

But, observe, it is all in the region of constructive interpretation. It is fortunately not possible to walk on clouds; nor is it possible for little bodiless heads and faces to float about in space and mingle their golden hair with the bright rays of the sun. Nor is it possible for any baby to contain behind its eyes the deep mystery of human sin, sorrow and redemption, such as is found in the fathomless liquid depths of the eye of this baby here. The whole thing, say the actualists, is a fabrication; and yet it is just this fabrication which perhaps more than any other in the whole region of art, has struck home as the truth to the human race. Here we see how low we are; here we see to what heights it is possible to rise.

The modern painter, Millet, has just as deep a faith as Raphael, but he does not present it in the same way. Not upon the mystery of the heavens is his eye directed but on the human life barely suggested by Raphael, while what occupies the main place in Raphael's picture is only hinted at by him. Millet in his *Angelus* gives us a picture of the peasants of N. Brittany engaged in their heavy daily task, while in their mind is the belief that they are immortal spirits. Thus when the "Angelus" sounds across the level fields from the distant sunlit church spire, and the call comes to them to acknowledge the origin and source of all their life, they at once respond and are transfigured into children of the infinite, possessing within their spirits the calm and peace of the skies. This sense of kinship with divine realities may be mingled with I know not what rites of worship or daily tasks in the life of the peasant, nor with what superstitions

even. Be that as it may; let the feet of these peasants be heavily shod and tied down to what they work in; our eyes are nevertheless drawn upward by the outlines of their unusually tall forms ("Ay, every inch a king") till we see their heads bathed as it were in the pure atmosphere, and sharply chiselled against a sky which makes as true a halo as was ever drawn around the head of mediæval saint.

Luke's story, too, is just as beautiful in its way as that of any of the painters.

(Lu. 2^s) "And there were shepherds in the same country abiding in the field and keeping watch by night over their flock. And an angel of the Lord stood by them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Be not afraid: for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all the people: for there is born to you this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this is the sign unto you: ye shall find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying

"Glory to God in the highest
And on earth peace among men in whom
he is well pleased."

It is foolish to say that there is no truth in this passage, simply because the events could not have happened; it is equally foolish to insist that the value of the narrative depends on its literal and verbal fidelity to fact.

Now let me give in a few words, not a picture, but a slight shadow-sketch of Jesus. From a mother of remarkable intelligence and piety (John the Baptist, you see, was a connection on the mother's side), the child Jesus learned to study and ponder over not only the law but the prophets, and at the same time was taught to expect the coming of a great and powerful man, who would rally the Jews as their leader and shake off the Roman oppressor. How ardently the devout