

men of his own times, supplies and sustains the proof of his godhead. He asserts nothing more than this, that the Gospels, in a broad and general sense, are historical and veritable; and this, in point of fact, is virtually settled by all. Such being the case,—one or other of two hypotheses is unavoidable. Either such a man as Jesus of Nazareth really appeared on earth about the time which the Christian records fix, or the writers of the gospels gave form and life to a mere idea, which never had an outward realization, and existed nowhere but in their minds. No third supposition is conceivable on any rational ground; one or other of these two must be accepted; and in truth there is no choice between them, for the difficulties involved in the latter are wholly insurmountable. On the supposition that Jesus of Nazareth never actually existed, it is not within the range of rational belief that the idea of such a Being was formed in that country, that age, and in the minds of such men as the Evangelists are held to have been, and as in point of mental endowment and culture and social rank they certainly were. Granting then the humanity of Christ, it is utterly inexplicable except on the ground of true divinity.

And he next proceeds to the proof of this. He remarks that the outward and inward aspects of every earthly course are mysteriously related to each other. But the life of Christ stands out a mysterious exception to all the ordinary laws that govern the destiny of man. His poverty was one obstacle. He had to support himself by manual labour; "is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary?" His education at best must have been very limited; "how knoweth this man letters, having never learned?" He had no patronage;—in fact men of any influence were his bitter enemies. Thus, Jesus Christ as a man was alone, a poor artisan, uneducated and unpatronised. His entire social circumstances pronounce the impossibility, in human judgment, of his elevation to power and glory. Thirty years he spent in Nazareth; for three years he ministered before the world, and then he suffered death by crucifixion. Humanly speaking, what was the cause of his death? He had incurred the violent hatred of the leaders of all the religious sects of his day. His spiritual views, and his advocacy of them openly, rendered him obnoxious alike to Pharisees, Sadducees, Ascetics, and Mystics. While contending with one another, these sects united in common hostility to him and their leaders by stirring up the people against him, procured his death. The great facts then are, that Christ was a public teacher for only three years, and died in comparative youth. All that he did was to speak—he left behind him a few spoken truths—not a line or word of writing—and a certain spirit incarnated in his principles, and breathed out from his life, and then he died.

Further, it is to be remembered that he was born a Jew, one of a people who had been long accustomed to over-value them-

selves, and to under-value all the rest of the world. He appeared besides at a period in their history of awful corruption. But Galilee was disreputable even in Judea, wickeder as it was; and even in Galilee, Nazareth was notorious for the ignorance and profligacy of its inhabitants. Christ's connexion with this place was against him as a public teacher; "can any good thing" they said, "come out of Nazareth?" It was in such a place that Jesus spent thirty years of his life. It was here he stood forth, after that time, to unfold his mission. Such then are the outer conditions, briefly summed up, of the life of Christ.

But at this stage we are met by the assertion that these events in the life of the Saviour are fabulous rather than historical; and that they only shadow forth certain spiritual truths, and these the very truths that were most firmly believed by the nation in connexion with the expected Messiah. Now, the reader will at once perceive, that not one of the characteristic features in the life of Jesus of Nazareth is in harmony with the national expectations—the humble but still more the debased village in which he was born and brought up—his poverty—his trade of a carpenter—his utter want of worldly patronage—and worldly learning—all the main circumstances in his outward lot and condition are in fact diametrically opposed to the ideas which they entertained of the great Deliverer that was to arise among them. Such a character would have been the last that the Jewish mind could have conceived in connection with their Messiah, and the last to be presented as a claimant for such an office. The Jewish Messiah was to be a monarch and a conqueror; and around this idea all their hopes had for many ages been concentrated, as indeed they are at the present day.

Such is the groundwork of our author's reasoning. Granting the humanity of Jesus, he maintains that with such facts before us his divinity can be established on the most solid basis. To suppose that the writers of the Gospel invented such a character is only to involve the question in still deeper mystery. With him alone—with this poor young man, without friends, unknown, unbefriended, did this idea originate—lofty, catholic, spiritual, embracing not Judea only but the wide world—not a nation only, but universal humanity. And was he then, he asks, nothing more than he seemed to be? Was all this possible, in the circumstances, to a mere man? Above all, was it possible to such a man as we have found Jesus outwardly was?

In such a brief notice as the present, it is impossible for us to do more than indicate the leading points in Mr. Young's argument, which is of a cumulative nature, each chapter and section opening up a more abundant field of testimony in favour of the great truth of the Divinity of Christ, which he labours by a beautiful and consistent chain of reasoning to establish, upon purely historical ground. We regard his treatise as

a most valuable contribution, to the evidence of Christianity. It has the merit of suggesting a new method of approaching the question—one at least which we do not remember having seen wrought out before with such striking results. It is one indeed which no infidel can peruse without feeling that he occupies a dangerous position in denying, upon grounds of reason, the testimony of Him who "spoke as never man spake." Is he disposed, on grounds of reason, to deny the possibility of miracles, then let him remember that the existence of Christianity, now so widely diffused over the world, is both a fact and, considering its origin, the greatest of all miracles that could possibly be imagined. Whatever may be the faults of those who prefer this religion, this forms no argument against it. It itself is divine, and can only have sprung from a divine original. The proofs upon which it rests are open to the investigation of all, and are so weighty and invincible that seldom or never will the anxious enquirer after truth fail to find it in the pages of the Word of God.

The following is the concluding paragraph of this excellent little volume, which we have no doubt will be extensively read and admired. "But once, only once, in all time, the Godhead tabernacled in flesh, and from within this marvellous veil gave forth its holy and grand announcements. The first, the lowest, but yet also the last and highest duty of the world, is to listen and believe. The command to all ages and to all men is listen and believe. That command was given of old in Palestine, from the opened sky beneath which Jews of Nazareth stood—"This is my beloved son, hear ye him!"

CHURCH AT HOME

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland met on Thursday.

At the conclusion of his levee in the forenoon, the Lord High Commissioner left Holyrood Palace, and, accompanied by the city and country authorities, &c., went in procession to the High Church, which he reached a few minutes after twelve o'clock.

On arriving at the High Church his Grace was conducted to the royal seat. The sermon was preached by the Rev. Dr. Andrew Bell of Linlithgow, the retiring Moderator, the reverend Doctor taking for his text the 11th verse of the 4th chapter of Ephesians. At the conclusion of the service, his Grace left the church, and re-entering his carriage proceeded to the Assembly Hall, where a guard of honour from the 92nd Highland was drawn up.

His Grace having taken his seat on the Throne, the retiring Moderator engaged in prayer, and the roll of members was made up in the usual manner.

Dr. ANDREW BELL, the retiring Moderator, then addressed the Assembly, and con-