
The Genealogy of *Jesus the Christ*

JAMES E. TALMAGE AND THE
TRADITION OF VICTORIAN
LIVES OF JESUS

By Malcolm R. Thorp

JAMES E. TALMAGE HAS BEEN RIGHTLY VIEWED as one of the three European immigrants who were influential in systematizing LDS theology in the early twentieth century.¹ Talmage's specific contribution was described as consisting of a fundamental reinterpretation of the nature of the Godhead, as well as the doctrine of man. It is also apparent that Talmage played the major role in embedding Mormon thought on the earthly mission of Jesus in the orthodoxy of the "Victorian lives of Jesus tradition," the purpose of which was to make Christian beliefs safe from the critical approach of modern biblical criticism. This paper attempts to demonstrate Talmage's reliance on Victorian biblical scholarship, and more specifically, to assess his place within this tradition. It will be argued that Talmage's masterpiece, *Jesus the Christ*, owed much to Victorian lives of Jesus writers, especially Frederic W. Farrar, both in terms of approaches to subject matter, as well as to materials presented. While certain differences between Talmage and these writers exist, the similarities are altogether too obvious to be ignored.

Talmage began his work on the life of Jesus in a series of lectures at the Latter-day Saint University Sunday School, during the school terms of 1904-1906.² A trained geologist and educator by profession, Talmage lacked formal skills as a biblical scholar, especially knowledge of ancient languages. Nevertheless, from the beginning of his teaching career, Talmage displayed an interest in gospel themes, and his training in science encouraged him to collect references for his frequent lectures on LDS topics. While his elaborate journals³ make no mention of an interest in biblical textual criticism, which had only made an impact on American scholarship within his lifetime, it is obvious that he was aware of these new currents of thought and reacted negatively to them.

In his earlier book, *Articles of Faith*, Talmage asserted that evidence of the Bible both internal and historical proved the genuineness of the various separate parts. He wrote that the Bible had come down to us through the work of a special Providence; and, although there were some errors in the text, these he believed were minimal. In addition, Talmage stated that all human efforts at bringing forth a better edition of the Bible were nothing more than the works of man and that the only way an improved text could appear was through prophetic inspiration.⁴ In short, Talmage's treatment of the eighth article of faith provided little encouragement for the study that came to be known as higher criticism.

Nor did Talmage wish to promote such a critical approach in his book *Jesus the Christ*. In the preface to that work, Talmage described his purpose as formulating a narrative of Jesus's earthly mission that was based on an explication of the "Holy Writ of olden times in the light of present day revelation."⁵ While it is true that there is much in his text derived from materials in the LDS tradition, it is also obvious that Talmage went beyond the mere explication of "Holy Writ" from a Mormon perspective. For example, the underlying thesis of *Jesus the Christ* is that the text of the Gospels is reliable, that discrepancies in the story are minimal and insignificant, and that none of the textual problems are important enough to cast the least shadow of rational doubt upon the historicity of the story of Jesus of Nazareth.⁶ Thus, the modern believer should not fear textual exegetes who quibble over detail and purposely mislead through falsely portraying the supposed logical inconsistencies in the story. This same message can be also found, as we will see, in Farrar and his counterparts in late nineteenth century Britain.

II

Any discussion of the tradition of Victorian lives of Jesus must begin with an examination of Daniel Pals's book on this

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subject, which was published in 1982.⁷ In his book, Pals attempted to demonstrate the similarity of approach that one finds in reading the genre of Victorian biographies of Jesus. While these voluminous biographies are of considerable interest to our understanding of the crosscurrents of Victorian thought, none of these studies are relevant to biblical scholarship today. As Pals shows, all of the "lives" were lacking in critical content and were derivative from a standard collection of conservative writers who represented a reaction against the contemporary German trends of biblical criticism. In the late nineteenth century, however, the biographers of Jesus played a pivotal role in the process by which Christianity in Britain reconciled itself with the growing awareness of biblical criticism, especially after the publication in English in 1885 of Julius Wellhausen's monumental study of the history of Israel.⁸ According to Pals, these writers soften the impact of the new criticism, thus enabling Britain to avoid the bitter falling out that occurred in America between the fundamentalists and the liberals. Pals observed, "Anyone who read of Wellhausen and his doubts about the Old Testament had an equal opportunity to open a *Life of Christ* and read its reassurances about the New." The Victorian lives were perceived as the products of criticism, but with a difference: positive, reassuring, and above all, faith promoting.⁹

For our purposes, Pals's discussion of the "Big Three" Victorian

writers—Frederick W. Farrar, J. Cunningham Geikie, and Alfred Edersheim—is particularly important, because Talmage used these authors extensively in his work. Frederick W. Farrar's scholarship, according to his son-in-law, belonged to the "extensive" rather than the "intensive" school. His book, *The Life of Christ* (1874),¹⁰ resembled a summa of safe, orthodox opinion, including the work of Cambridge scholars such as Westcott, Hort, and Lightfoot.¹¹ German textual criticism was not only virtually ignored, but there is an underlying theme of rejection of such probings.¹² But what Farrar could not explain with the text, he explained with the exotic materials that he had gleaned from his travels in the Holy Land, as well as fanciful descriptions that brought about charges of sensationalism.¹³ In spite of limitations, Farrar's *Life* was a publication landmark for a book of this kind, going through as many as twelve reprintings in one year.

Not far behind Farrar in reader appeal was J. Cunningham Geikie's *Life and Words of Christ* (1877),¹⁴ which, according to Pals, was written as a conscious imitation of Farrar.¹⁵ In many ways a stylistically more satisfying biography, Geikie's biography also tended to be better at synthesis than original analysis. Geikie's book showed its author's concern for meticulous historical detail as he attempted to enliven the life and times of the Savior. But even here, one wonders if he reached the point of losing his readers in a the great labyrinth of detail, thus hiding

his lack of an original approach.

The most original of the three biographers was undoubtedly Alfred Edersheim, a convert to Christianity and a recognized authority on Jewish customs at the meridian of time. In 1883 his *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* appeared, providing Victorian readers with an abundance of historical detail on social conditions during the time of Jesus.¹⁶ But, however interesting Edersheim is, even for modern readers, his book followed the same pattern of interpretation as Farrar and Geikie. As Pals states: "The curious thing about this vast storehouse of information ... was that it apparently coexisted in the same mind with a critical innocence difficult to fathom."¹⁷

Pals fails to point out, however, that the slowness in accepting new foreign methodologies (such as German textual criticism), and the conservatism in eventually adopting such new thought, fits well into the English tradition of gradualism. British scholars were traditionally slow in responding to continental intellectual movements, but surprisingly, German biblical criticism penetrated into intellectual circles within a mere generation. Undoubtedly the reason for the spread, even at this modest pace, was due to the penetration of German educational ideals and the appeal that such methods had on young scholars in the late nineteenth century. Indeed, many of the best and brightest students at this time went to Germany for at least part of their education, thus bringing back with them the latest in scholarship. At any rate, it is curious that Pals failed to develop this theme adequately in his study.

Pals notes that the writers of Victorian biographies "reveal too much about the intersecting currents of Victorian society, popular attitudes, religious thought, biblical study, and cultural change to be passed over so easily."¹⁸ Pals, however, was not altogether successful in developing this theme. Much more, for example, could be said about Farrar's treatment of Jesus than Pals reveals. Indeed, Farrar was so caught up in the religious controversies of his day that his book loses relevance for a contemporary audience. Farrar was so fiercely anti-Catholic and anti-atheist that his narrative was encumbered by his opposition to such sectarian notions.¹⁹ Farrar's biography also contained the typically Victorian underlying theme the idea of progress, as well as the corollary notion of the superiority of Western cultural traditions. Consider the following exposition, which reveals more about what smug and confident Victorians thought about their world than the reality of conditions:

Come and see a dying world revived, a decrepit world regenerated, an aged world rejuvenescent; come and see the darkness illuminated, the despair dispelled; come and see tenderness brought into the cell of the imprisoned felon, and liberty to the fettered slave; come and see the poor, and the ignorant, and the many emancipated for ever from the intolerable thralldom of the rich, the learned, and the few; come and see hospitals and orphanages rising in their permanent mercy beside the crumbling ruins of colossal amphitheatres, which once reeked with human blood. . . ; come and see the dens of lust and tyranny transformed into sweet and happy homes,

defiant atheists into believing Christians, rebels into children, and pagans into saints.²⁰

These significant "advances" in Western civilization were seen as the result of adherence to Christian truths, whereas the other great historical religions—Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism—were viewed as decadent and socially debilitating.²¹ Additionally, Farrar's treatment of the Jews was hardly in keeping with his avowed concerns for charity. Passages in his narrative reveal anti-semitic beliefs, as well as the traditional notion that Jews were being punished for the ancient crime of crucifying their Lord.²²

Given these prejudices, it is not surprising that racial overtones can also be detected in Farrar's biography. In a most revealing passage, Jesus was depicted as a Teutonic ideal rather than a Jewish man:

He is a man of middle size, and of about thirty years of age, on whose face the purity and charm of youth are mingled with the thoughtfulness and dignity of manhood. His hair, which legend has compared to the color of wine, is parted in the middle of the forehead, and flows down over the neck. His features are paler and of a more Hellenic type than the weather-bronzed and olive tanned faces of the hardy fishermen who are His Apostles

...

It would be instructive to compare Farrar's depiction of Jesus with the contemporary painting by Holman Hunt, "The Light of the World," in which the Savior was depicted in mysterious tones, a man with an "electric influence," who could penetrate the souls of men with a mere glance. Thus, Farrar described Jesus as Nordic in appearance, with an outward visage that was not quite human: "A flame of fire and starry brightness flashed from His eye, and the majesty of the Godhead shone in His face."²⁴

Although Farrar is still read today by conservative Christians (and Mormons) who wish to escape from the uncertainty of twentieth century interpretations, it can be rightfully argued that Farrar's study lacks those characteristics of transcendence that enables readers of various intellectual persuasions to regard it as a classic biography.

III

From the LDS perspective, there is an additional reason for paying attention to Pals's book. Pals persuasively demonstrates that Victorian lives writers tended to borrow profusely from one another (but especially from Farrar): "To read them is at time to feel as if one is passing through a museum gallery of reproductions; there is the same Jesus, the same orthodox deity, drawn again and again by different hands."²⁵ As we will see, Talmage was greatly influenced by this tradition, and it is beyond question that, excepting the Mormon orientation of his book, *Jesus the Christ* can be properly seen as fitting into the Victorian lives tradition.

While it would be too much to argue that Talmage produced yet another reproduction of a Victorian life of Jesus, it seems clear that the narrative of *Jesus of Christ* follows closely the sequence

established by Farrar and his followers. Like other Victorian lives writers, Talmage wrote that there were two cleansings of the temple, two miraculous meals of bread and fish, and he also confidently asserted that there were no essential contradictions in the biblical narratives concerning the trial and crucifixion of Jesus.

Except for Farrar, Geikie and Edersheim, most of the secondary sources used in *Jesus the Christ* predate the emergence of biblical criticism as a discipline. These included such orthodox writers as Richard Chenevix Trench, whose 1846 study on miracles was considered a classic answer to skeptics, as was his 1841 study on the parables. Also prominent were William Arnot's *The Parables of our Lord* (1865) and Samuel J. Andrews's *The Life of Our Lord . . .* (1863). Significantly, most of these sources were published before 1890, and a number of references, such as Adam Clarke's *The Holy Bible . . . with a Commentary* (1810), went back to the early nineteenth century. Virtually all of the authorities that were extensively used by Talmage were devotional writers who did not approach the Bible text from a historical perspective, and many of these books were certainly archaic works by the time Talmage was writing.

And, like the dog that failed to bark in the Sherlock Holmes story, what is missing in Talmage's book is also revealing: none of the sources he used employed the new critical methodology, a discipline that was producing a number of important studies in Britain by this time.²⁶

We can also assert that Talmage borrowed such concepts as "At one-ment," denoting reconciliation, from these writers,²⁷ as well as his discussion of the meaning of the term Son of Man.²⁸ Other elements in the story suggest dependence on the Victorian tradition. Talmage, for example, confidently argued that all of the problems of Jesus' genealogy in the New Testament accounts were answered as a result of studies by Mill and Harvey.²⁹ His discussion of the temptations of Christ, especially the discussion concerning the peccability or impeccability of Christ, largely follows Farrar's narrative.³⁰ In discussing the cryptic accounts of Jesus's childhood, Talmage (and Farrar) looked upon the paucity of details as proof of authenticity; for "inventive" writers would certainly have added detail.³¹ In both Farrar and Talmage, John the Baptist's probable state of mind as he languished away in prison, a condition that cannot be determined by the Gospel accounts, is discussed in such a striking way as to suggest Talmage's reliance on Farrar's earlier account.³² In addition, Talmage's discussion of Jesus as the world's greatest champion of the rights of women is echoed from the Victorian tradition.³³ We should not accuse Talmage of dishonesty (i.e., plagiarism) here, for, as we have noted, all of the Victorian lives of Jesus writers tended to borrow material from one another. Plagiarism is a word that has taken on a different meaning in contemporary scholarship, but in Talmage's time, it was perfectly acceptable to borrow from other writers, even without footnotes. Thus, rumors that circulate concerning Talmage's prolific borrowing without proper attribution are both exaggerated as well as unfounded in terms of rules of usage during his time.

In criticism of Pals, however, it can be said that there was a

greater amount of individuality in the approaches of Victorian lives of Jesus writers than he admitted, and this is most certainly true of Talmage. Talmage's *Jesus the Christ* is no carbon copy imitation of his predecessors. His expostulation on the Gospels is a more closely literal treatment than any of the major Victorian writers. Talmage's dialogue contains fewer historical materials that would give flavor to the life and times of Jesus. He also avoided the grandiloquent flamboyance of Victorian prose in favor of a more subdued, restrained style. Talmage's independence can also be seen in his occasional divergence from the chronological arrangement that was generally followed by Victorian biographers. In addition, in several instances he refuted allegations from previous writers that he thought to be untenable.³⁴ Most importantly, Talmage's interpretation of Jesus differs from Farrar and his school. There is no aura of mystery surrounding the Savior; instead, Christ is a rational manipulator of eternal laws that were incomprehensible to man. Certainly the approach of Talmage the scientist can be discerned in the following argument:

In no instance do we find that Christ used unnecessarily the superhuman powers of His Godship; the divine energy was never wasted; even the material creation resulting from its exercise was conserved, as witness His instructions regarding the gathering up of the fragments of bread and fish after the multitudes had been miraculously fed.³⁵

While there are important differences between the Victorian biographers and Talmage, when we turn to a comparison of the methodology employed in interpreting the four Gospels we find little difference between Talmage and these writers. In other words, Talmage definitely shares a commonality of purpose and method with the Victorian lives of Jesus writers. Consider, for instance, Farrar's attempt to establish irrefutable Gospel harmony:

[In considering] the evidence of the Evangelists, as evidence given by witnesses of unimpeachable honesty, we have every right to believe that, to whatever cause the confessed fragmentariness of their narratives may be due, those narratives may fairly be regarded as supplementing each other. It is dishonest to assume the existence of irreconcilable discrepancies, as it is to suggest the adoption of impossible harmonies.³⁶

Likewise, Talmage wrote in the preface to his work:

True, there are diversities of deduction based on alleged discrepancies in the records of the past as to circumstantial detail; but such differences are of strictly minor importance, for none of them nor all taken together cast a shadow of rational doubt upon the historicity of the earthly existence of the Man known in literature as Jesus of Nazareth.³⁷

In other words, both authors felt the text was reliable and criticized scholars who suggested that there were textual problems with the narrative. Or, if such problems did exist, they were of little significance and did not distract in any way from the credibility of the accounts.

Still, there are differences of degree between Farrar and Tal-

mage. While both writers were willing to admit that the Gospels were fragmentary in character and were often vague in details, Farrar went even further by admitting that there were probably narrative traditions that superseded the writing of the Gospels, and thus the historical detail was often confused.³⁸ He argued that there was at least one and possibly two common oral traditions that formed the basis for the Synoptic Gospels. He also admitted that, especially in the Matthew and Mark accounts, the chronological arrangement was often determined by "subjective considerations" (i.e., material was grouped together for expository purposes to illustrate moral or religious lessons) rather than by a historical sequence.³⁹ In addition, he admitted that each of the Gospels reflected its author's personal individualism, even its author's own natural suppositions.

Nor was Farrar convinced that all of the materials included in the four Gospels were genuine. While he certainly believed in the accounts of the miracles, at least one such story was bothersome to him. Concerning the miracle of the fish caught by Peter to pay the temple tax (Matthew 17:24-28), Farrar believed that the story presented readers with a "fine ethical lesson," but the historicity of this story obviously caused him difficulty. While he averred that the intention of the narrative was to suggest that a miracle had been performed, Farrar reasoned that the most literal translation of this passage would read that "on opening its mouth, thou shalt get, or obtain, a stater." And, Farrar continued, there should be no difficulty in believing that a fish could swallow a glittering coin that was accidentally dropped in the water; hence, the miracle could have taken place. But this incident obviously caused Farrar problems. He wrote that "the peculiarities both of the miracle itself and of the manner in which it is narrated, leave in my mind a doubt as to whether, in this instance, some essential particular may not have been either omitted or left unexplained."⁴⁰

As was usually the case, Talmage was in no way bothered by the circumstances of this miracle, and he offered a most literal interpretation of the happening. He argued that, although the finding of the stater in the mouth of the fish is not indicated in the text, we can assume that the miracle was realized, "as otherwise there would appear no reason for introducing the incident into the Gospel narrative." While admitting that the miracle was without parallel in the Bible, he said this need not raise any questions. In a passage aimed at chastising skeptics (such as Farrar), Talmage asserted that

the knowledge that there was in the lake a fish having a coin in its gullet, that the coin was of the denomination specified, and that that particular fish would rise, and be the first to rise to Peter's hook, is as incomprehensible to man's finite understanding as are the means by which any of Christ's miracles were wrought. The Lord Jesus held and holds dominion over the earth, the sea, and all that in them is, for by His word and power were they made.⁴¹

Talmage explained that by employing such a device for payment, Jesus maintained his independence as a King's Son, and this was the reason for the miracle. Talmage always looked for a logical reason for Jesus' miracles, and assumed that the miracles

were performed according to proper scientific principles, even though we do not know the scientific methods employed.⁴²

While the doctrine of biblical literalism predated Talmage's writings, he certainly provided the Church with an important restatement of this position. Indeed, he maintained that the LDS Church's interpretation of the Bible was more literal than any other major denomination.⁴³ While the official creedal position was that the Bible was true insofar as it was translated correctly, *Jesus the Christ* leaves the distinct impression that there were few textual problems, at least in the four Gospels. In only one major context does he suggest that there was a scribal error involved, that being John's statement that Christ was crucified "about the sixth hour," while Mark has the event taking place at the third hour of the morning. Talmage believed that this was due to the errors of early copyists, who mistook the sign meaning third for the one signifying sixth.⁴⁴ Although he alluded to other errors and textual inconsistencies, he believed that they were easily reconcilable.

Even within the essentially literalistic interpretation of LDS biblical study, it is interesting that Talmage asked few questions about the intentions of the writers of the four Gospels. There was no discussion of the differing purposes, say, of Matthew and John. Indeed, his treatment of John is most revealing of Talmage's approach. Considered by scholars to be the least historical of the Gospels, the Johannine account emphasizes the transcendental and incomprehensible elements of the story of Christ. Scholars also generally assume that the text of John was at least partially rearranged by a later redactor.⁴⁵ The text that we have, it would seem, was intentionally arranged to formulate a narrative that was not concerned with biographical details or chronological sequence. Yet Talmage and the Victorian biographers attempted to harmonize John's account with the others, arguing that the essential difference is really that John treated Jesus's Judean mission more fully, while the Synoptic writers were more interested in the events that occurred in Galilee.⁴⁶

When confronted with a problem, such as John's early account of the cleansing of the temple, it was de facto assumed that there were two cleansings, even though the Johannine account of the incident reveals certain contextual problems as the story fits into the narrative. Also significant, in terms of the logic employed, is the account of the woman taken in adultery. Some scholars have raised questions about this incident because the story does not appear in early manuscripts of John, as well as the contention that neither the language nor the grammar of this passage are consistent with that contained in the Gospel.⁴⁷ While it might well be argued that the incident is authentic, certainly Talmage's reasoning (which is adopted from Farrar) does not clearly resolve the issue. Farrar contended that the episode was historical; otherwise, he asked, why is it contained in so many important manuscripts that we now have?⁴⁸ Notice the logic employed here. Clearly, Farrar does not build a case based upon reasoned exposition of the various early versions. Rather, he offers an authoritarian pronouncement that is aimed at convincing the

reader that no discussion is necessary.

IV

Talmage's *Jesus the Christ* is a book that is important to the restatement of theology that was taking place in the first decades of the twentieth century. As a clear, concise statement of LDS beliefs, it is deservedly recognized as a Mormon classic. But this is not to say that methodology used in 1915 and before is sacrosanct and answers the questions today. It is sometimes argued in defense of the Victorian approach that these writers knew Jesus with greater insight and understanding than later scholars. But can such a statement, especially in light of Pals's study, really be shown to be valid? Has the Victorian tradition really answered all of the important issues concerning the four Gospels, as well as the interpretation of Christ that is found in Paul and in the accounts of the early Church?

F.C. Burkitt was arguably the greatest New Testament scholar in Britain during the early twentieth century. Writing only a few years before Talmage, he asserted that the tangled questions of Gospel history admit no easy solutions, orthodox or otherwise. Furthermore, in answer to the question of why we need historical criticism of the Bible, he replied:

It is not to get new ideas of religion or of philosophy that we need a minute and searching historical criticism; rather do we need to test the ideas we already have by the historical facts, and we cannot get at the facts without the criticism. Not that it is always or generally an easy task to exercise a true historical criticism upon a great subject, and it is only too easy to fall into error. But of this, at least, we may be confident, that our errors will not long escape detection: if not by our own generation, then by the next. And the attempt to "return to the historic Christ" is the only way by which we can escape from the tyranny of the last generations's theories about Christ.⁴⁹

LDS discussions on the New Testament have often ignored textual issues and authorities have been conjured up from the remote past in such a way as to suggest that textual problems themselves are a myth. Although Talmage was certainly forthright about where he got his ideas, we still like to imagine that we really get our ideas exclusively from the Bible and other revealed sources, rather than from scholarly traditions that need to be defended through rational discourse.

Any attempt at interpretation of texts either sacred or profane obviously involves us with the preconceptions of the author and his age. It is always human minds that organize and interpret the "facts," which never entirely speak for themselves. Nor can we ever know the exact intention of any document, especially ancient texts, where the gaps in language and cultural traditions between such past ages and the present are so wide. Thus, scholarship is always an ongoing process, and there is little room for embedding thought in procrustean beds of past generations. As new questions arise and new sources come forth (such as the Dead Sea Scrolls and biblical fragments from earlier manuscripts) which help us to understand the Gospels more fully, then seekers of

light and truth should approach their study honestly, through the mediums of both faith and reason.

NOTES

1. Thomas G. Alexander, "The Reconstruction of Mormon Doctrine: From Joseph Smith to Progressive Theology," *Sunstone*, 9 (July-August, 1980): 24-33.
2. L.D.S. University Sunday School, Theology Class. *Jesus, the Christ*. Instructors, Elders Ja[me]s E. Talmage and James J. Anderson (Salt Lake City: 1904-06).
3. Harold B. Lee Library, Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah. James Edward Talmage Collection, Journals, 1879-1920.
4. James E. Talmage, *Articles of Faith* (Salt Lake City: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1968), 236-37.
5. James E. Talmage, *Jesus the Christ* (Salt Lake City: Deseret Book Company, 1961), iv.
6. *Ibid.*, 1.
7. Daniel L. Pals, *The Victorian "Lives" of Jesus*. The Trinity University Monograph Series in Religion, Volume VII (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1982).
8. Julius Wellhausen, *Prolegomena to the History of Israel*. . . (Edinburgh: A. & C. Black, 1885).
9. Wellhausen, p. 153.
10. Frederick W. Farrar, *The Life of Christ* (Portland: Fountain Publications, 1980).
11. See Farrar page 10, for a discussion of sources.
12. Farrar, p. 43.
13. Pals, p. 84.
14. U.J. Cunningham Geikie, *The Life and Words of Christ*, 2 vols. (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1879).
15. Pals, pp. 93-94.
16. Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, 2 vols. (New York: Loonmans, Green, and Co., 1910).
17. Pals, p. 105.
18. Pals, p. vii.
19. Farrar, p. 373.
20. Farrar, p. 137.
21. Farrar, p. 216 and passim.
22. For example: Farrar says that "avarice the besetting sin of Judas the besetting sin of the Jewish race . . ." was perpetuated from ancient to modern times p. 593). See also pp. 289, 445, 604, 632.
23. Farrar, p. 246.
24. Farrar, p. 135.
25. Pals, p. 127.
26. The most important secondary works used by Talmage were Samuel J. Andrews, *The Life of our Lord* . . . (London: A. Staham & Co., 1863); Adam Clarke, *The Holy Bible . . . with a Commentary and Critical Notes* (n.p., 1810); Charles Force Deems, *The Light of the Nations* (New York: Gay Brothers, [1884]); John Robert Dummelow, *Commentary on the Holy Bible* . . . (London: Macmillan and Co., 1909); Edward Greswell, *Dissertations upon the Principles and Arrangement of a Harmony of the Gospels* (Oxford, 1830); Lord Arthur Charles Hervey, *The Genealogies of our Lord* . . . (Cambridge, 1853); John Laidlaw, *The Miracles of Our Lord* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1890); William Hodge Mill, *The Evangelical Accounts of the Descent and Parentage of the Saviour* . . . (Cambridge: J. and J. Deighton, 1842); William Smith, comp., *A Dictionary of the Bible* . . . (Hartford: J.B. Burr & Hyde, 1872); Richard Chenevix Trench, *Notes on the Miracles of Our Lord* (London, 1846); Richard Chenevix Trench, *Notes on the Parables of our Lord* (London, 1841).
27. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 23.
28. Compare the discussion in Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 142, with Farrar, p. 140, n. 2.
29. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 89, n. 5.
30. Farrar, p. 116; Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 134.
31. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 111; Farrar, p. 70.
32. Talmage, *Jesus*, pp. 255-56; Farrar, pp. 229-34. In Farrar especially, there is a propensity to describe psychological states of mind, often in an imaginative way that does not relate to the text.
33. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 475; 484, n. 5; Geikie, vol. II, p. 349.
34. See Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 186, n. 3, where he openly criticizes Farrar's position on the Nobleman of Capernaum.
35. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 495, 334.
36. Farrar, p. 43.
37. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 1. Also important to Talmage's methodology is his statement that "it is the part of prudence and wisdom to segregate and keep distinctly separate the authenticated statements of fact . . . from the fanciful commentaries of historians, theologians, and writers of fiction, as also from the emotional rhapsodies of poets and artistic extravaganzas wrought by chisel or brush" (p. 93). Talmage obviously believed here that objective, impartial, even "scientific" inquiry was possible. The problem is, how is it possible to keep to strictly "authentic statements of fact"? And, who determines what is authentic and what is imaginative? See also, Farrar, p. 40, for a similar statement.
38. Farrar, p. 482.
39. Farrar, pp. 543-44.
40. Farrar, p. 395.
41. Talmage, *Jesus*, pp. 382-86.
42. Talmage, *Jesus*, pp. 151-52, n. 7.
43. Talmage, *Articles*, p. 236. Talmage's method involved what scholars have called the theory of verbal inspiration and inerrancy of every part of the scripture, an approach that (as we shall see) discredited the differences between the four Gospel writers. For a discussion of this theory, see Stephen Neil, *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1961* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 4-5. The official pronouncement of the Church on this issue was made in October 1922 when Charles W. Penrose and Anthony W. Ivins reiterated the Church's belief that the Bible was the word of God as far as it was translated correctly. At the same time, they pointed out that there were some problems with the Old Testament texts. Thus, it was asserted that what was important was not that the books in question were historically correct, but that they were doctrinally accurate. In conclusion, they said, "To answer yes or no" to biblical criticism, "is unwise and should not be undertaken by one representing the church." No position was taken toward individual members of the Church who sought understanding through textual criticism. See Thomas G. Alexander, *Mormonism in Transition: A History of the Latter-day Saints, 1890-1930* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1986), p. 283.
44. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 668, n. 7.
45. Raymond E. Brown, trans., *The Gospel According to John* (i-xii), The Anchor Bible, vol. 29 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday & Co., 1983), p. xcvi-cii.
46. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 166, n. 2.
47. John 8: 3-11. For a discussion on the problems of this passage, see Brown, *John*, pp. 332-34.
48. Talmage, *Jesus*, p. 422, n. 5.
49. F. Crawford Burkitt, *The Gospel History and Its Transmission*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1907), pp. 30-31.