

appointment in the treasury, but when Hsien Tsung became emperor shortly afterwards, he was degraded to Lien district as sub-prefect, soon, however, being made prefect, and then transferred in the same capacity to the districts of Fan and Ho in succession. He returned to the capital as secretary of imperial receptions and was granted another high literary degree. He left the capital once more to be prefect of Suchow, where he acquired fame as an official. Finally, he reached the highest office, becoming advisor of the heir-apparent, inspector of Han-liu manuscripts, and president of the board of rites. Su Wen Chung, a later poet and statesman, said that Liu Yu Hsi and Liu Tsung Yuan, by not adhering to the plans of the faithless censor, Wang Shu Wen, were to be reckoned among the most faithful subjects of the T'ang dynasty. Po Chu-i, the contemporary poet, praised Liu Yu Hsi as a most eminent poet and a most poetical correspondent, and, according to a fashion then current, the works of both poets were classed together under the single name of Liu Po. Another story runs that one day Liu Yu Hsi, Liu Tsung Yuan, Po Chu-i, and others, sitting together, started to versify on the subject of "Thoughts of old Nankin." Liu finished first, and Po, looking at what he had written, said: "Four of us have been seeking the dragon, but Liu has found the pearls. All that is left is the scales and the claws, so why should we write any more?" And with that the others cast aside their unfinished verses. It was a Chinese mode of conceding Liu's superiority. Not unlikely the following lines were written on some similar occasion.]

Who heeds the hill's bare height until
 Some legend grows around the hill?
 Who cares how deep the stream before
 Its fame is writ in country lore?
 And so this humble hut of mine
 May shelter virtues half divine.
 The moss may climb its ruined stair,
 And grassy stains the curtain wear,
 But scholars at their ease within,
 For all but Ignorance enters in,
 With simple lute the time beguile,
 Or "Golden Classic's" page a while.
 No discords here their ears assail,
 Nor cares of business to bewail.
 This is the life the Sages led.
 "How were they poor?" Confucius said.

A CRITICISM OF THE CLERGYMAN'S "CONFESSIONS."

To the Editor of The Open Court:

Not having read the book entitled *Confessions of a Clergyman*, I am perhaps in no position to discuss intelligently any of its points. However, I shall trust the powers of lucid exposition of Dr. Carus concerning one position of the unknown author.

"He rejoices that the passage in Mark relating to the story of the Ascension has been cut out by higher (*sic*, why not lower?) criticism so that it will no longer trouble a distressed faith" (*Open Court*, Dec. 1910, p. 769).

Why rejoice? Because the passage contains an account of "the signs that

shall accompany them," or because of the Ascension itself? If the former, does it make the New Testament any the less miraculous? Then we should welcome somebody who would show us the spuriousness of the Book of Acts. It must be because of the account of the Ascension that our clergyman rejoices. But to remove from the text any account in so many precise words of the ascension of Jesus even though perfectly justified on grounds of textual criticism, is no cause for rejoicing, for it does not make primitive Christianity one whit more modern. The ascension of Jesus is a logical necessity in the world-view of the time to faith in Jesus as Messiah. The same might be shown of the Resurrection.

The course of Gospel criticism has made it increasingly plain that Jesus believed in the coming of the Kingdom in an eschatological sense, and that its advent was at the door. His disciples shared in his messianic secret that he was to usher it in coming as the Son of Man on the clouds of Heaven. He foresaw that he must die and rise again if he was to come again in this supernatural manner. For, forsooth, was he not on earth in Galilee? To understand this we must have recourse to the ancient Jewish cosmogony. Above the firmament was Heaven; in the bowels of the earth was Hades, the abode of the dead. For Jesus to die meant to the early Christians to descend to Hades (some even said he preached there). For Jesus to come in the clouds of Heaven meant the necessity of his departure upward from Hades (= his resurrection), his ascension to Heaven, where he was seated for the moment at the right hand of God, and whence the early Christians were daily awaiting his coming in glory on the clouds of Heaven to usher in the Kingdom. This is the testimony of the early speeches in Acts. It is the woof into which the early Christian hopes are woven. To remove the words at the end of Mark is not to remove its fundamental idea from the beliefs of early Christianity or its documents. To remove the ascension of Jesus is to take away a necessary joint in the framework on which their hopes and beliefs are hung.

Why then rejoice? To remove the ascension of Jesus does not make first century Christianity more modern and it does not even allow it to be itself. It seems this unknown author is endeavoring to do what so many have fruitlessly tried, make twentieth century ideas live in the first. The early cosmogony is dead and to us it seems childish, but let us at least admit that to the first century it was real; if we do not choose to admit that, then, these documents are closed to an historical understanding. The hopes of Jesus and his disciples as to an early end of the world were illusions. Let us admit it once for all and save at least our intellectual integrity. The early eschatological ideas of Christianity are crude and do not fit into our modern view of the world. We do not even give them that serious consideration which is involved in argument. To mention them is to reject them. Yet all these views are necessary to true historical knowledge and appreciation of primitive Christianity and to deny them is not equivalent to banishing them from the New Testament.

From Dr. Carus's review of this work I judge that our author has renewed his faith by a patch-work process and not by a clear-cut analysis of the distinctions between ancient and modern faith, and that if his confessions are valuable they are only so to those just emerging or about to emerge from an antiquated world-view.

AN UNCONFESSSED CLERGYMAN.

P. S. Why has nobody (at least to my knowledge) written an account of the "Resurrection of Jesus in the light of the eschatological hopes of Jesus and

his disciples"? If the disciples believed Jesus would come as the Messiah in a supernatural manner, surely the *post mortem* appearances were after all not so unexpected as we have been given to suppose, and the legends did have some better understood cause than Renan or Strauss etc. have held forth.

LAO-TZE AND YIN-HI.

Sze Ma Ch'ien, the historian of China, says in his Historical Records when speaking of Lao-tze, the Old Philosopher:

"Lao-tze resided in Cho most of his life. When he foresaw the decay of Cho, he departed and came to the frontier. The custom-house officer, Yin-Hi, said: 'Sir, since it pleases you to retire, I request you for my sake to write a book.'"

The artist who made our frontispiece represents this scene. Yin-Hi with two attendants reverently approaches the philosopher and causes the venerable sage to write that famous book which has been a power in China down to the present day throughout its subsequent history of over two and a half millenniums. The book on "Reason and Virtue" was declared a canon by Emperor Ching (156-143 B. C.), and since that time has been called "The Canon of Reason and Virtue." It consists, as states Sze Ma Ch'ien, of about five thousand and odd words. These have been quoted and requoted by authors who lived from about 300 to 200 B. C., and in these ancient quotations about three quarters of the book has been verified. No one doubts that these quotations are genuine and that they were taken from the Canon of Reason and Virtue, which was known to Sze Ma Ch'ien. In modern times Lao-tze's Canon of Reason and Virtue is considered genuine by practically all sinologists with the sole exception of Professor Herbert A. Giles, who believes that the present book is a garbled reconstruction of the true Lao-tze from these many quotations, and he thinks that the original was lost at the time of the burning of the books. Professor Giles, however, stands alone in his opinion, for the very shortcomings of the book, its rambling composition and its lack of system and coherence, are evidence of the reliability of Sze Ma Ch'ien's report. Lao-tze's little book on "Reason and Virtue" bears all the imprints of the conditions under which it is reported to have been written. The old sage who is commonly supposed to have reached the mature age of three score and ten, is depressed with the ominous condition of his native land and quits the country and the misery that is sure to come upon it. He is old and ill at ease but his soul is full of profound wisdom welling over with sentences of far-reaching significance. Nevertheless he has not the time to arrange his thoughts in logical order. His brush glides over the paper hurriedly, nor does he take the trouble to revise what he has written. Thus his sentences are rambling. He quotes from his predecessors, the sages of yore, and he gives new meaning to some homely phrases.

Normally his book is divided into the first part on the *tao* or reason, and a second part, on *teh* or virtue; but according to the sense of his sentences, this distinction is not justified. He speaks of virtue or *teh* as much in the first part as of reason or *tao* in the second. We have no reason to doubt the genuineness of the book, nor the statement of the ancient Chinese historian on the mode of its composition.

The world is indeed indebted to Yin-Hi for having requested Lao-tze to write the book. Had he not done so, the life of one of the most venerable,