

Investigations like the foregoing furnish clear proof that there is no better antidote for the much decried "destructive" tendencies of Biblical criticism than its own self: than resolutely to follow out its most delicate and "dangerous" researches and reasonings to the very end. For thus, instead of a timorous policy of barricade, behold the ancient truth revealed clear and pure, no longer indeed blinding, because now perceived with the well-armed eyes of science, but all the more overmastering. For Truth stands never in conflict with Truth, and the Holy Spirit loses naught in power or dignity, whether it find expression in the life of an individual or in the firmly compacted intuition of an age and a race. Neither is the validity of the Biblical text for the churches hereby affected, whatever attitude they may assume regarding it. Is there not indeed far greater cause of uneasiness in the perpetual strife of dogmas, each denying the other and denouncing it as heretical? Is it not this very strife that has brought us to our present unbearable condition? Nay more, it is the eternal wrangle of the churches that has set Faith hopeless and helpless at war with herself, and it is precisely from such researches as the foregoing, which dispel doubts and annul contradictions, that the *Faith* of the best of every creed may hope to win security and unity once more. And if any man chooses to dub the result "docetic," because forsooth teaching that the history of Jesus is a fact not of history but of *Faith*, by all means let him have his word. In the spirit of real religion it is a title of honor. For was not Docetism the oldest, the *actually historic*, view of the story of Jesus? And is not this form of faith in that story the only one that can lend it virtue? It is only in presence of this genuine Faith in the Eternal Son of God, revealed in Righteousness and Love, and not in the presence of legends, miracles, and relics, that invincible Science is awed and lays down her weapons.

THE THEORY OF A PRE-CHRISTIAN CULT OF JESUS.

Prof. W. Benjamin Smith's collection of essays in German¹ on the origin of Christianity—which is sufficiently paradoxical in the circumstances of its publication, since it is the work of a distinguished American writer on mathematics—employs no small learning in the defence of a theory that is a still greater paradox. No

¹ *Der vorchristliche Jesus, nebst weiteren Vorstudien zur Entstehungsgeschichte des Urchristentums.* Mit einem Vorworte von P. W. Schmiedel. Giessen: A. Zöpelmann, 1906.

historical hypothesis put forward by any competent scholar was ever more revolutionary, or more important, if true. For, while it is certain to seem startling, beyond any other possible hypothesis, to religious orthodoxy and critical conservatism, it is equally at variance with the fundamental presuppositions of the whole advanced school of New Testament criticism. Yet the argument is so skilfully handled, and so much apparent new evidence is extracted from familiar data, that one of the most eminent and most radical of the critics of the prevailing school commends the book, in a friendly preface, to the serious consideration of the Biblical scholars of Germany, and, while certainly not professing conversion, declares that the reasoning is "really by no means so easy to refute."

What we know as primitive Christianity, Dr. Smith contends, was the product of a vast and slow syncretism. The more fundamental and distinctive elements in it were derived from Gnosticism—of which movement, therefore, it was the child, and not, as has been supposed, the parent. The Christian faith of the second century emerged, through certain processes of fusion and modification, out of the doctrines of quasi-Gnostic sects that flourished in Syria at least a generation before the Christian era. The name of its reputed founder, Jesus Nazoræus, was originally that of a divine being or Aeon revered by the sect of the Naassenes,—and probably by others. The semi-human figure who is the hero of the Synoptic Gospels was evolved (chiefly as the result of the partial transformation of this Gnostic theosophy through its merging with Jewish Messianism) out of the celestial object of this primitive Jesus-cult. The resurrection-belief originated in a sort of etymological myth, due to the ambiguity of such words as *ἀνίστημι*, *ἀνάστασις*, *ἐγείρω*; the doctrine of 'the raising-up of the Christ' at first related, not to the reappearance of a body once entombed, but to the divine legation and the final triumph of the heaven-descended Messiah. The ethical and religious content of the extant Gospels consists, not of the utterance of a great Teacher more or less diluted and corrupted by the inferior media through which they are transmitted, but of the ultimate deposit of the reflection and discussion of several generations of men profoundly stirred by one form of that movement of mysticism, otherworldliness and aspiration after inner regeneration, which was then sweeping over the entire Hellenistic world. The literary excellence and the moral profundity of many of the sayings and parables in the Gospels is the result, not of the

inspiration of a single Master, but of the long social attrition through which they were sharpened and polished, and of the gradual process of spiritual selection of which they are the fit survivors. All of this Dr. Smith believes to be capable of proof. And, though further evidence is promised in subsequent publications, the substance of the proof to be offered seems to have been already exhibited chiefly in *Der vorchristliche Jesus*.²

There is, or ought to be, no *chose jugée* in history; and the present theory, revolutionary though it is, deserves—since it undeniably has extensive erudition behind it—to receive an unprejudiced and careful examination. Fortunately the main argument is reducible to a few clear and definite contentions. I shall try to state these in consecutive order; to indicate the principal evidence offered for each; and to give an opinion concerning the genuineness and adequacy of that evidence.

I. It is undeniable, Dr. Smith maintains, that sects adhering to a characteristically Gnostic type of doctrines and 'mysteries' flourished widely in the Hellenistic world during the first century B. C. and at the period of the diffusion of Christianity; and, by the showing of the canonical writings themselves, such sects looked upon the Christian teaching as akin to their own.—The argument for this preliminary generalization rests chiefly upon the case of Simon Magus (Acts viii. 9-24, supplemented by Justin, *Apol.* I, 26 and 56; Irenæus, *c. Haeres.* I, 22; II, 126; IV, 6). If we take the passage in Acts as the reflection—distorted under the influences of very obvious motives—of a historic character and a real situation, and if we identify this first-century Simon with the originator of the Simonian heresies described by Justin and Irenæus, we get a representation of an immensely influential leader who owed nothing to Christian teaching and whose propaganda began earlier than that of Christianity; who was no mere sorcerer, but the preacher of a universal religion based upon a philosophical monotheism combined with Gnostic dualism and emanationism; who was deified by his followers; whose own traditional attitude towards Christianity was friendly enough; whose followers were, in the early second century, not generally distinguished from the Christians; and whom patristic tradition regarded as the father of all the Gnostic heresies. The assumptions upon which this representation is based seem to me

² For the reader of English only, a first-hand account of Dr. Smith's hypotheses seems to be available only in his article "New Testament Criticism" in the *Encyclopedia Americana*. A part of the argument is, however, published in *The Monist*, XV, pp. 25-45.

fairly probable ones. But the fact remains that the Simon-legend constitutes a historical conundrum of an almost insoluble complexity. There were, as Schmiedel has pointed out, at least four figures of Simon, one of them being apparently the Apostle Paul (*Enc. Bib.*, s. v.); it is impossible to affirm, with any considerable degree of confidence, just where one of these figures ends and another begins. The whole matter is involved in the controversies over the authenticity and date of the Pauline Epistles; the sources and date of the Book of Acts; the date and sources of the *Clementina*; the respective characteristics and the precise relations of Petrine and Pauline Christianity. Dr. Smith can hardly be said to have settled all these related issues; and for the present, therefore, any argument founded upon the passages relating to Simon Magus must be regarded as somewhat less than conclusive. For all that it may be considered a reasonable probability, to which facts of several sorts point, that tendencies or organized sects characterized by some or most of the distinguishing elements of Gnosticism, and especially by a fusion of Jewish, Greek and Persian ideas, were not rare about the beginning of the Christian era; and that Christianity was only one example of a common type of innovating religious movement at this period.

II. The great point of Dr. Smith's argument, however, lies in the assertion that the name *Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωπαῖος* is to be found as that of a Logos or divine emanation among one or more quasi-Gnostic sects of unmistakably pre-Christian date.—In point of fact, no example is offered of the employment of the two words in conjunction anywhere outside of the New Testament. It will therefore be advisable to consider the evidence concerning each of the two terms separately.

A. *The name Ἰησοῦς.* 1. The proof of the existence of a Gnostic Jesus-cult in the first century B. C., Dr. Smith finds, first and foremost, in a passage of the *Refutatio* of Hippolytus. There we are told (V, 6) that the sect of the Naassenes adored as the primary manifestation of the ineffable Deity an archetypal, celestial Man, whom they also spoke of as "Son of Man"; and in a Naassene hymn cited by Hippolytus (V, 10) the name Jesus occurs as that of a pre-existent heavenly being sent by the Father to the lower world as the impartor of the saving Gnosis to suffering humanity. Now, we have good reason to believe, argues Dr. Smith, that these Naassenes were pre-Christian. For Hippolytus's arrangement of the heresies is plainly meant to follow a chronological order. And

it is the Naassenes that he mentions first of all; they, the Peratae, the Sethians and Justin, all come before Simon Magus, whom tradition represents as an older contemporary of the Apostles and the father of all the heresies. Hippolytus, according to our author (p. 123), "declares repeatedly that the Naassenes were the first of the heretical sects, from whom all the others afterwards known as Gnostics derived (*Ref.* V, 6, 10, 11)." "We may quite definitely conclude, therefore, in agreement with Hippolytus, that Naassenism was antecedent to Christianity, that it flourished before the Cross was preached, and that the later forms of Gnosticism were its offspring" (p. 124).

If the reader will now turn to Hippolytus* and examine the fifth book of the *Refutatio* for himself, he will be likely to revert upon these last-quoted sentences with some astonishment. For he will discover two things. First, Hippolytus in none of the passages cited makes any such statement as that ascribed to him, about the descent of all other Gnostic doctrines from Naassenism. The nearest he comes to it is to say that the Naassenes "afterwards called themselves Gnostics" (which does not imply that they were the only or the first heretics who did so, and that "separating from them, many devised a heresy, in appearance manifold, but in reality one" (V, 6); this last seems to refer merely to the diverse subdivisions of the Ophite sect. Second, Hippolytus in plain terms describes the Naassenes as Christians. They are classified as a "heresy"; they taught that the archetypal Man "descended in one man, Jesus, who was born of Mary" (V, 6); they traced their doctrine "through Mariamne to James, the brother of the Lord"—which, of course, shows them not only Christian but also, at earliest, of the first or second generation *after* the Apostles. Dr. Smith's omission to mention any of these statements of Hippolytus, and his citing of that authority as a witness in favor of a view of the date of the Naassenes which the very same chapters of the *Refutatio* categorically contradict—this is a thing so amazing that it is difficult to comment upon it with propriety. Perhaps the author proposes to begin his argument by striking out from Hippolytus's text all the numerous passages unfavorable to the theory of a pre-Christian Jesus. But nothing is said even of such a desperate way of dealing

* Having seen advance proofs of Professor Lovejoy's criticism, Dr. Smith takes exception to the implication of unfairness on his part in the citation of Hippolytus, and in the January number of *The Monist* will take the opportunity to maintain his position especially with regard to this point as well as other particulars presented by Professor Lovejoy.—Ed.

with the difficulty. The unsuspecting reader is simply given to understand that Hippolytus plainly and consistently describes the Naassenes as pre-Christian; in point of fact, he plainly and consistently describes them as a late first-century or second-century Christian school. In view of this, Dr. Smith's long essay on the Parable of the Sower must also be considered a failure. It is designed to show that the parable is a reworking of a Gnostic cosmogonic myth, relating the Creator's dissemination of the λόγος σπερματικός among the different classes—pneumatic, psychic, choïc—of mankind. The idea is not without intrinsic plausibility; but the argument for it rests entirely upon the assumption of the pre-Christian date of the Naassene version of the parable, given by Hippolytus. And this assumption Hippolytus himself expressly forbids.

It is, indeed, true that there is some (though little good) patristic evidence for the non-Christian—not the pre-Christian—character of the Naassene sect. "Naassenes" is, of course, only Grecized Hebrew for "Ophites" or "Serpentists"; and of the Ophites Origen avers (*c. Cels.* VI, 28—the passage is not noted by our author) that "they spoke against Jesus. . . and would not so much as listen to the name of Jesus," (which, of course, proves too much for Dr. Smith's case). But this is flatly contradicted by Epiphanius (*Adv. Haeres.* 37), by Irenæus (I, 34); and by Jerome (*Adv. Lucif.*, 23), all better authorities than Origen on heresiology. It is not impossible that there was a pre-Christian Ophism, under a Hebrew name; but there is no real evidence of its existence. And there is not the least reason for believing (even if such a hypothetical pre-Christian stage of Naassenism be assumed) that in such a stage the sect knew anything of the name "Jesus." For the only Naassenes of whom Hippolytus has anything to say were definitely Christian.

2. The author also adduces in favor of his theory the fact of the occurrence, in an "old" passage of the Paris Magic Papyrus, of the words: "I adjure thee by the god of the Hebrews, Jesus" (ed. Wessely, l. 3120). If, as some authorities suggest, the passage be pre-Christian, it is undoubtedly significant. But so long as the date of it remains essentially conjectural, no argument of any weight can be rested upon it.

3. In the New Testament itself, however, Dr. Smith finds evidence pointing toward his conclusion. In Acts xviii. 25 we are told of Apollos of Alexandria that, coming to teach in Ephesus, "he

was wont to speak and teach accurately the doctrine of Jesus (κατὰ τὸν Ἰησοῦν),” though “knowing only the baptism of John.” One who “knew only the baptism of John,” argues Dr. Smith, can hardly have had any contact with the Christian propaganda. Whence, then, his knowledge of “Jesus”—unless there existed, independently of the Christian Church, and before it, a Gnostic Jesus cult, of which Apollos was one of the itinerant preachers? The argument has a certain *prima facie* effectiveness; but Dr. Smith again shows a surprising facility of forgetting the context of his chosen evidential passages. There are two considerations which prevent the story about Apollos from serving our theorist’s purpose so well as it at first appears to do. The essential point of that story, as conceived by the author of Acts, is clear. The conception of the Holy Spirit, and the doctrines of the power of the Apostles to impart it, and of its wonder-working presence in the Church, may be said to be theological hobbies with that writer. Now “the baptism of John” (in contrast with the orthodox apostolic baptism) had come to be almost a technical term, signifying a “baptism of repentance” merely in which there was no reference to the Holy Spirit and no impartation of it (cf. Acts, i. 15; xi. 6; viii. 16, 17; Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16; John i. 33). And (as is clear from the immediately following passage, Acts xix. 1-6) the fact that the disciples of Apollos had been baptized “into John’s baptism,” was taken as synonymous with the fact that they “had not so much as learned whether there is a Holy Ghost.” Paul thereupon administers the joint ceremonies of baptism and laying on of hands, and “the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they spake with tongues and prophesied.” Now, it is not only possible, but even probable, that there existed early communities of Christians to whom the (probably not primitive) doctrine of the Holy Ghost, and the tale of the marvels of Pentecost, needed to be taught; and in the Apollos-story we very likely have the traces of some such episode. Certainly such an explanation of it seems far more natural than Dr. Smith’s, while it is equally adequate to account for the peculiarities of the incident recorded. It is, indeed, true (for the second consideration) that we are told that Paul baptized these disciples of Apollos “into the name of the Lord Jesus.” This might (though it need not absolutely) imply that they had not before been baptized in that name. Such an interpretation would undoubtedly make the whole character of the doctrine and affiliations of Apollos rather obscure. There seems to be an inexplicable inconsistency between what is asserted

by xviii. 25 and what is suggested by xix. 4, 5. But if the author of Acts really intended to indicate that the disciples of Apollos had not been baptized in the name of Jesus, his testimony would be even more unfavorable to Dr. Smith's hypothesis than it is upon the other interpretation. For if, as Dr. Smith believes, Apollos's whole teaching centered about the "name" and the powers of a divine emanation called Jesus, and if (as the text affirms) Apollos observed the rite of baptism, it would be inconceivable that he should not have baptized his followers "into the name" of that divinity.

B. The term *Ναζωπαῖος*. For the pre-Christian use of this term Dr. Smith seems to me to make out a not much better case. His principal arguments are these:

1. As every one knows, the traditional explanation of this adjective as derived from the name of a Galilean town has long been unsatisfactory. We have very good reason for disbelieving that, in the first century, any such town existed.⁸ Dr. Smith reviews the various theories that have been devised for dealing with this difficulty and finds all of them—even Cheyne's equation of "Nazareth" with Galilee—open to reasonable objections. Yet the word, for some reason, played a great part in early Christian nomenclature. Epiphanius says (*Adv. Haeres.* 29, 1) that the followers of Jesus were all called Nazoræans before they were known as Christians. The name persisted as that of a Judæo-Christian sect who acknowledged the Messiahship of Jesus, but insisted upon the observance of all the requirements of the Law.

2. It is etymologically possible to derive the word from נָצַר, "to guard, preserve"; "Jesus Nazoræus" would then mean "Jesus the Preserver" or "Saviour." If this were the title of a divinity worshipped by Gnostic sects out of which Christianity developed, the early emphasis upon the epithet would be naturally accounted for; while neither the title itself, nor the emphasis on it, can be made intelligible upon the supposition of its reference to a wholly obscure, and probably non-existent, town.

3. Epiphanius speaks (*op. cit.*, 29, 6) of *Ναζαπαῖοι* who "were before Christ and knew not Christ." This seems pretty direct evidence that the word was in use with some special religious significance in the pre-Christian period.

This evidence, also, does not appear conclusive; but it has pertinency and interest, so far as it goes. It may be that Dr. Smith has here hit upon a hypothesis that may eventually yield fruit. Yet

⁸ See Dr. Smith's article in *The Monist*, XV, pp. 25-45.

even here he overstates the testimony of his sources, especially in his treatment of the evidence of Epiphanius, which he regards as so "conclusive" as to be "in fact the end of controversy."⁴ Epiphanius, in the first place, expressly distinguishes the terms "Nazoraioi" and "Nasaraioi," and plainly differentiates the sects to whom he ascribes those names. The "Nazoraioi" were a Jewish-Christian or Ebionitish sect, well known to us from the references to them by Jerome and other writers, as well as from the description of Epiphanius. They "adhered to the Law and practised circumcision," they "did not renounce the Law and the Prophets," but "confessed all things exactly as do the Jews," "differing from them only in believing on the Christ" (Epiphanius, *Adv. Haeres.* 29).⁵ The "Nasaraioi," on the other hand, according to the Bishop of Constantia, were a pre-Christian sect, Jewish by race, and classified by him among the "Jewish heresies"; while they observed the rite of circumcision, the Sabbath and the Jewish feasts, they condemned sacrifices, ate no flesh, and rejected the Pentateuch, professing to be in possession of a more authentic Mosaic revelation. If the Christian "Nazoraioi" and the pre-Christian "Nasaraioi" were, as Dr. Smith contends, one and the same sect, it is curious that the vegetarian regimen and the hostility to the orthodox Law, distinctive of the latter "heretics," were not found among the former also. Moreover, the "Nasaraioi" are the peculiar property of Epiphanius; apparently no other patristic writer gives even a hint of their existence. His own information about them he presents as having come to him rather vaguely at second-hand (ὡς ὁ εἰς ἡμᾶς ἐλθὼν περιέχει λόγος). Now a fact so significant as the derivation of Christianity and of the original name of the Christian believers from so peculiar a Jewish movement, could not have been unknown to other apologists and heresiographers. But Dr. Smith supposes that all save Epiphanius suppressed their knowledge, because the fact ran counter to the theory which they wished to establish, about the origination of the Church in the work of a personal Messianic founder. The "Nasaraioi" were never to be mentioned, lest the whole fatal story of the true descent of Christianity—now first revealed by a mathematician of New Orleans—should be given away. The supposition is far from plausible. A conspiracy of silence so extensive and effectual, about a fact that (according to the hypothesis) must at

⁴ *The Monist*, XV, p. 34.

⁵ So Jerome: ita Christum recipiunt ut observationes legis veteris non omittant.

the outset have been notorious and undeniable, would be a truly miraculous violation of historical probability. There is no reason to think that the early Christian writers had the wit to conceal so completely the skeleton in their closet, even if they can be supposed to have been, for some centuries, unanimous in a deliberate design to do so. Nor could such mere evasion have been a natural or effective policy for them. For their opponents, pagan and Jewish, must have known the fact as well as they; and one can well imagine how constantly (under the supposed circumstances) the name "Nasaraioi" would have been thrown into the faces of the Christians, and how imperative it would have been for the apologists to discuss directly, and to explain away, the connection of their Church and doctrine with this (*ex hypothesi*) familiar school of heterodox pre-Christian Jews.⁸ Out of a single description of a sect of "Nasaraioi" by a late fourth-century writer of not the highest authority, who confessedly knew nothing about them at first-hand, Dr. Smith fabricates a whole chapter of church history that is in the highest degree picturesque and engaging, but quite impossible of belief. The solitary testimony of Epiphanius—in view of the countervailing probabilities—is quite insufficient to assure us that there ever were any such "Nasaraioi" as he describes. He was capable of a great amount of confusion of names and of misapprehension of facts. But assuming that the sect existed as described, the antecedent probabilities concur with Epiphanius's own account of the matter, which is that the pre-Christian "Nasaraioi" and the "Nazoraioi," or early Jewish Christians, were quite distinct bodies, with different tenets and customs, with conflicting attitudes toward the Pentateuchal Law, and, indeed, with little in common beyond a similarity of names. Finally—and this is perhaps the greatest gap in the argument—Dr. Smith entirely fails to bring his pre-Christian Nasaræans or Nazoræans into any sort of relation to a Jesus-cult. The two halves of his principal argument fail to connect. "Nazarene" may possibly enough have originally been an epithet having some religious rather than geographical import; though we do not know what that import was, and the whole question is merely a field for ingenious and

⁸ Lest the reader suspect me of exaggeration in ascribing to Dr. Smith this humorous idea of a conspiracy of silence about the "Nasaraioi," let me quote his own words: "The dumbness of other heresiologists. . . now becomes more expressive than their speech. It was just because they had wit enough to perceive the danger of discussing these Nasaraioi, that they maintained a prudent but ominous silence, broken only by harmless allusions to their heretical doctrines. But the valor of Epiphanius got the better of his discretion." *The Monist*, XV, p. 41.

unverifiable conjecture. But at all events, the first-century Jewish community who (according to Dr. Smith) had the name of Nazoreans, are not said, even by Epiphanius, to have maintained a cult of a divine being called Jesus; and the sect which did (according to Dr. Smith) maintain such a cult was not called Nazorean. We are still a long way from the beginning of a proof of the existence of a Gnostic pre-Christian cult of Ἰησοῦς ὁ Ναζωραῖος.

III. The words ἀνίστημι and ἀνάστασις, with their Aramaic counterparts, were—so the next argument runs—quasi-technical terms in the vocabulary of Jewish Messianism; they referred to the coming and triumph of the hoped-for Redeemer of Israel or of mankind; and the first preachers of the “Anastasis of the Christ” could only have been understood by their contemporary hearers as heralding the speedy fulfilment of this hope.—This contention Dr. Smith bases chiefly upon two sorts of evidence.

I. An examination of both the classical and Hellenistic use of ἀνίστημι, he maintains, shows that, when not qualified by other expressions, the word did not ordinarily or naturally suggest the idea of resurrection from the dead; while it was very familiar in the sense of the “raising up” or “bringing forward,” through providential agency, of a prophet or leader or king or deliverer or “horn of salvation.” The latter use unquestionably occurs in the New Testament, e. g., Acts iii. 22, 26; Heb. vii. 11. But the other meaning is, of course, far more common; and I can see no reason whatever for supposing it to be a later or secondary meaning. The verb is used—and used without ἐκ νεκρῶν or other explanatory context—with the sense “to restore to life,” in what was very nearly the most famous passage in all Greek literature—the speech of Achilles to Priam in the last book of the Iliad (550-551):

“οὐ γάρ τι πρήξεις ἀκαχήμενος υἱὸς ἔηος,
οὐδέ μιν ἀνστήσεις.”

“For naught shall it avail thee to mourn thy noble son.
Thou canst not raise him.”

The same sense occurs again in a familiar choral ode of the Agamemnon of Æschylus (1361), and the Electra of Sophocles (139). Dr. Smith assuredly knows these facts; he would, I think, have dealt more fairly with his readers if he had explicitly mentioned them—at least the Homeric instance—especially since he takes the trouble to explain away the significance of Lucian’s use of ἀνάστασις, in the sense of “resurrection from the dead,” on the ground of the

late date of the writer. This substantive, it is evident, must always have been capable of suggesting the same range of meanings as the corresponding verb. As for the Hebrew terms, the author's discussion of them is no more convincing. It is true that the causative (Hiphil) of קם , "rise," does not occur in the Old Testament with the meaning "raise from the dead"; but the active form of the stem is used to signify "to rise from the dead" in Isaiah xxvi. 14, and Job, xiv. 12. These pertinent passages our author likewise neglects to quote. Dr. Smith's sixteen pages of labored reasoning on linguistic grounds seem to me wholly without valuable result.

2. A simpler piece of evidence, however, is found by the author in 2 Timothy ii. 18, where we are told that certain teachers, Hymenæus and Philetus, declared that "the resurrection had already taken place." It is a little difficult to see how—even if we knew no more about the meaning of this than the author suggests—the text can be supposed to favor the present theory of the original import of Anastasis. For, in the first place, the resurrection in question must be either that of Jesus or that of Christian believers generally. But the writer of the pastoral epistles surely cannot have deemed it a damnable heresy to maintain either that Jesus had already been "raised up" as the Messiah, or had already been "raised from the dead." The question at issue is, then, evidently that of the resurrection of the faithful; and ἀνάστis can therefore be used here only in the precise sense which Dr. Smith is intent upon showing that it did not originally bear. Furthermore, we know, beyond reasonable doubt, just what Gnostic heresy is here referred to; it is the doctrine—fully described by Tertullian and ascribed by him to the Valentinians, by Irenæus to "the followers of Simon and of Carpocrates"—that the true resurrection of the believer takes place when, by the attainment of the saving gnosis, and through baptism, he is delivered from spiritual death (Tertull., *De Res. Carnis* 19, *De Praesc. Haer.* 33, Irenæus, *Adv. Haer.* II, 31 § 2). Other canonical passages cited by the author in support of his contention are even more surprisingly irrelevant. In favor of his theory about the genesis of the Dogma of the Resurrection he cannot be said to have offered any substantial evidence.

Though there remain certain supplementary points urged by Dr. Smith in favor of his principal hypothesis, the foregoing examination covers all the arguments which the author himself appears to regard as fundamental. The long concluding essay *Saeculi Silen-*

tium,⁷ dealing with the relatively distinct problem of the date and authorship of the Epistle to the Romans, it is not possible to consider here. But of the main and most revolutionary theory, that relating to the origin of Christianity, it may be said, by way of recapitulation, that not only does the author's own evidence, when critically examined, fail to yield any material ground for the theory; but also that, in part, the theory is flatly contradicted by evidence in his chosen sources, of which, for unexplained reasons, he neglects to apprise his readers.

It remains to add that, while the foregoing examination has dealt with the hypotheses of *Der vorchristliche Jesus* as if there were no general, logical presumption either against or for them, they really conflict with all the antecedent probabilities in such a matter, and could therefore be justified only by the most overwhelming mass of specific historical evidences. For the theory of the book requires us to suppose that a being originally worshiped as divine, came, in a century or so, to be thought of as a person so definitely human as the central figure of the Synoptic Gospels: one born in plebeian family in an ill-esteemed province, who hungered and thirsted, who lived with publicans and sinners, who (except in manifestly late and corrupt passages) is represented as speaking little of himself, who denied his own omniscience, who was betrayed and given over to a shameful death, whose serene faith was transiently overcome in one awful moment of physical anguish on the cross; whose story was associated with definite places and historic characters, and whose brothers and kin and personal followers were, in the early second century, remembered as real persons. The Transformation of the Prophet of Nazareth into the strange, oracular figure found in the Fourth Gospel, is conceivable; but the transformation of a being even more vague and superhuman than that of the Fourth Gospel into the hero of the Synoptic Tradition, is a process that passes belief. We are not without historic examples of the apotheosis of great leaders of mankind; but there is surely no historic parallel for such a rapid and definite humanizing of a metaphysical hypostasis.

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THE FUTURE OF ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGES.

In *The Monist* for October, 1907, there appears an editorial essay on "Artificial Languages," which seems to me so full of mis-

⁷ Discussed by the same writer in *The Hibbert Journal*, I, pp. 308-334.