

"Now, there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man, for he was a doer of wonderful works,—a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ; and when Pilate, at the suggestion of the principal men among us, had condemned him to the cross, those that loved him at the first did not forsake him, for he appeared to them alive again the third day, as the divine prophets had foretold these and ten thousand other wonderful things concerning him; and the tribe of Christians, so named from him, are not extinct at this day."

The next paragraph continues the narrative of the disturbing events begun in the paragraph preceding that referring to Jesus, thus: "About the same time, another *sad calamity* put the Jews into disorder." Did the alleged appearance of Jesus put them into disorder? If not, it cannot be the "another." Josephus has just mentioned "one" calamity—Jews killed in the streets of Jerusalem,—and proceeds to relate "another"—the expulsion of Jews from Rome; these two make sense, shows sequence in the account; to sandwich a reference to Jesus between these "two calamities," connected as they are by the very language of the historian, is evidence of the clumsy, bungling character of the stupid forgery.

But an eminent Freethinker points to the "style" in which the passage is written. What, then was the habit of Josephus—did he dismiss important events in the briefest possible space? On the contrary, he devotes pages to even a street riot. Yet when he comes to describe the Messiah, the deliverer of the Jews, the Savior of mankind, the Incarnated God on the earth, the Infinite crucified on the Cross, the Jesus who rose from the dead and ascended to heaven after establishing a new religion, working endless miracles and prophesying his second coming in that generation—all this Josephus disposes of in nine lines! To say that this is "the style" of Josephus is a statement that anybody is competent to form an opinion upon.

But, besides placing the crucifixion opposite the year 28, we have the writer recording what we may call an eye-opener—"Christians are not extinct at this day!" Considering that the writer was on the spot where such wonders are said to have happened, within about twenty years of the time of the crucifixion, his story is marvellous indeed.

When a young man, it is reasonable to suppose, Josephus must have met older men who had lived through the events of the days in which the alleged Jesus lived. His omitting to record any of them may have suggested to some subsequent writer the importance of adding a brief allusion to them. The silence of Josephus on the most remarkable events which ever happened in the world, according to the Gospels, may, however, be accounted for on the supposition that they had not occurred or had not been reported at the time Josephus wrote. Mr. Gould (p. 160) sympathetically remarks: "It is little short of a calamity that so much obscurity should gather over the origin of Christianity." Speaking historically, not only obscurity gathers over this unique event in the history of the world; it seems to me to be a case of total eclipse. I believe the man has yet to be born who can satisfactorily explain why this should be so if the Gospels are genuine.