

see abundant reason why the Virgin Birth was not a doctrine that was likely to hold such a place as the Resurrection in the spiritual experience of the believer. What then, are we to say? Is the Virgin Birth likely to be true? Are we justified in embodying it in our Christian Creed? Undoubtedly we are, and for these reasons:—

1. "It was accepted as a truth in the earliest days of the Christian faith and most probably borne witness to by Mary herself and by Joseph, and found its place in the earliest records of our Lord's life. There is no evidence to prove that it was inserted in the gospel record at some later date.

2. "It was no less strange or wonderful that this should be true, than the wonderful life, death and Resurrection of Him who stands alone in all history. All the events in His life were in their way miraculous events without any rival or equal to them in any other person.

"Are we justified then in saying that those who find it difficult to accept the Virgin Birth as a historic fact are disloyal to Christ and outside the pale of the Christian faith? By no means are we justified in saying this, as I think we may gather from the silence of the greater part of the New Testament on the subject, which seems to me clearly not to demand it as essential to salvation. But I must add this. There is sufficient probability in its truth to lead us to see in it something which is in harmony with the whole spirit and character of the Gospel story, and the Church would be wanting in the fulness of its teaching, if it omitted to bear witness to what is so beautifully described in the Gospel and bears the very impress of truthfulness on the face of it—coming from such a source and recorded by such an exact and careful historian.

"If then I were asked whether I believed in the truthfulness of this narrative I should say yes, most certainly, because it appears to me more probable that it is true than that it is false, but if another man were to satisfy himself after careful consideration, that to him with his present knowledge it was more probable that it was false, than that it was true, I could not be his judge,

and I should say that he was bound to be true and faithful to his own convictions. Scientific truth has never said its last word—Faith and patience are as much needed by scientists as by theologians, not to say, as by the simplest Christian.

"That eminent biologist, George Romanes, the close friend of Darwin wrote these words a short time before his death, intending to amplify them later:—

"At one time it seemed to me impossible that any proposition verbally intelligent as such, could be more violently absurd than that of the doctrine of the incarnation. Now I see that this standpoint is wholly irrational, due only to the blindness of reason itself promoted by purely scientific habits of thought."

When the thoughts and fancies of generations of men shall have passed into oblivion the words of the Evangelist St. Luke will still stand as a record that cannot be lightly brushed aside. "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God."

IN MEMORIAM.

WILLIAM NORMAN

As the thoughts of many were turning to Bethlehem, William Norman, after an illness of a few hours, passed to his eternal rest.

He passed away in his own home which he loved so well. His mortal remains rested in the Church of St. Andrew's, which he equally loved and so zealously served, and where Sunday by Sunday he joined with his family in the worship of the King, Eternal, Invisible and Immortal whom he knew and loved so well. To him, the Christian religion was the most important factor in his life and in the life of his family. Everyone at the Port knew him and loved him, but only those intimately in touch with him knew his most delightful side—the spiritual and the family. One can never forget the sight of him, seated at the table with his family every night after the evening meal, conducting family prayer, the used dishes still on the table; everything so simple, yet so glorious in its very

simplicity, but with just this difference, one knew and felt the presence of Him whom W. N. worshipped with such devoted intensity.

For the past three years he had been Vicar's Warden, but to him it was more than just an official who signed cheques and took up the offertory. It was another little work of love for his beloved Master. Every Sunday, one saw him with his family making the most intimate of Communion that mankind can make. His soul hungered for that Holy Food, and now we know his soul has beheld the King and is satisfied.

What he has been, and what he has done for St. Andrew's will never be known, and what his friendship to his vicar has meant can never be expressed in words; but this much is most certainly known, that his spiritual presence and influence is with us still. This was never more keenly felt than on the Sunday after his passing, when each and all seemed to feel, so consciously, his presence with us at our Communion, when with "Angels and Archangels and all the company of Heaven" we offered up our thanks and praises to God for the life and work of William Norman. He too, in Paradise prayed that we who are left should carry on the fight for God against the powers of darkness. No theology will ever explain so forcibly the doctrine of the Communion of Saints, as the spiritual experience of those who knew William Norman as he was known by us of St. Andrew's, and is now known by us in the spiritual realm. It is just an experience, but a very wonderful one. The example and experience of a good life; a life so sweet that it is still with us, sharing and helping as it always did, but with just this difference, that now, that life has double the force and power, because it has seen Him, whom to know is to love. And we shall always think of William Norman as the man who loved, and was loved by all in return. May light perpetual shine upon him.

—B.R.B.

YORK MINSTER.

York Minister is among the most magnificent of English cathedrals. Early in the 7th century Edwin, the first Christian king of Northumbria,