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CELSUS: THE FIRST PAGAN CRITIC OF CHRISTIANITY, AND HIS ANTICIPATION OF MODERN THOUGHT.

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CELSUS has been speaking through the mouth of a supposed Jew (except in the last paragraph), but it is easy to see that there is a Greek mind behind the pen. He is more intent upon making a strong argument than upon representing a consistent Jew. Origen does not fail to discover that it is anomalous to have a Jew quoting Homer and Euripides. And occasionally the Jew says things which no Jew would be likely to say, unless he were a Sadducee or a Samaritan. Celsus is less fettered when he puts the supposed Jew aside and steps forth in his own person. But his method of argument, though more direct, is essentially the same. Freed now from the trouble of impersonating the Jew, he can set Judaism and Christianity against each other. "The Jews and the Christians," he says, "most stupidly dispute with one another concerning the expected King of the Jews. One side maintains that he has already come, while the other denies the fact. The Jews, being originally Egyptians, seceded from their nation and got up a religion of their own. The Christians have done to them what they did to their ancestors, the Egyptians. Both are opposed to the religion of the Empire." Then he points to the multiplied dissensions among Christians themselves. "At first their number was small, and they were all of one mind: but now that they are so numerous they are cut up into factions. They agree in one thing only, that is, the name, if, indeed, they agree in that." That was a description of Christianity seventeen hundred years ago. Has the reproach lost any of its point to-day? Celsus continues:

"The Christians invent terrors and superstitions to gain their power over man. They terrify their followers by threatening them with future punishments. Heaven forbid that either I or anybody else should ever reject the doctrine that the wicked shall be punished and the just shall be rewarded after death. But the Christians assert the doctrine without proof. Why is it a fault to have studied the best opinions, and to have both the reality and the appearance of wisdom? What hindrance does this offer to the knowledge of God? Why should it not rather be an assistance and a means by which one may be better able to arrive at the truth? When a person is to be initiated into the other mysteries [that is, the heathen mysteries], the herald proclaims that where any one is pure in conduct, wise in