

THE INTERMENT OF JESUS.

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THE New Testament contains five accounts of the burial of Jesus. Four of them are the well-known Joseph of Arimathæa pericope which occurs in each of the four Gospels. The fifth is found in John xix. 31-34.

The attention of scholars has always been attracted by the first four narratives, while the fifth passage has been generally overlooked. The method prevailing among laymen, by which it is expected to establish the historical truth may be described as follows. The four Gospels, it is taken for granted, contain the reports of four different eye-witnesses. These have been impressed in different degrees by different phases of the events they record. All we have to do in order to make sure of what actually happened, is to combine all the features of all the accounts of a given event into one composite picture.

But from the very beginning of Bible criticism, a very marked and close relationship of the sections common to the first three Gospels was noticed and has induced scholars since Griesbach and Neander to distinguish those Gospels from the last by the adjective "Synoptic." Their parallel passages agree to such an extent in construction as well as in vocabulary as if not three writers, but one and the same person were speaking. Moreover, the author of the third Gospel states directly (Luke i. 1-4) that he is not an eye-witness but a collector and editor of manuscripts that were in circulation when he formed the plan of composing out of them his Gospel.

Therefore, the pericopes common to the Synoptics or to all four Gospels, may be after all not independent reports of four individual narrators, but only different revisions of originally one written account. Whosoever desires to ascertain the real facts of the life of Jesus thus, has first of all to make sure of the mutual relationship of the accounts from which he derives his information.

In the case of the Joseph of Arimathæa episode the task is not very difficult. It is easy enough to remove quite a number of later

additions to the text; and the oldest versions within our reach can be proved to have read as follows:

MATT.	MARK	LUKE	JOHN
When it got late, a man, Joseph of Arimathæa by name, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. And Joseph took the body and wrapped him down in a linen cloth and laid it in a linen cloth and laid it in a sepulcher which had been hewn out in the rock.	When it got late, as it was "preparation," Joseph of Arimathæa went in late and asked for the body of Jesus. And he took down, wrapped it with linen cloths. And he took him in a laid him in a sepulcher which had been hewn out of a rock.	A man, Joseph of Arimathæa by name, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. And he took it down, wrapped it with linen cloth and laid him in a sepulcher of the rock. And it was a day of "preparation," and the Sabbath began to shine.	Joseph of Arimathæa requested of Pilate that he might take down the body of Jesus. And he took and bound it with linen cloths. But there was in the place where he crucified a tomb. There now on account of the star laid Jesus.

1. The first change in Matt. is that from the received text: "There came a rich man from Arimathæa, named Joseph" to: "a man, Joseph of Arimathæa by name." According to the first version, Joseph would have come just at that moment from Arimathæa, which then must have been a place near Jerusalem. The proposed reading makes the man's name Joseph of Arimathæa in a similar way as, for instance, Jesus is called Jesus of Nazareth. That is supported by the testimony of the other three Gospels.

The adjectives "rich" before "man" (verse 57), "clean" before "linen cloth" (verse 59), and "his own new" before "tomb" (verse 60), have been dropped for the same reason, namely, because the other Gospels do not have these words. The last-mentioned addition to the text is closely connected with the first adjective. The student responsible for both glosses attempted to remove thereby the difficulty presented by the fact that Jesus was buried by Joseph of Arimathæa in a grave appropriated for that purpose without the owner's knowledge or consent. Neither Mark, Luke, nor John indicate that the tomb belonged to Joseph. From John xx. 15 we learn that Mary realized the unlawfulness of the burial of Jesus. She said to the supposed owner or manager of the garden: "Sir, if thou hast borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away." The glossator of the Matt. text made Joseph of Arimathæa the owner of the grave and, as it was apparently a quite expensive burial-place, a rich man.

The relative clause: "who also himself was Jesus's disciple,"

Am. R. V., or as a literal translation would read: "who also himself was made a disciple by Jesus," is not vouched for by the other Synoptists. It is moreover a clumsy statement and can mean only: "who also was a personal disciple of Jesus." That indicates a rather late origin, a time when personal disciples had disappeared from the scene or, at least, had become very rare.

The reason why such an addition was made to the text is not far to seek. The early readers must have asked what induced Joseph of Arimathæa to undertake the burial of Jesus. His intention was apparently of a friendly nature. That suggested the idea of his having been a friend and disciple. After having eliminated so much of verse 57, also the words "there came" in the beginning of the verse and "this man" at the head of verse 58 have to be omitted.

The second sentence in verse 58: "Then Pilate commanded it to be given up," Am. R. V., is likewise a later insertion. Its character is revealed by the temporal adverb "then" which takes the place of the usual coordinate conjunction "and," as well as by the absence of the direct object of the infinitive. The Greek text simply says: "Then Pilate commanded to be given up." Such incomplete constructions are characteristic of glosses. As marginal, or inter-linear remarks, they are frequently abbreviated.

The next interpolation is the sentence: "And he rolled a great stone to the door of the tomb and departed." The Luke and John accounts do not contain that statement, and it is much easier to explain how that reference to the stone happened to come into the burial story than how it dropped out. The stone plays quite a part in all the resurrection narratives (Matt. xxviii. 2; xxvii. 66; Mark xvi. 3f; Luke xxiv. 2; John xx. 1). Any reader may have observed that nothing was said of that stone in the burial pericope and restored what he regarded as the original text.

The two words "and departed" have been treated as integral part of the stone incident. That assumption is based on the silence of all the parallel accounts as to the departure of Joseph. The words, however, mark clearly the end of the burial account. Hence when they were first added, the sentence: "But Mary Magdalene was there and the other Mary sitting over against the grave" cannot have been there. It must have been added afterward for the same reason as the reference to the stone. Mary Magdalene and the other Mary of verse 61 are identical with Mary Magdalene and the other Mary of xxviii. 1. They are in some way connected with Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee of xxvii. 56. Possibly lack of space

compelled the person responsible for the two Marys to omit the words in apposition to the second Mary as well as the third woman.

The awkward construction of the sentence betrays likewise its character. Why should the two women have been sitting opposite the grave after Joseph had left? Neither Mark nor Luke speak of such a vigil, and John does not mention any women at the burial. Another indication of verse 62 being a gloss is the Greek word for "grave." It is the same word as that used in xxviii. 1ff, while in the burial account proper a different noun is found.

2. Mark xv. 42, the clause: "that is, the day before the Sabbath" cannot have belonged to the original text. For that was written by a native of Palestine for readers of Jewish descent, who, as a matter of course, knew that "preparation" was their name for Friday, cp. Luke xxiii. 54. Also the Matt. account must have contained this word "preparation", probably in the same place where it is found in Mark, immediately after "when it got too late." For the term appears in the other Gospels and it turns up Matt. xxvii. 62.

Verse 43 the words "there came", "a councilor of honorable estate", "and he boldly" as well as the relative clause "who also himself was looking for the kingdom of God" have to be rejected as spurious. The words in apposition to Joseph of Arimathæa occur neither in Matt. nor in John. They are intended to explain why Joseph could dare to go to Pilate and ask him for the body of Jesus. But they do not belong to the common source. In the first Gospel a commentator tried to formulate the motive which induced Joseph to bury Jesus. The even more important question how a friend of Jesus could obtain his body, however, is not touched upon. The Mark commentator answers it by making of Joseph a councilor who by virtue of his position might call upon Pilate at any time and ask him for special favors.

But the Greek equivalent of "councilor" is found in the entire New Testament only here in Mark and the parallel Luke passage. It denotes a "councilor," or "senator," that is, a member of a body of lawgivers, judges, and administrators, such as that which Kleisthenes instituted at Athens, or as the senate at Rome. But we have no knowledge of a similar body of men at Jerusalem whose members are ever called "senators." The Gospels speak indeed of a "Synedrion"; but the men sitting in it are "the chief priests and the elders of the people," "the chief priests and the scribes," or "the chief priests and the Pharisees." The word "councilor," therefore, points to a Gentile, not to a Palestinian, author.

The clause: "who also himself was looking for the kingdom of

God" is clearly an attempt of establishing a strong bond of affection between Joseph and Jesus. But it is unsatisfactory because the doctrine of the kingdom of God was not a specifically Christian dogma. Jesus shared it with all the pious Jews of his age, including his mortal enemies, the Pharisees. There is indeed a difference between the Christian and the Jewish conception of the kingdom of God; yet that difference does not appear in the formula employed in our passage. Here again we are bound to discover the hand of a Gentile Christian. For a Jewish contemporary of Jesus could not have thought of explaining the devoted friendship of Joseph simply by referring to the Christian belief in the kingdom of God.

The words "there came" and "boldly" stand and fall with the appositive and the verb, just discussed. The verb was inserted to render the augmented sentence less clumsy; and "boldly," which is not supported by any of the other Gospels, confirms what has been said about the real meaning and purpose of the phrase "a councilor of honorable estate."

The passage verse 44-45 is unobjectionable in itself. The information given, while not important, fits into the situation. But, as none of the other Gospels mentions it, it must be classed as a later addition to the text. It is an attempt to enlarge and embellish the rather short account of the burial.

"And he bought a linen cloth" (verse 46) stands likewise alone in Mark. A man who wanted to inter Jesus if Pilate would grant such a request, would have had everything ready. For the lateness of the hour would not have permitted him to make any preparations after seeing the governor. I am also inclined to think that every decent family in Palestine, at that time, was always supplied with linen suitable for a shroud. Here again a tendency to enlarge on the source without any deeper purpose is to be noticed in Mark. Dropping this statement of verse 46, we are compelled to change the definite article into the indefinite one before "linen cloth" in verse 46.

The two sentences: "And he rolled a stone against the door of the tomb. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the [mother] of James beheld where he was laid" have been disposed of in discussing the parallel passage of Matt. The conclusion arrived at there, is also in Mark confirmed by lexicological evidence. Verse 46 two different Greek words for "tomb" are found. The second of them is the same as that used in the resurrection narrative (xvi. 1ff) in a similar way to what we observed in Matt. The source of verse 47 is verse 40: "Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James

the less and of Joses, and Salome." But it was not taken directly from verse 40. For in that case it would be difficult to explain why Salome was not made a witness of the burial. The latter is named xvi. 1; and, therefore, this verse depends directly upon xv. 40.

The Greek words for "Mary the of James," xvi. 1, would mean in classical Greek: "Mary the daughter of James." But in our case the compiler evidently did not care to copy all the words from xv. 40; he was satisfied with only the first words that identify the second Mary there. The party who later on inserted verse 47 compared his gloss both with Matt. xxvii. 61 and Mark xv. 40 as well as xvi. 1. For he has only two women at the grave and calls the second "the of Joses," that is, the mother of the second son mentioned verse 40, so that xv. 47 and xvi. 1 together name the sons of the other Mary of xv. 40. The verbs of verse 47 have to be translated literally: "were beholding where he hath been laid." The author of the original story would hardly have written so.

3. Luke xxiii. 50f of the whole passage: "who was a councilor, a good and righteous man—he had not consented to their counsel and deed—," as well as "a city of the Jews: who was looking for the kingdom of God" has to be discarded. The term "councilor" and the clause "who was looking for the kingdom of God" have been discussed in Mark. Also the appositive "a city of the Jews" needs no further explaining.

The entire first quoted passage betrays its character by the very position it is found in. It divides the name of Joseph of Arimathæa into two parts which in the nature of things form one indivisible whole. While it has to be rejected as an interpolation for that reason alone, it serves nevertheless a purpose of its own. The sepulture of Jesus involves, as we have seen, two distinct factors. It required, in the first place, a devoted friend of Jesus and, in the second place, a man who had influence with Pilate. Any author who knew what he was writing about would have brought out these two factors in their natural order. Assuming for a moment the statements now presented by our text to be an adequate expression of what he had in mind, he would have told us: "A good and righteous man, who had not consented to their counsel and deed, but who was looking for the kingdom of God, Joseph of Arimathæa, being a senator, went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus."

The above statements, however, not only are found in the wrong place but also fail to express the ideas they are intended to convey. Not to mention again the term for "councilor," the words "a good and righteous man" cannot be considered as synonymous with "a

Christian." At the time of the crucifixion many good and righteous men must have lived in Palestine that were not disciples of Jesus. The sentence: "He had not consented to their counsel and deed" interrupts the grammatical construction of the whole passage. Moreover, the mere fact that he was not involved as a partner in the crime of the chief priests and scribes does not stamp him as an active sympathizer of Jesus. The words in question predicate nothing but a passive, neutral attitude on his part. It would be different if we were told: "He had opposed their counsel and deed." After eliminating these insertions, we have to cross out also "this man" at the beginning of verse 52. For the subject Joseph of Arimathæa will stand again in its proper place immediately before the verb.

The assertion "where never man had yet lain" (verse 53) is not confirmed by the other Synoptists. It reminds us of the adjective "new" in Matt., although there is a difference between a new tomb and an unused tomb as appears also from John. The thought which called forth this addition to the text is probably that the Christians very early imagined the supreme miracle of the resurrection to have demanded a tomb never used before and, therefore, not defiled by the corpse of a sinner.

Verses 55f stand in the same relation to xxiv. 1 and xxiii. 49 as the two parallel passages in the preceding Gospels. The women are not named in Luke because they are nameless in xxiii. 49.

Verse 54 belongs undoubtedly to the original text. Its second half: "and the Sabbath drew on" causes some trouble in the Greek text. I should prefer to translate the latter: "and the Sabbath star began to shine." The Greek verb means "begin to shine" and may be used in that sense not only of the rising sun but also of the stars. The Old Testament day begins in the evening. Even at present, orthodox Jews may be seen watching the sky Friday night after sunset. As soon as the first star becomes visible Sabbath commences and all work stops.

4. John xix. 38, the purpose clause: "that he might take away the body of Jesus," Am. R. V., has to be rendered: "that he might take down the body of Jesus." "Take down," of course, means here "take down from the cross." The same verb is used twice in verse 38 and once in verse 31. It must in all three instances have the same meaning. The taking down of the body precedes in our narrative (John xix. 38-42) the preparing of the corpse for the burial, and is followed by the act of depositing it in the tomb. The latter was near the place of crucifixion, as we are told twice. Thus there

was no room for taking away the body of Jesus any distance to speak of in a horizontal direction from the cross. Moreover, the New Testament dictionaries assign the meaning "take down from the cross" to our verb.

The words: "being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews" have to be canceled as a gloss. The statement is apparently based upon the corresponding information found in Matt. and serves the same purpose. John improves, however, upon his model by calling Joseph directly a disciple. The modifying words are to account for the fact that no Joseph of Arimathæa is known as a companion of Jesus or of his apostles. He was and remained a disciple "in secret" and emerges from his hiding-place only to pay the last honors to his master.

In verse 41 we come upon another indication of the dependence of John upon the Synoptists in their present condition. In the phrase: "a *new* tomb *wherein was never man yet laid*" the italicized words have been borrowed from the first and the third Gospels.

The sentences: "And Pilate gave leave. He came therefore and took down his body," which close verse 38, must be assigned to some commentator. Both are superfluous, and the first reminds us of Matt. xxvii. 58. For in John not only the direct but also the indirect object are missing.

The Nikodemos episode (verse 39) and the words belonging to it in verse 40 are spurious. The silence of the Synoptic Gospels as to the anointing of the body of Jesus at the time of the burial, is a decisive argument against the authenticity of what John tells about the part which Nikodemos played at that occasion. That is strengthened furthermore by Mark xvi. 1 and Luke xxiii. 56-xxiv. 1. According to these two passages the women intended to embalm the body of Jesus early the next Sunday. That would have been unnecessary if he had been embalmed Friday evening. Finally, Jesus himself was certain that he would not be anointed when his body should be committed to the ground. He said (Matt. xxvi. 12f) when Mary had anointed him: "That she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial. Verily, I say unto you, Wherever this gospel shall be preached in the whole world, there shall also this that this woman hath done be told for a memorial of her." Jesus without doubt foresaw the circumstances and conditions that were to surround his death.

There are still other indications of the spuriousness of the Nikodemos episode. The man is introduced by the words: "And

there came also." If he assisted Joseph in burying Jesus, there must have been a previous understanding between the two men. In that case they would have gone together to Pilate. For Nikodemos was a man of some consequence; "a ruler of the Jews" (John iii. 1), whatever that may be. The quantity of myrrh and aloe he is reported to have brought along is incredibly great. The prepositional phrase "with the spices" (verse 40) does not agree with the verb "bound." For the body could hardly be bound with strips of linen (dat. of means and instrument) together with the spices. If spices were used, the body was first anointed with them and then wrapped up in linen cloth or strips. The clause: "as the custom of the Jews is to bury" is clearly of Gentile origin.

It is easy enough to understand why Nikodemos could become connected with the interment of Jesus. After Joseph of Arimathæa had become a disciple, the name of Nikodemos, the only other secret disciple the fourth Gospel mentions, suggested itself to any attentive reader of our pericope.

The last words to be eliminated are "a garden and in the garden" (verse 41), and "the Jews (verse 42). None of the other Gospels refers to that garden. It probably has been inserted on account of "the gardener" of John xx. 15. The clause: "for the tomb was nigh at hand" (verse 43) is also probably a gloss. It is superfluous in view of what we read about the location of the tomb in verse 41 and, besides, it does not fit very well into its present context.

The foregoing investigation has restored the oldest text of the four Joseph of Arimathæa pericopes as far as that is possible without possessing the very manuscripts from which our four accounts were originally copied. They have now to be compared in order to establish their mutual relationship. The four parallel passages point to one common source. They relate the burial of Jesus in almost identical terms and in the same order. The principal actor is Joseph of Arimathæa. He asked Pilate for the body of Jesus, took it down from the cross, wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a grave.

The narratives of the Synoptic Gospels, however, are much more closely related than any of them is to that of the fourth Gospel. That does not imply that the Synoptic and the Johannine versions go back to two different eye-witnesses. The variations in grammatical construction and vocabulary may point only to different translations from the same Semitic text or from different revisions of that text. For instance, the verb "take down" has its counterpart

in a synonymous verb used in Mark and Luke. There is no difference in meaning between the Synoptic wrapping up in linen cloth and the Johannine binding in linen cloths. But it ought to be admitted that the translator who furnished the Johannine pericope aimed less at a literal translation than at expressing the gist of the matter in his own way.

The three Synoptic texts show, in spite of their obvious dependence upon a common source, that the latter had undergone already different revisions. We are forced to distinguish two principal revisions and one mixed text. Matt. agrees with Mark in four instances, all of which are characteristic. The time of the burial is announced in both right at the opening of the narrative. In Luke and John, on the other hand, it is mentioned at the end. Besides, the three expressions "when it got late," "hewn out," and "rock" occur only in the first two Gospels. Matt. coincides with Luke in three cases. These are "man," rendered however by two different Greek words, "by name," Matt. genitive, Luke dative, and the phrase "went to Pilate." The slight differences suggest, however, that Matt. does not depend upon the Luke text directly. Mark and Luke have only two readings in common, namely the verb "take down" and the Greek term for "tomb."

The main feature of the Joseph of Arimathæa account is that Jesus, in spite of his disgraceful death, received an honorable burial. That same fact, however, presents also the principal difficulty. For the question has to be answered: How could Pontius Pilate allow such a burial to be given to a man who had been crucified because he had been charged with the crime of claiming to be the king of the Jews? The Gospels indeed represent the governor as having sent Jesus to the cross although he was convinced of his innocence. But one should think that just in that case Pilate should have treated him with the greatest severity the law prescribed, pretending to see in him a most dangerous man.

The Roman law provided that crucified people should not be interred, but should remain on the cross until the natural process of decomposition, aided by the birds of heaven and the beasts of the field, had destroyed the corpse. The idea was to strike terror into the hearts of all who beheld such crosses with their gruesome burden. It was not only the realization of the fearful death which should warn them not to commit crimes punishable by crucifixion, but also the knowledge that their souls could find no rest after death. For the ancients believed in the necessity of a properly performed burial. Deprived of that, the soul could not enter into Hades but

had to lead the cursed existence of a ghost. Our interment narrative furnishes no hint why Pilate granted the request of Joseph of Arimathæa. Even the earliest commentators could not explain the attitude of Pilate, although, as the examples of Mark and Luke demonstrate, they were aware of the problem.

Turning now to John xix. 31-34, we find there another account of what happened to Jesus after his death. We are informed that "the Jews" asked Pilate to have the legs of the crucified men broken and their bodies taken off the cross. Those men are not friends of Jesus. The term "Jews" is met with but rarely in the Synoptic Gospels but is used quite often in John. There it is in many cases a synonym of "the enemies of Jesus," so, to mention only a few instances, John xviii. 12, 14, 31, 36; xix. 7 (cp. 6), 12, 14 (cp. 15). "The Jews asked of Pilate" is, therefore, only another way of saying: "The chief priests asked of Pilate." The reason why they asked for the removal of the bodies, which implied, as a matter of course, some kind of a burial, is given in the statement: "that the bodies should not remain on the cross upon the Sabbath (for the day of that Sabbath was a high day)," Am. R. V. The Sabbath here referred to was the day after the death of Jesus. It belonged to the seven days of the feast of the Passover, Ex. xii. 15ff. But apart from that, no special importance belonged to that Sabbath. The Am. R. V. puts presumably for that reason the words: "for the day of that Sabbath was a high day" in parentheses, thereby indicating doubt as to their authenticity. But as we drop that clause from the text, we must likewise reject the preceding clause: "that the bodies should not remain on the cross upon the Sabbath." For there is no law which forbade the Jews to keep crucified criminals on the cross upon a Sabbath day. It seems as if the last quoted clause was inserted into the text by a person who did not understand why the Jews, the enemies of Jesus, should have asked the governor to have the bodies taken off the cross. Being ignorant of the true reason, he thought of the Sabbath. Another glossator who was not satisfied with that explanation claimed a special sanctity for the Sabbath of the Passover week.

While there exists no law applying to crucifixion and the Sabbath, the Old Testament contains a very plain and explicit commandment which regulates that old Semitic mode of capital punishment for any day of the week. Deut. xxi. 22f we read: "And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree; his body shall not remain all

night upon the tree, but thou shalt surely bury him the same day; for he that is hanged is accursed of God; that thou defile not thy land which Yahveh thy God giveth thee for an inheritance." Josh. viii. 29 and x. 26f two instances of crucifixion are related where the victims were treated in accordance with the just quoted commandment. In the first passage we are told: "And the king of Ai he hanged on a tree until eventide: and at the going down of the sun Joshua commanded, and they took his body down from the tree, and cast it at the entrance of the gate of the city, and raised thereon a great heap of stones." From the second passage we learn: "And afterwards Joshua smote them (the five kings), and he put them to death, and hanged them on five trees: and they were hanging upon the trees until the evening. And it came to pass at the time of the going down of the sun, that Joshua commanded and they took them down of the trees, and cast them into the cave wherein they had hidden themselves, and laid great stones on the mouth of the cave." If the enemies of Jesus went to Pilate to have the body of Jesus removed from the cross Friday evening, their only motive to do so must have been the just quoted Old Testament law; and the kind of burial they intended to give to Jesus may have been something like the interment of the king of Ai and of the five kings in the cave of Makkedah. That is to say, the body of Jesus was to be thrown into some ditch and covered with stones and loose earth or into some cave or vault that served as a charnel-house.

The proposed treatment of the crucified men, before they were committed to the ground, consisted in breaking their legs. That was to make sure of their death even if they should be taken down before they had breathed their last. That suggests rather a vault or a cave as a burial-place. For burying them in a grave and covering them with earth would also have assured their speedy death by suffocation. Still we cannot put any stress upon that circumstance. For breaking the legs may have been the regular way of treating crucified men before they were taken down by the Jews.

According to verses 33f, the bones of Jesus were not crushed like those of his two companions. The soldiers found Jesus dead and saved themselves the unpleasant task of beating his legs to pulp with mallets. Instead of that, they thrust a spear into his side and probably pierced his heart.

No mention is made of the final disposal of the three corpses. That does not imply, however, that they were not buried. Nobody would deny that of the companions of Jesus. But what has to be

taken for granted in their case, applies with equal force to Jesus. Neither are we forced to claim a lacuna between verses 34 and 35. For it is very improbable that the original narrator should have written a detailed account of the burial of the three bodies. In the first place, it would have been a revolting thing to do; in the second place, all his readers without exception knew well enough how bodies of executed criminals were disposed of if they happened to receive a burial.

We are now enabled to form a judgment as to the words "after these things" which introduce the Joseph of Arimathæa pericope verse 38. They place the Joseph episode after the burial of Jesus by the Roman soldiers. But Pilate could not have granted to Joseph of Arimathæa the privilege of burying Jesus after having ordered his soldiers to inter the three crucified men in accordance with the request of the chief priests. The two passages John xix. 31-34 and 38-42 are therefore parallel accounts of one and the same event.

Verse 35 at present forms the conclusion of the burial scene. It is, however, possible that it closes the entire Johannine account of the suffering and death of Jesus. Of course, verses 36f attempt to confine verse 35 to what we read in verse 34.

It is now to be determined whether the first Johannine burial account deserves any historical credit. The Joseph of Arimathæa pericope failed to give a satisfactory answer to the question why Pilate permitted Jesus to be buried. Whether Pilate thought in his heart Jesus innocent of the charges raised against him or not, he knew the Jews were most unwilling subjects of the emperor and ready to revolt at any time. For that very reason, the small country had been placed under a governor of its own, who had at his disposal an exceptionally large military force. Jesus on the cross would serve, therefore, whether he was guilty or not, as a warning example for all who harbored disloyal thoughts. No friend of Jesus would, under such circumstances, have dared to ask for the body of his master. For in doing so, he would have incurred the suspicion and resentment of Pilate. The commentator who added the word "boldly" (Mark xv. 43) was aware of that fact.

But why did Pilate grant the request of the enemies of Jesus? A satisfactory answer to that question is not far to seek. In the first place, the chief priests did not intend to give Jesus an honorable burial. We have learned that the Jews considered their land defiled if a corpse was left over night on the cross. Pilate, indeed, was not guided by the laws and scruples of the Jews but by the ordinances

of the Roman law and the commands of his emperor. In peaceful times he would respect as far as possible the religious prejudices of his subjects. But whenever the interests of Rome clashed with what he regarded as Jewish superstitions he would offend the Jews relentlessly just to convince them of their helplessness. Thus he would as a rule insist on keeping the corpses of crucified persons on the cross as long as anything was left of them. The Jews had to submit to that transgression of their divine law and to console themselves with the thought that their country was not defiled by an act of their own nor with their will and consent.

The case of Jesus was quite an exception. The chief priests of the Jews themselves had denounced the man from Galilee and delivered him into the hands of the governor. The latter could not doubt the loyalty of the priests; and, therefore, he would be inclined to grant them a favor provided such a favor would not run counter to the Roman interests. The chief priests had caused Jesus to be crucified by direct and overt acts of their own. They had done so with the help of Jewish assistants. When Jesus was nailed to the cross, everybody at Jerusalem, that is to say, the whole Jewish nation, knew that he had become a victim of the wrath of the priests. If, under these conditions, the body of Jesus would have been kept on the cross over night, the priests would have been charged by the people with having defiled the land. The result might have been serious disturbances of the peace and a revolt of the nation against the chief priests. Pilate must have understood the force of that argument and must have agreed to help his friends to hold their position, especially since his own interests were identical with theirs.

The first burial account in John, although it is without parallel in the first three Gospels, bears all the marks of historical truth. The Joseph of Arimathæa story, even in its oldest revision, does not tell us what actually happened. In spite of its fourfold repetition, we should have to doubt its authenticity even if we did not possess John xix. 32-34. The numerous glosses and other additions which have crept into the text alone are sufficient to prove to what a degree the early students of the Gospels were troubled by the problematical nature of their text.

The first Johannine report enables us to throw some light on the Joseph of Arimathæa episode. That man is either a purely fictitious character or he must have been the representative of the chief priests who went to Pilate to arrange for a burial of Jesus such as Jews and Gentiles might grant to the body of a criminal. He acted, of course, strictly in the interest of his employers who

were most anxious to appear, especially in the case of Jesus, as the faithful guardians of the Law of Moses. Joseph was sent very likely because he was the regular go-between and had also denounced Jesus and arranged for his arrest in the name of the priests. For it is certain that in both cases the priests did not go in a body to Pilate. At the burial Joseph was present as the official witness but took, very naturally, no active part in it. While scholars have been unable to locate Arimathæa in Palestine, it may be possible to find the place somewhere else in the Roman Empire. It may be the name of Rome itself. For Joseph was undoubtedly able to converse with Pilate in Latin. He, therefore, must have been born and raised in the Jewish diaspora, and that in the city of Rome, and his name was Joseph of Rome.

YANG MING.¹

BY HARDIN T. MCELLAND.

THE principal feature of the Yang Ming philosophy is supplied in the meaning of its name, which may be translated "positive enlightenment," and as it thus implies a growth of the rational and noetic intelligence, its natural function is to compose the fiery passions and support the soul of man on its hazardous journey through the material world. The Japanese General Nogi was a student of the Yang Ming philosophy, having attended the Grotto for several years, whence he came by that supreme poise of soul which made him worthy of the rank of general; and which showed the world why it was that no amount of Russian opposition or cruelty to prisoners could deter his set decision to advance to the capture of Port Arthur which was the pivot of the whole Russo-Japanese war. But on the later decease of his Mikado he found greater honor in *hara-kiri* than in lonely survival—better to die "the positive death" than to become a negative factor in post-mortem devotion.

A tranquil life is built, first, in the freedom from fear of externals; second, the construction arises well apart from any doubt of the capacity of one's internal powers, either of their presence or influence. A third element so often overlooked, is the clear discernment that although all existences are potentially the same, yet some are merely extentional while others are intentional. The powers of

¹The Yang Ming philosophy has now become the composite production of the school of the Yang Ming Grotto, founded in Japan in the first quarter of the sixteenth century by the famous Chinese idealist Wang Yang Ming (1472-1528); cf. *Monist*, Jan., 1914.