but being obliged to admit "there is something in it," that something they assert must be "the devil." I have only one thing to say to the transportation and the re-appearance of Jesus after his bodily dissolution, commonly called the "Resurrection."

In Matthew xli. 1, Mark ii. 20, and Luke ix. 28-30, we find the records of the transfiguration. The "magnificent" appearance of Spiritism here that Jesus gave in continuance to such noble personalities as spiritualistic seers, but when you read the record of this wonderful transfiguring and materializing scenes of "that is better, read these to them and ask questions, you will, as a rule, soon discover that they had never read those without understanding. Jesus selected Peter, James and John, who no doubt possessed psychic powers, for it is these same three who accompany him and constitute the members of that remarkable council at which the resurrection of Jesus' daughter takes place. Being natural people, or developed by contact with great and highly evolved personalities, they are found to be extra-ordinarily sensitive to the most ordinary conditions today for success in any psychic investigation. They go up into a high mountain in order to have good physical conditions, with abundant sunlight, and freedom from interruption. Then there is the transfiguring of the face of the principal sensitive, and the shining white garments so common in our seances today. Two materials, individually, long before passed away—Elijah and Moses—are manifested. It is said "They were talking with Jesus." When conditions are at their best in our present-day magical seances, we sometimes have the figures visible and speaking at the same time. I have been present under such conditions.

"Let us make three tabernacles," say the disciples, "one for Thee, one for Moses and one for Elijah." The usual clerical explanation of this is simply futile, but one gets a clear conception of this statement by substituting the word hut or booth, which is placed in the margin of the Bible. The Greek word means a hut or booth—the present-day word is cabin—and I understand that the best results are obtained when there is a cabin for the medium, and another for the materialized form or forms, so that the materializing substance and power are concentrated. There is the cloud which is the accompaniment of nearly all cases of materialization. There is the direct voice, "This is my beloved Son," the ordinary Churchman takes this to be the "Voice of God," without thinking what that assertion involves. This is often the familiar way that spirit guides speak of their instrument. In Luke there is a prediction indicated—"they speak of his departure or passing away which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem." I have had predictions given at such a stage, indeed the very fact that I am on this platform addressed as an ally of sympathetic Spiritualists was indicated to me some years ago, at that time to me as unlikely a thing as if some sensitive told me tonight, that in a few years I would deliver an address to a meeting of occultists in India.

It is interesting to observe that Peter and they that were with him were "heavy with sleep." I have sat in seance with individuals,





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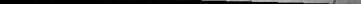
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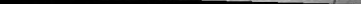
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