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## IS THERE ANY JESUS OF NAZARETH IN HISTORY?

BY CHARLES CATTELL.

I ONCE gave as a reason "Why I rejected Christianity," that I regarded it as *unhistorical*. As this is a point not over clear, an explanation may be of service. Two qualifications of the meaning of the term "history" denote its character—sacred and profane. It is here used to denote what has been written by others than the writers of Christian literature. In other words, the question is: Are the life and doings of Jesus, as related in so-called sacred history, recorded or alluded to in "profane" history? Did any writer who described the ordinary events of the times in which Jesus is said to have flourished, mention his birth or resurrection, or his founding a new religion? The answer given by Prof. Graetz, in his excellent "History of the Jews," page 166, is: "Justus and Josephus, who relate to the smallest minutiae everything that took place under Pilate, never named the life and death of Jesus."

This, to me, appears to cover the whole ground, since they are the authorities upon which subsequent writers had to depend. It may be useful to point out that I am not setting up a man of straw for the purpose of knocking him down. Quite recently a well-known clergyman stated in one of our monthlies that the stupendous miracle of the Resurrection was historically on a level with the battle of Blenheim and the coronation of Victoria! A distinguished American has also just stated, although holding advanced views, that Jesus in all essentials is as historic as Julius Cæsar or Cicero, and lies beyond the reach of any destroying hand.

With regard to the first, as the Queen survives and was present at her own coronation, the fact of the Resurrection ought to obtain belief just as far as it is similarly evidenced. As to the second, I think that the death of Cæsar, causing the sun to turn pale and all vegetation to become yellow for a whole year, does furnish a slight parallel to the death of Jesus, which darkened the world for an hour or two.

Last October, I received from the Truth Seeker Co. (Bradford, Eng.), as a prize, Mr. Gould's "Concise History of Religions." In Vol. 3, p. 81, the author says: "Neither classical historians, nor Josephus, nor Philo offer us any information as to the career of Jesus of Nazareth." In Vol. 2, p. 160, he says: "The truth is that, *outside* the New Testament, no historians are