

all predicted hundreds of years before they came to pass, and all fulfilled in the history of Jesus of Nazareth; and it is to be remembered that over many of these events His parents and His nation could have had no control in bringing them to pass.

Were we to see a man discharge a fire-arm and speed the missile to a certain mark, we might say it was by accident that he hit the mark; but when we see the gun fired twenty, forty, fifty times, and yet observe that every time the ball goes straight to the mark, we should be obliged to say that the marksman is aiming to hit that very mark. I see not how any one who will study the predictions of the Old Testament can resist the conviction that the shafts of prophecy were aimed directly at Jesus of Nazareth.

Another proof that Jesus Christ did come into the world is furnished by the Jews themselves, who reject His Messiahship. They do not deny that there was such a man as Jesus of Nazareth. Josephus, in some editions of his works, is made to mention Him by name, and seems to regard Him as something more than man; and if this passage is spurious (as some scholars affirm), it is not denied that he mentions John the Baptist, and certain circumstances which point to the existence of Christ in the world at that time. The Talmuds, though containing much falsehood, refer to His nativity, His flight into Egypt, and do not deny that He performed many eminent miracles.

Still another kind of evidence is supplied in great abundance by early Christian and heathen writers. Justin Martyr, who presented his "Apology" to the Emperor Antoninus Pius and to the Roman Senate about the year 140, and Tertullian, in a like treatise, written about 200, and Eusebius, who wrote later, all appeal to the "Acts of Pontius Pilate," preserved in the public archives, as attesting the truth of Christ's death and resurrection.

Quetonius, who wrote A.D. 116, says: "Claudius Cæsar expelled the Jews from Rome because they raised contin-

ual tumults at the instigation of Christ." Tacitus, who wrote A.D. 110, says: "The author of that sect," speaking of Christians, "was *Christus*, who, in the reign of Tiberius, was punished with death as a criminal, by the prosecutor, Pontius Pilate."

The younger Pliny, in his celebrated letter to Trajan, asks, in A.D. 107, what he shall do with the many people in his province of Bithynia who refuse to offer sacrifice to the Roman gods, but, "who sing among themselves alternately a hymn to Christ as to God."

Celsus, who wrote against Christianity in the second century, speaks of Christ as having lived a short while before his time; Porphyry, a little while after, Julian, the Apostate, who reigned in the fourth century, and Mahomet, who flourished in the latter part of the fifth century, all testify as to the fact of Christ's existence on the earth. The stilted, yet brilliant, pages of Gibbon, who assuredly wrote not in the interests of our holy faith, give ample proof of the existence of Christ, in the many persecutions of Christians which he details; and the Catacombs of Rome, the place of burial as well as of worship of the early disciples of our Lord, are a living witness of the real personality of Jesus Christ.

The very life of Christ is proof that He was a real character: a life so perfect as to have transcended the power of all the historians, novelists, orators and poets of the world, and to have extorted from the infidel Rousseau the tribute that, "if it was the invention of man, then the inventors were greater than the greatest heroes."

Not to speak of the history and progress of Christianity—a system of doctrine which bears His name, and derives its all-conquering power from Him—we might appeal to the ordinances of His Church, which derive their significance from facts in His personal history—especially the Lord's Supper; rites very simple in their nature, and yet touchingly beautiful in their origin and associations, and which have been observed with sacred reverence for nearly two