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Please read all literature alongside your bible, so that you can see the accuracy and truth of the message for yourself

This Pamphlet reproduces the ninth of a course of twelve addresses arranged for the first Sunday of each month during 1949, by the

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To show that it is not only possible but reasonable to believe those foundation truths of Christianity upon which doubt has been cast by some modern writers.

Dare we believe?

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND DIVINE SONSHIP

WE are indebted to Matthew (Matt 1 v 18-25) and Luke (Luke 1 v 26-56) for the only two circumstantial accounts in existence in the world of the birth of Jesus Christ. Quite independently and from two different points of view they combine to tell us that he was born of a virgin. Espoused to Joseph but not yet living as his wife, Mary was vouchsafed an angelic message: the Holy Spirit would overshadow her, a son would be born, who would therefore be the Son of God and also, through his human parent, a son of David to sit on David's throne; he would be a saviour from sin and should therefore be called Jesus. Joseph, we are told, realized Mary was with child, knew he was not the father, and, being just but kind, intended a private separation, from which an angelic explanation dissuaded him; he lived with Mary as her husband only after the birth of Jesus. Jesus was the son of Mary; Jesus was the Son of God; Jesus was not the son of Joseph: that is the one message of both Matthew and Luke. Is it true?

In A.D. 110 Ignatius expressed his belief in it; Aristides fifteen years later, and Justin Martyr shortly after that. By the middle of the second century the belief was widespread and enshrined in the words of what is now called the Apostles' Creed: "Conceived by the Holy Ghost, Born of the Virgin Mary". In the early third century Origen witnesses to its common acceptance: "For who is ignorant that Jesus was born of a virgin...?" In modern times it was Voltaire's scurrilous pen which first caused

it to be doubted, and in the 19th Century the sceptic Renan and faithless, Higher Critical theologians in Germany aided the cause of revelation-rejecting deism, with the result that in 1892 all references to the Virgin Birth were omitted from the creed and lessons in South German Churches.

In recent years the loud denials of one or two leading churchmen have become notorious, so that it is not surprising if the masses of the careless ridicule the doctrine, whilst some of the few would-be Christians are perplexed. To the latter we would repeat the appeal of the late Bishop Gore, "that no-one will treat as disproved by loud denials something the grounds of which he has never frankly or fairly examined. When he does come to examine them he will find them adequate" (Gore: *Jesus of Nazareth*, p. 248). To such a frank and fair examination we now address ourselves, first briefly considering why some have rejected the doctrine.

OBJECTION TO THE MIRACLE

The non-Christian who rejects all miracles quite consistently rejects this, and his position has already been considered in a previous pamphlet in this series (E. J. Newman: *Miracles*). But Christians who accept the miracles of Christ and the greatest of all, his resurrection, are not consistent in rejecting the Virgin Birth merely because of its miraculous nature. Those who claim to be Christians and yet try to dispense with the whole, of the miraculous element in Christianity are guilty of accusing their perfect teacher of repeated error in his attitude towards his own wonderful works, as for example when he asked that men should believe him "for the very works' sake" (John 14 v 11), or when he contended that those who rejected him had the greater sin because they had witnessed his performance of works such as "none other man did" (John 15 v 24). The angel's reply to Mary's uncomprehending bewilderment is the just and sufficient answer to all so-called Christian doubters of the miracle: "With God nothing shall be impossible" (Luke 1 v 37).

ALLEGED UNRELIABILITY OF MATTHEW AND LUKE

With tantalizing vagueness and with what one would like to think modest restraint, Bishop Barnes begins: "In the opinion of analytical scholars who accept scientific postulates, these stories are. . . edifying legend" (E.W. Barnes: *The Rise of Christianity* p. 68). Discrepancies are said to exist between the two accounts (chiefly with respect to the residence at Nazareth and the genealogies), whilst the first two chapters of both gospels are alleged to have been absent from the original text; both very serious criticisms if true. The "marked contrast" boldly announced by Barnes resolves itself into a difference of atmosphere between the two accounts, which it is acknowledged argues their independence; but then, in a naive attempt to have it both ways, he maintains, without a single word by way of proof, that the contrasts would have been more glaring had it not been for attempts at harmonization by later writers (Barnes: op. cit. pp. 71-72)

The records are, in fact, not discrepant but complementary. There is very good evidence that Matthew writes from Joseph's point of view and Luke from Mary's. The former tells of Joseph's perplexity, his private intentions, the dreams by which he was guided, his care of Mary until the birth and in the journey to and from Egypt, whilst even the birth itself is mentioned only incidentally in relation to Joseph's behaviour (Matt 1 v 25). Luke, on the other hand, tells of Mary's reception of the angel's message, of her inner emotions, her puzzled question, her happy submission, her hurried journey to Elisabeth, her Magnificat of praise, and the details of the birth itself. In chapter 1 there are five expressions of time essentially feminine in language (Luke 1 v 24, 26, 36, 57), and four times in chapter 2 we read of her inward ponderings about her son (Luke 2 v 19, 48, 50, 51). This clearly marked difference in point of view is enough to account for what may seem at first to be contradictions.

Barnes and others argue from silence when they claim that Matthew implies that Joseph and Mary belonged to Bethlehem and only lived at Nazareth after the return from Egypt (Barnes: op. cit. p. 69), and silence is a flimsy foundation for such an allegation. As to the genealogies, the obvious divergence between them is only inconvenient if they are both considered to represent the line of Joseph. Lack of space forbids a detailed treatment of this question, and Barnes' contention that they both show the descent through Joseph and were "invented" before belief in the Virgin Birth was common (Barnes: op. cit. p. 72) would excuse us from examining them here at all; since, if that is so, their invention was not intended to commend that belief and therefore they do not affect the issue. A little must be said, however. Matthew (Matt 1 v 2-17) traces the line forward from Abraham, relating Christ's birth to the promises to the Jewish fathers; Luke (Luke 3 v 23-38) backwards from Christ to Adam, relating it to the salvation of the race. As far as David they are identical; thereafter Matthew traces the line through Solomon, Luke through Nathan. The evidence given above would suggest that Matthew gives Joseph's line, because he acted as father to Jesus, being legally responsible for him, and we notice the very careful use of terms in the last generation: "Jacob begat Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus" (Matt 1 v 16) not Jacob begat Joseph and Joseph begat Jesus. Luke, we believe, gives Mary's line, most scholars agreeing that Heli was her father. If in addition to the words "as was supposed" we include in brackets "the son of Joseph" (Luke 3 v 23)—which does not alter the sense—the difficulty vanishes.

There is even less substance in the statement that these four chapters were absent from the original text—which is perhaps hardly surprising in view of the fact that Wellhausen omits them from his three books on Matthew, Luke, and the Synoptic Gospels without a word of explanation or justification. They are in fact absent only from the Ebionite gospel and from the Evangelium of Marcion. The Ebionites, a Jewish sect of Christians, were opposed to Apostolic preaching and rejected all the epistles of Paul, indeed the greater part of the New Testament, using only a Hebrew gospel which was pronounced corrupt at the time. Marcion, a Gnostic of about the middle of the second century, believing with his fellow Gnostics that Jesus Christ was "not come in the flesh", logically rejected the Virgin Birth and therefore the first two chapters of Luke. He rejected also the whole of the Old Testament, whilst his New Testament consisted often of Paul's Epistles considerably altered, and one gospel, chiefly that of Luke, which he made begin at 4: 31, where the words "and he came down to Capernaum" were interpreted of the descent of Christ from heaven instead of from Nazareth. Little importance can be attached to the opinion of either the Ebionites or Marcion, especially when it is realized that these four crucial chapters appear in all the accessible ancient MSS. and versions and that no scholar, however faithless, can produce a single MS. otherwise unutilized from which they are missing.

The accounts are reliable, independent but not discrepant, complementary not contradictory, breathing their own authenticity in the intimacy of their details, their Hebrew atmosphere, and in the precision of their time-references so naturally interwoven with the miraculous element. Two very important points can be only mentioned here, about each of which long and scholarly books have been written. They concern Luke's record. First, the account of the miracle very closely neighbours a passage (Luke 2 v 1-2) of very detailed history, about whose reliability controversy once raged, but which the labours of Sir William Ramsay have established as accurate beyond all cavil. This seems to be ignored completely by Barnes in his comments on the date of Christ's birth (op. cit. pp. 74-75). Second, the same writer and others, claiming a resemblance between these accounts and pagan myths of parthenogenesis, and acknowledging that the idea was too abhorrent to the Jewish mind for the Virgin Birth story to have been invented by them, postulate a very late date for the writing of the gospels in order to allow time for the legend to have grown up in a Gentile setting (op. cit. pp. 68-69). Their theory is first of all quite without the semblance of proof: "one can imagine the play of fancy", says Barnes! It runs counter to much recent scholarship which is

consistently pointing to a very early date for the Synoptic Gospels. It depends upon a supposed eagerness of early Christians to demand a miraculous origin for their great teacher, which does not correspond to the known facts, even the gospels themselves indicating that the ordinary people believed Jesus of Nazareth to be the carpenter's son (Matt 13 v 55) unless he were born of fornication (John 8 v 41). Even the 50 years allowed by Barnes is far too short a time for the growth of such a legend, as experts in mythology have fully shown. But most important of all—and this is the second positive characteristic of Luke's record which can here be only hinted at—the theory totally ignores the essentially Aramaic origin of his story; Box (G. H. Box: *The Virgin Birth* 1916) having written a fascinating book establishing clearly that in turn of phrase and frequent allusion to the Old Testament these first two chapters of Luke's Gospel are Aramaic in style and noticeably different from the cultured Greek of the rest of the book. Under God, the writer had drawn his information from a close family circle, perfectly well acquainted with the facts, and of Luke's certainty his prologue leaves us in no doubt (Luke 1 v 1-4).

ALLEGED SILENCE OF THE REST OF THE NEW TESTAMENT

This last reason for the rejection of the Virgin Birth is often stated in extravagant terms, as for instance by Barnes, who, speaking of the Gospel accounts, says: "Nothing corresponding to them is found elsewhere in the New Testament" (OP. CIT. P. 68). We shall see later that the silence is far from complete. Were it otherwise the argument would have the weakness which invalidates all arguments from silence: the Apostle Paul's silence about the bestowal of the Holy Spirit upon Jesus and about his transfiguration, and even about the existence of Mary, proves nothing. The relative silence is explained by the writers' unwillingness either to provoke further scandalous accusations (John 8 v 41) during Mary's lifetime, or to emphasize what they had not witnessed; for to witness they had been commissioned (Acts 1 v 18), Matthias had been chosen (Acts 1 v 21-22), and as witnesses they preached and wrote (1 John 1 v 1-3).

We proceed now to a simple statement of some of the positive reasons the true Christian has for believing it.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE GOSPELS.

Though Mark has no record of it, the reason is clear: he is concerned with the mission of Jesus only and begins with his baptism. He gives no record of the birth at all, but presumably he realized that Jesus was born. As it is, his opening words are clear, bold and categorical: "[The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, THE SON OF GOD](#)" (Mark 1 v 1). This is expanded by John, whose purpose in writing his gospel is that we might "[believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God](#)" (John 20 v 21), and who gives us in his first chapter the divine genealogy of Christ: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory (the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth" (John 1 v 14). John's is acknowledged by all to be the latest of the four gospels; he would therefore certainly know the accounts of Matthew and Luke. Moreover, he had exceptional opportunities of knowing the truth of Christ's origin, since from the time of the crucifixion Mary made her home with John (John 19 v 27). Yet when he comes to write, far from correcting or altering the earlier records, he uses words which are only satisfactorily understandable if the Virgin Birth be true.

Further, the Gospels offer no support for the modern interpretation of Christ's sonship, that he gradually came to realize a closer fellowship with God and assumed the title. Already at the age of twelve, when gently reproved by his mother for making them search anxiously for him for three days, he gives the calm reply "[Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?](#)" (Luke 2 v 49). Already at the, very beginning of his ministry, as he rises from the waters of baptism, it is made clear

that his sonship does not depend upon his later obedience and spiritual development; for the objective declaration is made, with the Baptist as witness; "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matt 3 v 17, Mark 1 v 11, Luke 3 v 22, John 1 v 34). Later at the transfiguration, a similar declaration was heard by Peter, James and John, with the added injunction that they should "hear him" (Matt 17 v 1, Mark 9 v 7, Luke 9 v 35).

There is another line of evidence in the Gospels, less impressive in dialectics but very compelling to the sober, honest reader: the calm, natural, intimate and yet reverent assurance of Christ when speaking to or about the Father. There is here no uncertain, presumptuous, striving, hopeful claim to divine sonship; no tension, no faltering, no unevenness, no muffled inner doubts. The title itself indeed, is not often asserted; he is usually content rather to be called the Son of man. Only in his dispute with the Jews does he go out of his way to press his divine sonship, and there it is by contrast with their being sons of sin (John 8 v 38-44). Normally, it is with quiet, confident, serene truthfulness that he claims to be the sole channel of the Father's revelation (Matt 11 v 25-28), to know (John 5 v 20), and what is more, to do (John 8 v 29) his Father's will, and to predict his Father's action (Matt 18 v 19, 35; 20 v 23). He sees his cross and resurrection as part of his Father's will: "This commandment have I received of my Father" (John 10 v 18) "And in the garden secretly, and on the cross on high", it is a real son speaking to a real Father: "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt 26 v 39-42); "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23 v 43); "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit" (Luke 23 v 46).

THE VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE EPISTLES

Without this doctrine the First Epistle of John is surely incomprehensible. Its whole aim is, to oppose the incipient Gnostic heresy that "Jesus Christ is not come in the flesh", but that an ordinary man, Jesus of Nazareth, had been invested with a kind of emanation from God at his baptism, which had left him before his crucifixion, so that he only seemed to suffer. The relation between the Father, the Son, and the believer holds the key to the understanding of this letter, which, though it appears to be the most abstract of the New Testament writings, is in fact firmly grounded on the actual, physical, historical appearance on earth of the Son of God: "God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him" (1 John 4 v 9).

In the Pauline epistles we will concentrate only on a very important passage from the Epistle to the Galatians: "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father" (Gal 4 v 4-6). Clearly here Christ's birth is in view, and at a foreordained time, and as God's act, and as part of God's purpose, whose effect is the adoption of other sons sharing Christ's spirit. All that is on the surface. But the language repays close scrutiny. The Son was "made of a woman". There is nothing very remarkable about that, say the critics; it just means "born of a woman", and they compare it to the words of Job (Job 14 v 1) or to Christ's own words about John the Baptist (Matt 11 v 1). But the difference between "made" and "born" in the English corresponds to a difference in the Greek. The usual word for born is *gennētheis*; the Apostle does not use that here; he uses *genomēnos* which literally means "having become". Again the critics would have us believe that this is the word regularly used by Paul for "born" and it has even been alleged that he never uses the normal word. In fact he uses *gennētheis* twice in this very chapter, when speaking of the birth of Ishmael (Gal 4 v 23, 29). It is interesting that when he is referring to the birth of Isaac, which was the result of divine intervention in the lives of his very aged parents, he uses no word at all for "born" (Vv 23, 29). But when the birth of Jesus Christ is the subject of discussion, the Apostle carefully avoids the usual word and chooses a word which should indicate the altogether exceptional

nature of his origin; he was "*made* of a woman". The earnest student will be thrilled to discover that exactly the same word is used by the same writer at the beginning of the letter to the Romans and in that to the Philippians Phil 2 v 7). In the first case - a passage quoted by Barnes when dealing with Christ's descent from David, but from which he carefully omits the crucial word we are now italicizing (op. cit. p. 73) —we are told that God's "*Son Jesus Christ our Lord. . . was made of the seed of David according to the flesh; and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead*" (Rom 1 v 3-4). He was already the Son of God; his glorious resurrection declared that fact triumphantly. It is finally of great significance that the same verb is used also by the Apostle John in the passage already quoted from his prologue: "*The Word became flesh*" (John 1 v 14). These passages are of the utmost importance for the correct understanding of this doctrine.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

After soberly studying this clear and consistent New Testament teaching, the honest reader must find that the question Christ put to his enemies among the Jews, puts itself powerfully and insistently to him: "*What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he?*" (Matt 22 v 42-46). Christ did not mean then to ask them whose son he, himself, was; for his enemies were hesitating to identify him with their expected Messiah. He asked them rather whose son their Messiah should be according to the Old Testament scriptures. They answered with a half-truth: "*The son of David*". Thereupon Christ quoted to them, the first verse of Psalm 110, not in order to prove that their answer was quite wrong—as Barnes assumes, with what seems like wilful blindness to the obvious intention of the quotation—but in order to supply the other and more important half of the truth. "*How then doth David in spirit (we do well to note this statement of David's supernatural wisdom) call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?*" This Psalm foretells a day of weakness for the Messiah to be followed by a day of power, after an intervening session at God's right hand. The Messiah was to be in David's line; that promise had been vouchsafed to David in the, clearest terms (2 Sam 7 v 12-16). Yet here when speaking of this promised son, David is guided by the spirit to call him his lord, a clear indication that he should be no ordinary son, but worthy of David's worship, because he should be the Son of God also.

This incident in which Christ seized upon a single word in the Old Testament to confound those who objected to his claim to be God's Son, is both valuable in itself and a justification for our looking elsewhere in those inspired writings for hints that the Saviour would be born of a virgin. We shall not expect to find more than hints; for had it been written plainly there, perhaps not even the blind eyes of the Jews would have failed to see it. Their blindness to it is no proof that it is not there. They were blind to the prophecies of suffering for their Messiah (e.g. Isaiah 53), and by their very blindness helped to fulfil them (Acts 13 v 27).

Controversy has raged long about the justice of Matthew's quotation (Matt 1 v 22-23) from Isaiah 7: "*Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.*" Barnes (op. cit. p. 70) quite correctly points out that the Jewish rabbis at the beginning of the Christian era did not even consider the passage Messianic, but he fails to see that this renders it most unlikely that the figment of the Virgin Birth which he supposes to be fashioned out of this prophecy would have met with widespread credence; he also forgets, incidentally, that he postulates elsewhere a Gentile origin for the story (op. cit. p. 87). Those who, have objected to the association of this prophecy with the, birth of Christ have done so on two chief scores: that the Hebrew word *almah* has been wrongly translated "virgin ", since it means simply "a young, marriageable woman", and that the time factors mentioned demand an immediate fulfilment. There are in fact only six other occurrences of the word *almah* in the Old

Testament, and all of them either demand or suggest the idea of virginity: it is used of Rebekah before her marriage to Isaac (Gen 24 v 43), of Miriam when Moses was in the bulrushes (Exod 2 v 8), of damsels playing on timbrels (Ps 68 v 26), twice in the Song of Solomon (S of S 1 v 3, 6 v 8), and in the Proverbs among the wonderful things on earth is included the way of a man with a maid (Prov 30 v 19). The time factor is more difficult. Ahaz, the king, of Judah, was beset simultaneously by the kings of Syria and Israel. He was assured by the prophet that their plans would fail and that Israel would be broken within sixty-five years. The sign that follows refers not to this precise promise of deliverance, whose precision needed none, but to the certain fulfilment of God's covenant with David's house, faith in which would have removed from the heart of Ahaz all fear of this local threat to the stability of David's throne. He refused to ask a sign. The promise was therefore renewed to David's house that David's son, to sit on his throne, would be God's Son too (Isa 7 v 14. For a fuller exposition see *The Gospel of John* (J. Carter, pp. 56-58)). It must also be pointed out that the next chapter connects the immediate deliverance with the birth of a son in the normal way to the prophet and his wife, but who should be given, not the name Immanuel with its spiritual and Messianic implications, but a name of much more local import, Maher-shalal-hash-baz (Is 8 v 3). For all its obscurity, one feels that this dark allusion is part of the broad sweep of prophecy which culminates in the heartening message of chapter 9: "[Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful. . .](#)" One feels that Matthew was right in seeing here a promise of God's gracious, voluntary and stupendous act: "[The Lord himself shall give you a sign](#)".

We must be satisfied with a very brief summary of the other Old Testament allusions to the Virgin Birth; the passages listed below will provide a fascinating line of study for the earnest reader. It must be stressed that it is their cumulative evidence which is weighty; taken separately they could hardly support such a mighty superstructure. For its first ray of hope, fallen humanity was directed to the ultimate destruction of sin by the sin-bruised seed, not of the man, but of the woman (Gen 3 v 15), and it is not only Christadelphian expositors who hear an echo of this in Paul's words to Timothy "[Yet she shall be saved through the child-bearing](#)". Instructed by the letter to the Hebrews that Christians "[have an altar whereof they have no right to eat that serve the tabernacle](#)" (Heb 13 v 20), we believe we find a hint of the virgin birth of that true altar in the Law's instructions for the building of an altar either of earth or of unhewn stone (Ex 20 v 25). Taught too by the rending of the veil at Christ's crucifixion (Matt 27 v 51) and by the equation of that veil with Christ's flesh, through which his death has opened up for us a way into the holiest (Heb 10 v 20), we believe we see our Lord's origin of a sinful (Is 1 v 18), human mother and a righteous (Rev 19 v 3) divine Father foreshadowed in the interweaving of scarlet and white linen in the Tabernacle veil (Ex 26 v 31). Isaac's miraculous birth of aged parents, to be called by God, in spite of Ishmael's existence, Abraham's "only son" (Gen 22 v 2), and in the letter to the Hebrews "[his only-begotten son](#)" (Heb 11 v 7), offered to death and received back in a figure from the grave, prepares our minds for the greater miracle of the virgin birth of God's only begotten Son, for God's greater love in actually giving him for a sacrifice, and for the mightier marvel of his resurrection. The Psalmist has allusions to "[the son of thy handmaid](#)" (Ps 86 v 16) and "[the son of man made strong for God](#)" (Ps 80 v 17). Jeremiah foresees a "[new thing in the earth](#)" (Jer 31 v 22) and calls the Messianic Branch "[The Lord our righteousness](#)" (Jer 23 v 6). Zechariah in another prophecy about the Branch mentions a "[stone](#)" endued with God's spirit, and which God himself should engrave, with the aim of purging iniquity (Zech 3 v 9). Daniel looks to the day when "[the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom](#)" and sees the image that represented human kingdoms struck on the feet by "[a little stone, cut out of the mountain without hands](#)" (Dan 2 v 44; 34-35). Throughout the Old Testament, Christ's work as the slain destroyer of sin and death, as the mediator of access to the Father, as the raised seed of Abraham, as the revelation and source of God's righteousness, as the founder of God's temple and the builder of God's kingdom, is foretold in words which are peculiarly, and we believe designedly, appropriate to his virgin birth.

THE VIRGIN BIRTH AND CHRIST'S SINLESSNESS

By contrast with those Old Testament hints, our final argument is broad and powerful and demands the most reverent consideration. Exceptionally righteous, saintly men are the most conscious of sin. The Apostle Paul is witness, telling of his inner conflict in Romans 7, and exhibiting in his progress in discipleship a moving growth in his realization of his own unworthiness (1 Cor 15 v 9; Eph 3 v 8). To claim sinlessness for ourselves is quite simply to lie, says John (John 1 v 8), another, surely, of the holiest of men. If Christ had been only a very good man, like them, he would have said the same. But never once do we hear from him an admission of sin, and we are not offended: "[Which of you convinceth me of sin?](#)" (John 8 v 46). "[I do always those things which please my Father](#)" (John 8 v 29) "[My meat is to do the will of him that sent me](#)" (John 4 v 34). "[I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love](#)" (John 15 v 10). And others said the same of him. "[Christ did no sin](#)", said Peter. "[In him is no sin](#)", said John (1 John 3 v 5), "[He knew no sin](#)" (2 Cor 5 v 21), said Paul. "[Tempted in all points like as we are](#)", he was "[yet without sin](#)" (Heb 4 v 15). Christ was at once a sharer of full human nature with all sin's tendencies, and strengthened by his Father to resist sin, so that he might offer himself a perfect sacrifice for sin, and being sinless, triumph over death, the wages of sin.

Some who themselves believe that Christ was born of a virgin doubt whether the doctrine is essential for salvation. The Bible leaves no room for that doubt. The best loved words of scripture are followed by an unequivocal statement of our duty: "[God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life... He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God](#)" (John 3 v 16, 18).

H. A. TWELVES.

DARE WE BELIEVE?

Twelve addresses designed for those who feel that there is a conflict between modern knowledge and religious belief.

The Need for Belief
The Scientific Outlook and the Christian Faith
Christianity and Evolution
Miracles
Biblical Criticism
Revelation and Reason
The Meaning of Inspiration
The Virgin Birth and Divine Sonship
Sacrifice and the Blood of Christ
Physical Resurrection
The Exclusive Element in Christianity