Book Review: The Trial of Jesus Christ, By Andrew C. Bisek

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law—he may have to deny himself; he may have to consecrate his efforts to the support of a client's right; he may have to defy public clamor and incur reproach in his assertion of these rights. He lives a life of consecrated duty and yet in how many states is there any thoroughgoing attempt to ascertain whether he has a call to that high vocation on the threshold of his admission to the Bar? And in how many law schools is the nature of the service he is to render kept in the forefront while his technical education progresses?

I urge upon the youth of America who look upon this great profession as an opportunity for Service to consider well whether the solution of every ethical quandary will not, after all, be found to lie in Faith, that is, not only in Daniel Webster's conviction in the existence of a Supreme Being, but in the "abiding confidence in the friendliness of one's God," as Cairns of Aberdeen phrased it.

If the Creator of our spirits is the friendly chancellor of the conscience he implants in every breast, the "dignity" of the relationship, and the "loyalty" of the friendship will produce the "Integrity" that marks the perfect Chancellor.

Such a book by such an author should help, indeed, make many such chancellors.

H. B. M.


The author in his preface expressly professes his belief in the divinity of Christ but states that he limits himself to the purely legal aspects of the case leaving its theological relationship to the clergymen. Being a lawyer he obviously is better qualified to write on this subject than were some of those who have written before him. His treatment as a whole shows that he has conscientiously studied all the available data including of course the history of Christ as related in the New Testament, the Jewish system of law contained in the Talmud, such scattered information as can be obtained from the writings of Josephus and other contemporaneous writers and the modern works dealing with the life of Christ generally or with the trial in particular. His style is clear and forcible and in a good many pages reaches a high degree of literary excellence. His chapter on the trial before Pilate is particularly satisfactory whether the reader believes with the author that Pilate stayed reasonably within the law as it was and acted as a judge or whether he believes that he was merely an opportunist with a smattering of legal principle and a contempt for it. The book will be a valuable addition to the library not only of the lawyer interested in trial work, or of the clergymen interested in Lenten sermons but also of the man of broad culture interested partly in its subject matter, partly in its literary qualities. The type is large and bold and the paper and binding though by no means of the highest grade are sufficient for a book of this size. It is to be regretted that the volume contains no index and that quotations from the Bible and other sources contain no reference to the sources.

Perhaps the best method to acquaint the reader with the scope of the work will be to run through the various chapters. In Chapter I the author deals with the traditions and condition of the Jewish people at the time, with particular regard to their fierce monotheistic belief and their horror for all graven images and shows that these feelings were in a large part respected and to some extent flouted by the Roman conquerors. In Chapter II he shows the effect of the teaching of the Nazarene on this strange, headstrong, and poverty-stricken nation particularly in regard to his own claim to divinity and to his unsparing denunciation of the Pharisees, perhaps the most influential group. In Chapter III he
subjects the gospel narrative of the trial to legal tests and demonstrates its entire trustworthiness. Chapter IV. is a very excellent outline of the then existing Jewish jurisprudence and sets forth the various courts in existence, their relationship to each other and to the nation as a whole, their jurisdiction, personnel and the rules of evidence in vogue. This chapter concludes with a list of the names of some of the seventy who sat in judgment on Jesus including such New Testament characters as Gamaliel and Joseph of Aramathaea, both of whom naturally dissented. After a short chapter dealing with the arrest of Jesus, the author in Chapter VI deals with the trial before the Sanhedrin and shows that all the evidence introduced was unable to meet the rigid tests imposed by the Jewish law and that the conviction finally was had on Jesus' frank statement that he was indeed the son of God, a statement which to his judges was identical with a plea of guilty. In Chapter VII the author deals with the Roman dominion over Palestine and the compromise which had been arrived at where the Jewish and the Roman law conflicted. Chapter VIII is concerned with the trial before Pilate and takes up step by step the various questions asked of Jesus, the answers given by Him as related in the four gospels, and shows the legal significance of each. This chapter is perhaps the most valuable in the book. In the next two chapters the author deals with the apochryphal acts of Pilate and the arguments pro and con concerning the legality of the trial. The book concludes with a chapter in which the author sums up is own conclusions.

The writer of this review has but a very superficial acquaintanceship with some of the other works dealing with this trial. A bibliography contained on pages 331 to 333 contains besides general works on the life of Jesus a reference to four distinct books dealing specifically with the trial—those of Chandler, Innes, Richards-Aigar, and Rosadi. A comparison of these works with that now under review would be interesting but time and other considerations make this impossible. The writer, however, has read by far the greater portion of Mr. Bisek's book and is of the confident opinion that his effort is a real and lasting contribution to the literature on this subject.

CARL ZOLLMANN


This is a collection of cases on the subjects of bailments and carriers, liens, conditional sales, mortgages, suretyship, interests in real and personal property, conveyancing, insurance, banks and banking, bankruptcy, crimes (frequently confronting the business man) and contracts, combinations, and practices in restraint of trade, and intended for use as a basis for an advanced course for students in the commerce course. There are presented here some of the illustrative and a few of the leading cases found in casebooks on these subjects which are in use in law schools, and in addition some few very recent cases. The cases are well edited. The matter not material to the subject head under which the case is placed has been cut, thus showing a great deal of careful work and a desire to reduce the size of the volume.

The writer has always believed that law can only be adequately taught in a law school after sufficient preliminary preparation, and that the subjects upon which these cases bear can only be understood by a student possessing a thorough grounding in the elementary legal subjects such as torts and contracts. How-