

WHY WAS JESUS CHRIST A POOR MAN?

BY DAVID HEATH.

THE answer to this inquiry is not at once manifest. He was born in the midst of a humble family, and it may be said He had no choice in the matter. But the same Divine purpose which planned His life, after the known lines, could as easily have planned it otherwise, giving the Saviour of the world a position of dignity and independence in society. There must have been reasons for His poverty, which it may be well for us to find out.

Many reasons may be given why He should have been in a "good position in life." With the same kindliness of heart we know Him to have had, He would, supposing He had been rich, have influenced the poor and lost of His day none the less, but rather the more. The poor are most deeply touched by the kindness of the rich, and in human eyes the philanthropy of the upper classes, in actively and personally seeking to save the lost, comes with greater unction than from socially obscure people.

It seems as if Jesus could not only have served the poor more largely had He been "well off," but the upper classes also might be expected to have given more heed to Him. We know what a disposition there is in respectable human nature to think but lightly of the words and works of poorer brethren. "Wisdom is better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom is despised, and his words are not heard." Very commonplace sentiments and opinions which have come from the lips of ordinary men scores of times without much heed being taken of them, coming from "an influential gentleman" are printed and reprinted, quoted, applauded, and followed.

Teaching the same doctrines, and urging the same words of symbolic royalty, it is equally certain that had Christ been rich, His end would have been death just the same, and there would have been more show of reason in the charge of rivalry, of which the Jews made so much before the Roman Court. There was something ridiculous about the charge against such a man as Jesus. The empire would have shown itself to be in the last stage