

HE IS NOT HERE
—
THE RESURRECTION
OF CHRIST

BY THE
REV. J. H. BROOKES, D.D.

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THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

CHAPTER I.

WHERE IS JESUS?

IT is impossible to exaggerate the importance of this question. Upon it hinges the history of the civilized world for nearly nineteen centuries ; upon it hangs the hope of the human race for all coming centuries. About it gather the past, the present and the future ; the generations that have moved on to the great Hereafter ; the generations that may yet follow ; the existence of the Church ; the unity of mankind ; the destiny that awaits each of us ; and the key that unlocks the mystery of death and the meaning of eternity.

It is enough to make the most heedless blanch if forced to face the tremendous issues involved in the single inquiry, Where is Jesus? Since the whole world knows that he lived, the whole world knows that he died ; but what became of his body? Did it moulder into dust, or did it come forth victorious in the conflict with "the king of terrors"? Did it become the prey of worms, or did it ascend to the right hand of the Majesty on high? The attempt is now made to treat the consideration of this thought as of no consequence, on the senseless plea that we still have Christ left to us ; but a moment's consid-

eration will show that, if his body remained in the grave, we have no Christ and no revelation from God. "Without Christ . . . and without God in the world," is the way the Bible puts it. *Eph.* ii. 12. If there was no resurrection, there is no Christ; if there is no Christ, there is no God; leaving but the blank conclusion of the hopeless skeptic, who could see only "an empty heaven looking down upon a soulless race."

First, all we know about Christ we learn from his own words as recorded by his immediate disciples and from the testimony of his apostles. If the book, therefore, is unworthy of belief, he is as much a myth as Sinbad the Sailor in the Arabian Nights, and must at once be dismissed from the mind as a discreditable fraud. According to the reports of those who have preserved his sayings from the commencement to the close of his public career, he constantly predicted that his body must be crucified and killed, and that it would surely come forth alive from the tomb. If this was not true, he was a crazy fanatic, or a contemptible impostor; and hence it is madness to claim that we still have a Christ, when there is nothing worth having to retain if he did not come forth from the dead.

Second, there is no revelation. The earliest creed or confession formulated in the New Testament declares the gospel which was preached everywhere, and is still preached, as absolutely essential to Christian faith: "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." *1 Cor.* xv. 3, 4. The clause "he was buried," refers of course to the burial of his body, and the clause "he rose

again," to the resurrection of the same body, for his soul or spirit was certainly not buried after the crucifixion. The death of his body, the burial of his body, and the resurrection of his body are, "according to the scriptures," mentioned twice, for these facts entirely accord with the teachings both of the Old and New Testaments. As an unavoidable result, if his body did not rise again on the third day, the Scriptures from beginning to end are a stupendous falsehood.

Third, the apostles who declared this gospel, and proclaimed it to be fundamental to the entire system of Christianity, were the greatest liars the world has ever known, if the body of Jesus was not actually beheld and handled after his death. This they themselves frankly admit: "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ: whom he raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not." 1 *Cor.* xv. 15. Observe the precision of the statement: "We are found false witnesses." We are not only false witnesses, but are discovered to be such. That is, they were not deluded, but deliberate deceivers, testifying that they have seen what they have not seen. "Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God." The genitive is used to emphasize the special enormity of their blasphemy, for they are false witnesses who lie about God, and against God, and before God.

Fourth, the Church has no basis whatever upon which it can rest. If you take away the literal resurrection of the Saviour's body, you also tear loose the only support that upholds the wonderful structure. It was erected, as the rationalist Keim has well said, "upon an empty grave," and if that grave contains the dust of the cruci-

fied One, the imposing edifice, with all the troubled sinners it has sheltered, with all the tempted souls it has shielded, with all the solace it has given to the sorrowful, with all the knowledge it has imparted to the ignorant, with all the themes it has supplied to art, with all the stimulus it has furnished to progress and enterprise and civilization, topples over into everlasting ruin. You at once arrest the aspirations of the living, and enshroud in midnight blackness the light of the dying.

Fifth, it is impossible to account for the remarkable power of early Christianity on the supposition that it started in a lie. It survived the scoff of Greek philosophy, the force of Roman opposition, and the fury of Jewish bigotry. It passed through the flames of fiercest persecution, the fatal roar and rush of wild beasts, the tortures of the cross and the stake, and stayed not its victorious march until crowned queen of the mightiest empire of antiquity, remaining unscathed and unshaken in the fall of the colossal government that had covered the earth with its shadow. Men may be willing to surrender country, kindred, home, friends, cherished associations, religious faith, and to endure poverty, exile, imprisonment and a horrible death, but not for what they know to be a lie; nor does a lie carry blessings with it wherever it goes.

Sixth, if Jesus did not really rise, not only is the ground removed from Christian doctrine but from Christian morality. He repeatedly said that he would rise, and the apostles said that they saw him and conversed with him repeatedly after he was risen; and if all this is not true, we are called to face the dilemma how to reconcile his broken promise with the whole tenor of his character and conduct. The purity of his life, the blamelessness

of his demeanor, and the sublimity of his teachings have been fully conceded by such bitter infidels as Rousseau, Tom Paine, Strauss, Renan, John Stuart Mill, Huxley and Ingersoll ; and if he cannot be believed, we must lose all confidence in every one, and talk no more of sincerity and goodness. Even of the writings of his apostles, it cannot be denied that they exalt virtue, demand honesty and veracity, denounce falsehood and licentiousness, promote the good order of society, introduce peace into the household ; and, so far as their influence extends, establish the reign of universal love. The noblest lives, the sweetest precepts and the most salutary principles originated in a lie, if Jesus did not rise. One has well said, "Wondrous fountain of blessing this lie has been ! What truth has ever wrought so much good in the world ?"

Seventh, let us suppose that the resurrection can be disproved, and Jesus is nowhere. To the world and to the human soul, therefore, there is no Christ. Every trace of him, we may imagine, is gone. Every vestige of his impress upon education and literature is thoroughly erased. Unbelievers who have unconsciously received innumerable blessings from his munificent hand, but who have failed to recognize their obligation for the manifold kindnesses he has bestowed, are suddenly stripped of all the help and light that have come from his presence on the earth. Those who have been trained by a pious parentage, and surrounded and moulded by the culture of a Christian community, are forever removed from the reach of his most distant touch. Blot out the resurrection, and you blot out Christ ; and even thoughtful infidels would recoil from the horrible consequences.

Some of you may remember Jean Paul Richter's dream,

translated by Thomas Carlyle. It is too long to quote, but it haunts one like a grim specter. He sees a universe without Christ. His spirit sails through illimitable space, and the planets go beetling on with no sun to attract them or hold them in their place. Down into the infinite abysses he descends, amid crawling, slimy reptiles. He is enclosed about in granite walls like a dungeon, with heights that could never be scaled, with depths that could never be fathomed. Alone, friendless, crushed, it was useless to cry for help, since there was no eye to see him, but only a black eyeless socket, staring out into the endless darkness. Turn whithersoever he would, there was no relief, no rescue, no rest, but endless and profoundest despair, for Eternity lay upon Chaos, and fed upon it. "Then there came sailing onwards," he tells us, "from the depths, through the galaxies of stars, a dark globe along a sea of light; and a human form, as a child, stood upon it, which neither changed nor yet grew greater as it drew near. At last I recognized our Earth before me, and on it the Child JESUS, and he looked upon me with a look so bright and gentle and loving, that I awoke for love and joy." No wonder the gifted writer could say, "His grave is the green mountain-top of a far, new world." Yes, the empty grave of Jesus holds within it the hopes of redeemed humanity.

"One place alone had ceased to hold its prey,
A form had pressed it and was there no more;
The garments of the grave beside it lay,
Where once they wrapped HIM on the rocky floor.
He only with returning footsteps broke
The eternal calm with which the tomb was bound;
Among the sleeping dead alone HE woke,
And bless'd with outstretched hands the host around."

CHAPTER II.

HOW DO WE KNOW?

THE American Bible Society has printed in the year 1895, about 2,000,000 copies of the sacred Scriptures. The British Bible Society has printed in the same time more than 3,000,000 copies in 330 languages and dialects of the earth. Besides these many hundreds of thousands have been printed by different societies in other lands, and by various private publishing houses. One such house in New York City alone has issued 110,000 copies of the Bible in the last year. This is a fact which infidels no doubt regard as a proof of deplorable and universal superstition, but that it is a fact they cannot deny.

Moreover, among the many millions who believe the Bible, are found the ablest scholars, men of the cleanest lives, of chaste conversation, of honorable conduct, of upright dealing, of neighborly respect for the rights of others, of uncomplaining obedience to law, and of charitable interest in the welfare of the poor and suffering. In this vast number there are unquestionably hypocrites ; but observe, these do not believe the Bible, for they are not in the least governed by its precepts. On the other hand, the rejecters of the Bible supply nearly the whole of our criminal classes. Burglars, murderers, drunken rowdies, prostitutes, thieves, are almost always gathered from the populace with whom the word of God has no

authority and no meaning. Let the records of police courts, and the crowds that swarm into our city and state prisons, furnish evidence of the correctness of the statement. "They have sown the wind, and they shall reap the whirlwind. *Hos.* viii. 7.

It would not be just and generous to say that infidels are uniformly guilty of loose principles and immoral practices. They are often kind, polite and reputable in deportment. But it will not be disputed that their most noted leaders like Astruc, Voltaire and Rousseau violated every rule of decency, plunged into the wildest excesses of debauchery, and with all their genius were still more celebrated for their constant intrigue and base treachery to the claims of hospitality. Nothing better can be affirmed of their gifted poets, like Byron, Shelley and Goethe, over whose private behavior the utmost that charity can do is to draw the veil of darkness. A book recently printed, called *The Influence of Skepticism on Character, Being the Sixteenth Fernley Lecture*, London, throws a terrible search light into the lives of these famous writers. The testimony of their biographers reveals, not only their total lack of sound morals, but the consequent wretchedness that followed.

Even their boasted scientists like Darwin, Tyndal, Huxley and Herbert Spencer, have never in the least advanced the science of true ethics, uplifted the fallen, soothed a troubled conscience, eased the ache of a burdened heart, nor arrested a tear in the eyes of the sorrowful. Infidelity has not been able to build a hospital, nor has it reared an orphan asylum, nor sent a ray of light into the gloom of heathenism. It may be intellectually sharp; and yet "this wisdom descended not

from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish." *Jas.* iii. 15. Belief in Christ, if genuine, saves the entire man; unbelief seeks only to exalt the mind.

Precisely the same line of separation now existing between the two classes can be traced back century by century, generation by generation, year by year, week by week, until the day of Pentecost. God has been saying to the unbelieving all along, as he said to Pharaoh fifteen hundred years before the coming of the Lord Jesus, "I will put a division [margin, a redemption] between my people and thy people." *Ex.* viii. 23. He has seen to it that there should be an unbroken succession of testimony in speech, in writing, in heroic endurance, and especially in the more convincing demonstration of a godly and separate life, stretching back from this day to the very day when the disciples exclaimed with joy, "The Lord is risen indeed." *Luke* xxiv. 34.

The nineteenth century sees Christianity diffused everywhere. The eighteenth century brought out thousands upon thousands of books written in defense and exposition of the Scriptures. The seventeenth century was the time of the Puritans, and of confessions of faith, when innumerable learned treatises were sent forth, upholding the Bible. The sixteenth century was the period of the Reformation, of the Huguenots, of Luther, Calvin and John Knox. The fifteenth century was made glorious by the discovery of the art of printing, the first book ever set up in type being the Holy Bible. The fourteenth century is honored by the labors of John Wycliff, who translated the word of God into English. The thirteenth century was signalized by the daring efforts of King Louis IX. of France, canonized after his death, to deliver Christians

from the yoke of foreign oppression. The twelfth century witnessed the uprising of all the nations of Europe to rescue the sacred sepulcher from the grasp of the Moslem. The eleventh century was distinguished by the invasion of England by William the Conqueror, who at once made provision for the extension of the Church. The tenth century is illuminated by the sufferings of the Waldenses for their faith. The ninth century finds Alfred the Great translating the Scriptures into Saxon, so that if the Danes took all the Bibles away, his people might have the word of God in their hearts. The eighth century shows the venerable Bede spreading that word by his translation. The seventh century brings us to Mohammed, who distinctly and publicly recognized Jesus Christ as among the prophets. In the sixth century we read of missions from Rome to England and elsewhere, through Pope Gregory, Theodoret and Fulgentius; in the fifth century Chrysostom was preaching the cross to enthusiastic crowds in Constantinople; Augustine was preparing his profound works on theology in Africa; and Jerome was carefully re-editing the Scriptures in the East; in the fourth century we discover Ambrose, Athanasius and Eusebius as heralds of Christ; in the third century we come to Cyprian, Origen and Gregory; in the second century to Papias, Tertullian and Irenæus, the last of whom was a disciple of Polycarp, who was the immediate disciple of the Apostle John, who was the immediate disciple of Jesus.

It shows how widely spread were the books of the New Testament in that early period when it is ascertained that Origen, in A. D. 230, quotes from all these books, by actual count, 5,745 passages; that Tertullian, in the year 200, makes more than 3,000 quotations from the same

books; that Clement, in A. D. 194, quotes 380 passages; that Irenæus, in A. D. 178, quotes 676 passages; that Polycarp, the companion of St. John, makes 36 quotations in a single letter; and that Justin Martyr in A. D. 130, presents elaborate extracts from the books of the New Testament as authentic. In the life of Robert Haldane it is stated that a number of literary gentlemen spent an evening together in Edinburgh. Some one suggested that it would be interesting to discover how frequently the New Testament had been quoted by the so-called "Fathers" of the first three centuries. Lord Hailes, a distinguished jurist, replied that he had a complete Anti-Nicene library, and he would gladly look into the question. He found in these writings, by a brief search, all but eleven verses of the New Testament, and expressed himself as satisfied that these, too, he would find when he had a little more leisure.

Such facts prove how extensively circulated were the New Testament books soon after they were written, in what reverent esteem they were held and how surely they were regarded as emanating from the evangelists and apostles of our Lord. But we must go back of the Fathers. Herculaneum and Pompeii were destroyed in the year A. D. 79. Some five hundred scrolls or volumes out of a library of two thousand have been deciphered and printed. These books were written in uncial or capital letters with no spacing between the words; and the earliest copies of the New Testament were written in the same way. Then we have the Syriac translation or Peshito version, the product of the second century, according to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, another in Latin known as the Italic version of the same date, and

the *Teachings of the Apostles*, closely bordering on the times of the first disciples.

Besides, the Apostle Peter mentions Paul's epistles, and raises them to the rank of "the other scriptures" (2 *Pet.* iii. 15, 16), Paul having written fourteen epistles before he was put to death by Nero, who committed suicide in A. D. 68. Luke wrote *The Acts* while Paul was still living, for he closes his book with the statement that the apostle was left in prison. *Acts* xxvii. 30. But Luke wrote his gospel before he had written the *Acts of the Apostles*, for he says, "The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began to do and to teach." *Acts* i. 1. Still further, Luke informs us that others had written of the life of Christ before his gospel was prepared; "Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us." *Luke* i. 1. Not only so, but Paul quotes Luke's gospel as "the scripture," when he writes, "The laborer is worthy of his hire" (1 *Tim.* v. 18), repeating the very words of Luke, "The laborer is worthy of his hire." *Luke* x. 7. Hence it is certain that a large part of the New Testament was written within a few years after the death of Jesus.

It greatly strengthens the evidence for the genuineness of these writings to find several different witnesses in various countries, each independent of the others. One class is in Italy, through Gregory up to Clement of Rome, in the times of the apostles; another in France through Hilary to Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, in the times of the apostles; a third in Africa through Fulgentius, Austin and Cyprian to Clement of Alexandria, and Tertullian in the

times of the apostles; a fourth in Syria through Ephrem Syrus to Ignatius in the times of the apostles; a fifth in Asia Minor through Anatolius and Pamphilius to Polycarp in the times of the apostles. Best of all, we have in our possession the undisputed writings of five men, Barnabas, Clement and Hermas, who are mentioned by name in the New Testament, together with Polycarp, the disciple of John, and Ignatius, the associate of the apostles, who quote or refer to the books of the New Testament as authentic.

But further light is thrown upon the authenticity of these books by heathen writers. The Roman historian Tacitus tells us that Nero, to free himself from the suspicion of setting fire to Rome, "fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abomination, called Christians by the populace. An *immense multitude* was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind." This immense multitude suffered, be it observed, in one city before A. D. 68. Pliny, a little later, Roman governor of Pontus and Bithynia, writes to the Emperor Trajan, that "many of all ages and of every rank, and of both sexes likewise," were accused before him of being Christians. He adds, "The contagion of this superstition had seized not cities only, but the less towns also, and the open country," so that the heathen temples "were almost forsaken," few victims were purchased for sacrifice, and "a long intermission of the sacred solemnities had taken place."

Justin Martyr, who wrote about thirty years after Pliny, says in his *Apology*, "There is not a nation either Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who

wander in tribes and live in tents, among whom prayers and thanksgivings, are not offered to the Father and Creator of the Universe in the name of the crucified Jesus." Gibbon eloquently describes the marvelous spread of Christianity, and does not in the least call in question the genuineness of the books on which it is founded, while attempting to account for its remarkable growth by certain facts and principles belonging to human history and nature.

But more still: Julian the Apostate [A. D. 331-363], composed a work against the claims of Christianity, and if he could have said a word to disprove the genuineness of the books of the New Testament, it would not have been left unsaid. He concedes the correctness of their dates, and quotes them by name as the established works of their reputed authors.

Hierocles, a Roman proconsul in Bithynia, who during the reign of Diocletian instigated a fierce persecution of Christians, also published a book to overthrow their faith. He refers to, and quotes directly from, twenty of the books of the New Testament, and accepts without hesitation their apostolic authorship.

Porphyry [A. D. 233-305], an able and determined adversary of Christianity, the first to ascribe the late date to the book of Daniel, in all his writings which have been handed down, assumes the genuineness of the New Testament, referring directly to the gospels of Matthew, Mark and John, The Acts, the Epistle to the Galatians, and telling Christians that Matthew is their evangelist.

Celsus, who lived in the second century A. D., regarded by infidels as a profound philosopher, wrote an

elaborate treatise against Christianity. His entire work proceeds on the assumption that the New Testament books were from the pens of the authors to whom they are commonly attributed; and we may be sure that so keen an intellect would not have failed to call in question the fact of their genuineness, if it had been at all possible.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Sir Isaac Newton, a thoroughly competent judge, pronounced this verdict after careful investigation: "I find more sure marks of authenticity in the New Testament than in any profane history whatever." Dr. Johnson, according to his biographer, Boswell, said, "We have more evidence that Jesus Christ died on Calvary, as stated in the Gospels, than we have that Julius Cæsar died in the capitol." Arnold of Rugby, the philosophical historian of England, says: "The evidence of our Lord's life and death and resurrection may be, and often has been, shown to be satisfactory; it is good, according to common rules for distinguishing good evidence from bad. Thousands and tens of thousands of persons have gone through it piece by piece as carefully as ever judge summed up on the most important case. I have myself done it many times over, not to persuade others, but to satisfy myself. I have been used for many years to study the history of other times, and to examine and weigh the evidence of those who have written about them, and I know of no one fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better and fuller evidence of every sort, to the understanding of a fair inquirer, than the great sign which God hath given us, that Christ died and rose again from the dead."

But what has all this to do with the resurrection of our Lord's body? Much every way. It is most important to show that the men who wrote the account of his crucifixion, and of his real appearance after death, lived at the time these events occurred; and,—as their honesty is now universally conceded,—that they had abundant opportunity to know the truth. Besides, Christ's resurrection is essentially linked with his claims upon our faith. He repeatedly promised that he would rise again. For example, a week before the transfiguration he said that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

If, then, his body was not actually seen after the crucifixion, he did not possess common morality or veracity; he proved himself to be utterly unworthy of belief, and is to be dismissed with contempt from our attention.

Even the cross could have no significance and no value to any soul, for it was a mere mockery of man's hope until the Saviour's work was crowned with his victory over death. Nor would it have been possible to gather his disciples together into organized bands, and to lead them forth to the triumphant march of nineteen centuries unless they had rallied, not about the speechless dust of a grave, but about the person of a risen and divine Redeemer. It is not claimed that his resurrection proves directly his divinity, but there is a singular consistency and harmony between the two. If he alone was born miraculously, he alone was sinless, and as sinless death was not his due. If, therefore, he died, it was only proper that there should be a reversal of the sentence that doomed him to the tomb. Man condemned him as

a sinner; God raised him from the dead as sinless and as his own divine and eternal Son.

“Low in the grave he lay;
Jesus, my Saviour,
Waiting the coming day;
Jesus, my Lord;
Up from the grave he arose,
With a mighty triumph over his foes;
He arose, a victor from the dark domain,
And he lives forever with his saints to reign;
Hallelujah! Christ arose.”

CHAPTER III.

FAILURES OF INFIDELITY.

WITHIN the memory of men now living, various attempts have been made by skeptics to disprove the resurrection of our Lord. They see at once that this is the turning-point in the evidence of Christianity. If it can be established to the full satisfaction of thoughtful and honest inquirers that he rose from the dead, all revelation is carried with it, and follows as a necessary consequence. If he did not rise, all is lost. It is useless, therefore, to waste time upon other features that are presented for our consideration on the face of the Scriptures, because we reach the very heart of the controversy when we settle the question, whether or not the crucified Jesus appeared on the earth.

As this is the key to the field of contention, infidels have wisely directed their batteries upon it and suggested different methods by which they hope it may be taken. Strauss, for example, has devoted a large portion of his two volumes, called the *Life of Jesus* to the discussion of this one subject, and laid out all the resources of his sharp and analytical mind, and his extensive reading, to the task of trying to show that the gospel narratives, which speak of the dead Christ as coming forth from the grave, are unbelievable. He properly begins his argument by saying, "This is the

burning question," and refers to the resurrection of Christ as "the center of the center, the real heart of Christianity as it has been until now." Let us look at the efforts of unbelief.

First, we have the theory of fraud. That is, it is claimed that the witnesses, who asserted that they had seen the risen Jesus, deliberately lied. It is evident, however, that they had nothing to gain, but everything to lose in the persistent proclamation of the shameful falsehood. They severed themselves from all that made life endurable or enjoyable, and encountered the force and fury of all conceivable hardship and trial. They tell us after years of contempt and imprisonment and scourging and stoning: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling-place. . . . We are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scourings of all things unto this day." *1 Cor.* iv. 11, 13. If they went abroad telling a lie, they certainly forfeited all hope of happiness in this world, and excluded themselves from all hope of happiness in the world to come. Men may lie, but men do not lie in this way.

But this is not all. They told a horrible lie, and at the same time said, "All liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone." *Rev.* xxi. 8. They were shockingly dishonest, and yet the people who believed them "renounced the hidden things of dishonesty." *11 Cor.* iv. 2. They were unrighteous, but preached, "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?" *1 Cor.* vi. 9. They were unholy, but proclaimed, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." *Heb.*

xii. 14. They were unbelieving, but represent God as denouncing his wrath against "them that believed not; so we see that they could not enter in because of unbelief." *Heb.* iii. 18, 19. They were untrue, low, unjust, impure, unlovely, disgraceful, and still we find them urging the observance of "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." *Phil.* iv. 8.

The assertion that these men were willful liars is too much even for the most rapacious infidelity, and the fraud theory is now universally rejected. If any one holds it, he writes himself down as utterly unworthy of argument or attention. To notice him is to cast pearls before swine. Baur, an extreme infidel, says, "History must hold to the assertion that to the faith of the disciples, the resurrection was a fact certain and indisputable." Strauss says, "The historian must acknowledge that the disciples firmly believed that Jesus was risen;" and "that they were firmly convinced that they had seen Jesus living, after he had died, is one which we will not call in question." De Wette, a leader of rationalistic unbelief, says, "The fact of the resurrection cannot itself be called in question." Such admissions might be multiplied; but enough has been said to show that it is as mean as it is malicious to charge the disciples with deliberate deception and practiced pretense.

Second, then came Paulus and his school with the naturalistic theory; that is, that Jesus did not really die on the cross. "He was exposed but six hours and lacerated wounds could not bleed much, so that it is quite possible

that he merely swooned ; and the executioners, mistaking the swoon for death, had him carried into a cave, where the coolness of the air and the fragrance of the embalming spices gradually re-animated the feeble body." Then when he was restored, he took himself no one knows where, and naturally died no one knows when. Strange to say, this view prevailed for some years among intelligent infidels. Of course it takes no notice of the sealing of the sepulcher, of the guard of soldiers around the tomb, nor of the frequent appearances of the risen Jesus to his disciples ; but skepticism has a convenient way of dodging troublesome facts, and of manufacturing other facts to suit its purpose.

Curiously enough, this infidel theory was stabbed to the heart by another infidel. "It is quite evident," says Strauss, "that this view of the resurrection of Jesus, apart from the difficulties in which it is involved, does not even solve the problem, which is here under consideration ; the origin, that is, of the Christian Church by faith in the miraculous resurrection of the Messiah. It is impossible that a being who had stolen half dead out of the sepulcher, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening and indulgence, and who still, at last, yielded to his sufferings, could have given to his disciples the impression that he was a conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life—an impression which lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression which he had made upon them in life and death, at the most could only have given it an elegiac voice ; but could by no possibility have changed their sorrow into enthusiasm, have elevated their reverence into worship."

Such a view he pronounces "absurd and self-contradictory;" and hence the naturalistic theory is laid, not very gently, on the shelf.

Third. Strauss then appears with his mythical theory. He necessarily maintains that a considerable interval of time elapsed before the story of the resurrection gained currency and credence, for a myth cannot start in a day or in a year. At length his followers conceived of his career, not with any desire to deceive, but with a foregone conclusion borrowed unconsciously from the prejudices and prepossessions formed by Old Testament predictions of the promised Messiah. They did not relate facts as they occurred, but fell into poetical and unintentional exaggerations, presenting to us what has been called "idealized history."

Webster defines a myth as "a fabulous or imaginary statement or narrative, conveying an important truth, generally of a moral or religious nature; an allegory, religious or historical, of spontaneous growth and popular origin, generally involving some supernatural or superhuman claim or power; a tale of some extraordinary personage or country, that has been gradually formed by, or has grown out of, the admiration and veneration of successive ages." But how does the mythical theory tally with the testimony of all the witnesses that Jesus appeared alive the third day after his crucifixion? According to the evidence, and this is all we have to reach any conclusion, he was seen three days after his death and burial.

"The third day" is everything in the Gospels, and in the preaching of the apostles, as it is in the rise and progress of the Christian Church. It is more than the constantly used formula, *Anno Domini*, in the history,

business, legal documents and letter-writing of the world. "The third day" is an essential part of the transaction. The resurrection itself was not more firmly and universally accepted than was "the third day" as the time of its occurrence. But it is entirely ignored by Strauss, who assumes that the disciples went into Galilee the day after the crucifixion, and did not return to Jerusalem until the end of a considerable stay in that country; who assumes that they were in a high state of excitement, expecting that their Lord would arise, contrary to the facts in the case; who assumes that it was some unknown person who appeared to the two Emmaus disciples, and to the seven disciples on the sea of Galilee; and, in short, thoroughly begs the question in the most unworthy manner.

Is there any possible chance for the gradual growth of a myth, springing out of the admiration and veneration of successive generations? Within forty days the Church was launched upon her marvelous voyage; within forty days the Christian Sabbath, the constant memorial of the resurrection, was observed. Within forty days Christian baptism, ever since celebrated, was performed; and surely there was no time for the formation of a myth in this brief interval. It shows a state of mind very far from a frank and noble purpose to discover the truth, when Strauss confines his appearances of the risen Jesus wholly to the few instances in which he was seen in Galilee, omitting those in Jerusalem. He brings his strongest objections to a real resurrection on the peculiarities assigned to the risen body of our Lord, forgetful of the fact that the same body, even before death, walked upon the rolling waves as on a pavement of granite, and passed through a murderous mob unseen and untouched. He leaves out every-

thing that in the least militates against his view, and not possessing a legal mind, he plays battledoor and shuttlecock with the evidence in the most astonishing disregard of all rules for taking testimony. Hence he has never satisfied sensible men. He may still be read occasionally for his fine literary style, but his mythical theory has been remanded to the grave of complete oblivion.

Fourth. Renan, seeing that Strauss is buried without hope of resurrection, followed with his hallucination theory. He also wrote a *Life of Jesus*, loaded with the tawdry tinsel of a French novel. When the book was published, the printing presses could not meet the popular demand for its perusal. Now it is forgotten, and buried in a deeper grave than those which entomb Paulus and Strauss. The French Jew coarsely characterizes our Lord as a typical Frenchman of the Second Empire, and insists that the witnesses of his resurrection deceived themselves by mistaking a subjective impression for an objective reality. Thus he says of the first appearance of the risen Jesus to Mary Magdalene, who lingered in tears near the spot where his body had been placed, and was carried away with a singular and sudden insanity: "Divine power of love, in which the passion of one possessed gave to the world a resuscitated God!"

The appearance of the risen Lord to the entire number of the disciples the French infidel explains as follows: "During a moment of silence, some slight breath passed over the assembly. At these decisive periods of time, a current of air, a creaking window, or a chance murmur, are sufficient to fix the belief of a people for ages. At the same time that the breath was perceived, they fancied that they heard sounds. Some of them said that they had

discovered the word *shalom*, 'happiness' or 'peace.' No possibility of doubt—Jesus is present; he is in the assembly."

It is supreme folly to suppose that the disciples were the victims of a crazy hallucination! An eminent Edinburgh physician says: "I have talked to persons, not a few, both in lunatic asylums and out of them, who were subject to hallucinations. I have had fair opportunity for reaching some definite conclusions on this subject, and I now venture to assert that I have neither known nor read of anything good, great or useful originating in delusion. Discoveries which enrich the world, and doctrines which stimulate and strengthen manhood, are not the products of hallucination. But no one can deny, if the apostolic visions of Christ were illusions, the most wonderful system of ethics, and the most extraordinary motive power the world has ever known, are undoubtedly due to such illusions. Nay, more, while I have known hallucinations which continued for some time, I have never known or heard of a hallucination in which two or more individuals held common and continuous conversation with the same ghostly visitor, in which the fullest explanations were given as to future duty and action, and whereby there was built up a system of worship and service, perennial in freshness and force."

No wonder the scientific physician expresses himself sternly and strongly against the monstrous delusion of Renan, and his silly attempt to palm off upon sensible people his hallucination theory as a reasonable account of the resurrection: "I defy any one from the whole catalogue of hallucinations to bring forward anything that approaches within a thousand million leagues of this.

And simply on physiological and psychological grounds, apart from my belief in the Scriptures, and apart from such spiritual knowledge as I may have, I pronounce the 'hallucination theory' of the resurrection to be one of the most absurd theories ever entertained by a rational mind. Itself is the hallucination."

Fifth. Keim succeeded Renan and others who failed; but he may be set aside with a word. He invented the spiritualistic theory, invoking the aid of modern spiritism or spiritualism to explain the fact that the disciples of our Lord evidently believed and preached his literal resurrection. He thinks that the appearing of Christ was an "apparition" or "phantom," treating the real history in the most arbitrary and contemptuous fashion. It is useless to argue the question with any who pin their faith to table-tipping, scratching on slates, or musical instruments emitting sounds in the dark. Even of "materialized spirits" it cannot be said that they talk, that they eat, that they invite persons to handle them, for they disappear at a touch. They come forth from "the cabinet" only in the night time, and if they walk among men they never can be grasped. They pretend to be nothing more than apparitions, and never say with the risen Jesus, "Handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." *Luke xxiv. 39.* Keim's theory has already exploded with the shallow tricks of spiritism, which have been exposed a thousand times.

Sixth. The Rev. George Bush, Professor of Hebrew in the University of New York, who wrote several excellent commentaries on the early books of the Bible, and then went sadly astray on the resurrection, utters very much the same sort of nonsense as did Keim. He talks about

“a spiritual body emerging at the moment of death,” and advances as his only argument the statement: “It is nowhere *expressly* affirmed in Scripture that the *identical material* body of Christ arose.” No, it is nowhere *expressly* affirmed in Scripture that he had at any time an *identical material* body before or after his crucifixion. The word *identical* and the word *material* are nowhere found in Scripture in any connection. But there is as much evidence, and the same kind of evidence, to prove that his *identical material* body rose from the dead, as there is to show that he had an *identical material* body before he was laid in the grave. He repeatedly declared that he was to be crucified and killed; what was it that was to be crucified? Not his soul or spirit, for that could not be murdered, but his body, and nothing but his body. If he told the truth, therefore, it was his body, and nothing but his body, which rose again the third day. Hence it is an unworthy subterfuge to which the professor resorts. But he had no following, for his theory was still-born; and it is a waste of time to pursue his fruitless vagaries. Skeptical hypotheses are now exhausted, except the last.

Seventh. By far the most dangerous form of infidelity is the assault made by a certain class of those who claim to be higher critics. Up to our own time avowed and open skeptics had a monopoly of the trade in speaking of the “mistakes,” “errors,” “contradictions,” “myths,” “unbelievable narratives” of the Bible, and in deliberately discarding the “miraculous and supernatural.” Now such language is frequently heard in the Church and amongst those who continue to hold position as the leaders of God’s people. In Protestant Germany, Great

Britain, and the United States, there are professors in Theological Seminaries loudly proclaiming their scholarship, and popular preachers in the pulpit proudly posing as "advanced thinkers," who do not hesitate to set forth objections to the Bible similar to those presented by Voltaire and Tom Paine.

For example, *The Christian Register* of Boston, a paper boasting of its culture, presumes to say, while it calls itself *The "Christian" Register*:

"Thomas Paine, though stigmatized and set aside as an infidel, finds reincarnation in the modern Biblical Critic. Paine pointed out the contradictions in the Bible, which rendered impossible the claim that it is an infallible book. He lived too far in advance of his age. The spirit of modern scientific criticism had not yet come. . . . And now it is interesting to find that with a different spirit, and with different tools, and bound by certain traditions from which Paine was free, the *professors in our orthodox seminaries are doing again the work which Paine did*, and like him in the interests of honesty and truth."

Some of this class of critics have denied the resurrection of our Lord. Thus a writer in a recent number of the *Westminster Review*, begins his article with the statement: "There can be no doubt that Christian doctrines, which were believed in their simplicity in former ages, are incapable of being so understood by well-instructed persons now. Such doctrines, for instance, as those of the Resurrection, Ascension, and Second Advent of Christ, are becoming more and more regarded as symbols of truth rather than as doctrines to be understood in their prosaic literalism."

If you are to guard against the peculiar perils which

beset the Christian's faith in these days, as it has never been assailed before, there are certain truths to which you must cling with firm and unyielding grasp. Whatever temptations assail you, do not relax your hold upon the arm of a risen, ascended and interceding Saviour, but depend upon the fulfillment of the promise, "My grace is sufficient for thee." *2 Cor. xii. 9.*

First, be persuaded that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice; that "All Scripture given by inspiration of God, is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." *2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.* Cling to it as the Psalmist did when he poured out his soul in prayer and praise: "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path . . . Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth forever." *Psa. cxix. 105, 160.*

And then, do not forget that "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." *1 Cor. ii. 14.* Hence your need of the abiding and manifested presence and power of the Holy Ghost, to be sought by earnest prayer, that he may make it your aim and ambition, that whether present with Christ or still absent, you may be well-pleasing, not to yourselves nor to others, but to HIM. *2 Cor. v. 9.*

So, whatever may be the attacks of secular infidelity, or whatever the pretensions of ecclesiastical infidelity, you shall be thoroughly convinced that Jesus rose from the

dead ; and exclaim with deeper meaning than Renan gave to his words at the close of his book : " Complete conqueror of death ! Take possession of thy kingdom, whither shall follow thee, by the royal road which thou hast traced, ages of worshipers."

" The morning purples all the sky,
The air with praises rings ;
Defeated hell stands sullen by,
The world exulting sings :
Glory to God ! Our glad lips cry ;
All praise and worship be
On earth, in heaven, to God Most High,
For Christ's great victory ! "

CHAPTER IV.

IS A MIRACLE POSSIBLE?

FROUDE relates with apparent gusto that Thomas Carlyle, his friend and master, once said to him : " A miracle is a mathematical impossibility." It is astonishing that two men of their fine literary taste, unquestioned genius and large reading, should be so foolish, the one to make, and the other to record, such a remark. They might as well have said that the existence of George Washington was a mathematical impossibility, or that the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo was a mathematical impossibility, or that any of the ascertained facts of history cannot be proved by mathematics.

Locke, the greatest of English philosophers, states in his "Chapter on Probability," the following incident :

" A Dutch ambassador, entertaining the King of Siam with the particularities of Holland, which he was inquiring after, amongst other things told him, that the water in his country would sometimes be so hard in cold weather that men walked upon it, and that it would bear an elephant, if he were there. To which the King replied, ' Hitherto I have believed the strange things you have told me, because I looked upon you as a sober fair man ; but now I am sure you lie ! ' "

In the king's reasoning the truth of the story was a mathematical impossibility ; and there are countless events that lie beyond the range of our experience and

observation, that cannot be proved by mathematics, and yet they are as certain as if they could be demonstrated by the process of algebra.

The question of miracles does not in the least depend upon figures, nor is it subject to the investigations of science, nor can it be elucidated by a process of reason. In the nature of the case we are forced to confine ourselves wholly to evidence, and to the trustworthiness or untrustworthiness of testimony. Most of the knowledge we possess is necessarily derived from our belief in what others tell us; and yet the foundation upon which we rest, and the conclusion we reach, may be no less strong and sure than the evidence of our senses, or the proposition that two and two make four. All of the transactions that have taken place in the world before our birth, all of the cities we have not visited, all of the men now living we have not seen, all the real discoveries, not guesses, of science which we accept as true, and even our parentage, we owe entirely to our faith in human testimony; and we know that in many things, at least, there is no possibility of deception.

Witnesses are properly held to be credible according to certain rules of law: 1. If the fact of which they bear evidence appealed to their senses; 2. If they carefully observed and attended to it at the time of its occurrence; 3. If they possess a fair amount of intelligence and memory; 4. If they are free from sinister and misleading motives; 5. If they are persons of unimpeachable veracity; 6. If they are not subject to hallucinations or optical illusions; 7. If their entire conduct and conversation show strict and undeviating integrity and purity. There is not a court of justice nor a jury anywhere that

would hesitate to receive the evidence of such witnesses ; and it would be esteemed altogether sufficient to establish the validity of a will, or to dispose of the largest property interests, or to consign a man to life imprisonment, or to sentence him to a shameful death. We are bound to believe credible evidence, or the doors of all legal tribunals must be closed forever, and the wheels of business and commerce cease to move.

If, for example, one, two, seven, eleven, seventy, more than five hundred such witnesses solemnly testify that they knew a certain man intimately ; that he was stabbed to the heart, so that life was undoubtedly extinct ; that he was buried ; that they afterwards saw him alive on many occasions, and in the daytime ; that he was the same man ; that there could be no possibility of deception, hallucination, optical illusion, or mistaken identity ; that they handled him ; that they ate with him ; that they held conversations with him ; that they beheld the scar of his fatal wound ; and this story they persisted in telling in face of their early prejudices, of obloquy, poverty, the loss of friends, persecution, tortures and death of the most frightful description, and meanwhile they exhibited in their lives and writings the soundest judgment, the strictest virtue and the most exalted morality ; would it be sensible to disregard their testimony ? Would not skepticism, strange and startling as the evidence might be, prove the moral insanity of those who disbelieved ?

When a thoughtful man considers how he exists, that all the animal activities necessary to his life are independent of his will, that his heart beats without his consent, and without his direction, that digestion and nutrition are

performed by methods of which he is not conscious, that his blood moves in a perpetual round, contrary to all known laws of motion, he will conclude that his preservation at each succeeding moment of his being is as mysterious, and calls for as great an exertion of power as the resurrection of Christ. If it is a wonderful thing to give life to a dead body, is it less wonderful to give life to a body that did not exist? He who reflects upon the history of a human being, from the moment of conception to full growth in its complicated and wondrous mechanism, and to the more wonderful inward development of its tremendous powers for good or evil, surely will not be staggered by the fact of the Lord's resurrection.

Scientists assure us that the diameter of the earth at the equator is in round numbers 8,000 miles, and at the poles the diameter is twenty-six and one half miles smaller. As the Mississippi River is at least fourteen hundred miles long in a straight line to the Gulf of Mexico, it ascends two and one half miles from its source to its mouth. "This apparent paradox is explained by the centrifugal motion of the earth that sustains the oceanic waters in the equatorial regions at greater distances from the center than the level of the same waters in the temperate and and polar latitudes; and if this motion were checked, the waters would then rush toward the poles, and the current of the Mississippi would be reversed." Notwithstanding the explanation, it is a natural miracle, as are many of the phenomena connected with the light and heat of the sun, cyclones, earthquakes and the tides. Professor Brooks has said in *Science*, "We all believe many things which are inconceivable, such as the truth that the image in our eyes is upside down; and sensible men will be slow to re-

ject testimony, even if the facts it sets forth are mysterious and unintelligible.

Hume, in his once celebrated argument, "contends that testimony is more likely to be untrustworthy than our uniform experience of the constancy of the laws of nature." Notice the fallacy contained in the words, "*our* uniform experience." Does it follow that *our* uniform experience has been the uniform experience of all others? If so, the king and people of Siam were right in rejecting the statement that water in Holland becomes so hard that it bears the weight of a man or an elephant, for it was contrary to their uniform experience. For some reason Hume does not touch the resurrection of our Lord, although that is the main point in dispute. However, it is useless to waste time upon him, since such agnostics as John Stuart Mill and Professor Huxley have shown that his argument is worthless. The former admits, if there be a God, "miracles are always within his power, and he is the true cause of them." The latter says, "that it is not upon any *à priori* considerations that objections, either to the supposed efficacy of prayer in modifying the course of events, or to the supposed occurrence of miracles, can be scientifically based." Since the English infidels have spoken, the Scotch infidel is forgotten.

Let us glance at the meaning of a miracle. It is not, as commonly supposed, a suspension of the constancy of the laws of nature, but that which in itself, or under the conditions in which it is presented, suggests the immediate working of God's power producing results, not explicable by what we ordinarily observe of the relation between cause and effect. That is, the law is not suspended, but its natural results are controlled. It is the

removal of a person or thing from the domination of a law of nature, but the same law keeps up its imperial sway over every other person or thing not affected by the new power which supervenes to accomplish a work of transcendent importance, that could not be achieved in any other manner; the end justifying the display of God's hand.

For instance, when the blind, the deaf, the dumb and the sick were healed by the touch or the word of the Lord Jesus Christ, disease still prevailed elsewhere; and when Lazarus came forth from the grave in obedience to his command, death still reigned over all the earth. If he was what he claimed to be, the Saviour sent by the Father, such works were natural to him, and absolutely essential, for a Christ without miracles would be an incredible Christ. Either he wrought gracious signs and wonders to attest his messiahship, or we are helplessly and hopelessly enclosed in the grim machinery of material laws, and are shut off from all contact with God. But surely a miracle cannot be regarded as a mathematical or moral impossibility by any one who believes in a personal God; for after all, to this question the controversy comes at last.

Both reason and revelation assert and insist that he did not create the universe, and then dismiss it from his control, as a clock-maker constructs his clock, and leaves it; as a ship-builder erects his ship, and permits others to navigate it without care of his own. Continually we see in the world around us, with no violation of the laws of nature, the operation of a higher law. For example, when we hurl a stone through the air, or lift a larger stone from the earth, the law of gravitation is not denied or

annihilated ; it exists as much as ever, but is held in suspense by our superior-power. Every day lower laws are kept in restraint by higher, so that Bushnell truly says. "It is no longer necessary to go hunting after marvels, apparitions, suspensions of the laws of nature, to find the supernatural ; it meets us in what is least transcendent and most familiar, even in ourselves." He well adds that "nature is the world of substance whose laws are laws of cause and effect, and whose events transpire, in orderly succession, under those laws ; the supernatural is that manifestation of power, which acts upon the chain of cause and effect in nature from without the chain, producing results that by mere nature could not come to pass." Such results we witness incessantly, produced by human power over the ordinary relation of cause and effect ; and if the will of God is substituted for the will of man, the argument for miracles is irresistible.

Unless matter in its infinitely diversified forms, and mind in its almost infinite capacities, were self-created, which is a self-evident absurdity and contradiction, some material and mental results must have had an immaterial cause. If God created the world, as the Bible says he did, then we have a miracle. If God created the man, as the Bible says he did, then we have a miracle. If man was descended from a monkey, and God imparted to him an immortal spirit and a rational intellect and a guiding conscience, as so-called Christian evolutionists say he did, then we have a miracle. If, as Professor Drummond asserts, Sir Isaac Newton and Sir Isaac Newton's dog Diamond originated in the same protoplasm, only the protoplasm of the former "waved its tentacles piteously in the air" until it developed into the profound

philosopher, and the protoplasm of the latter stopped at a four-footed beast, then we have a miracle.

If all things had their beginning in the "nebular hypothesis," as it is called, a cloudy formation in the dim unknown, ages past, then we have a miracle, for some one started the clouds in motion ; or we must see a miracle in the gradual growth and magnificent expansion of this limitless universe. If there is no God at all, then we have a still greater miracle in the unnumbered suns and systems wheeling in unbroken order through space, and in the marvelous and measureless manifestations of animal and vegetable life, all precisely answering to a wise design. Even Huxley expressed his belief "that in the universe there is a being whose intelligence was as far beyond his own as that was beyond a black beetle's," and "endowed with powers influencing the course of nature as much greater than his as his is greater than a snail's." No wonder that on his dying bed he wished to be buried with the service of the Church of England, which always requires the reading of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, the sublime resurrection chapter.

Look which way we will, it is certain that we cannot get along without a miracle. All the agnostic, atheistical and infidel scientists, having experimented for years in every conceivable way, have reluctantly concluded and confessed that life can come only from life. The eminent scientist, Pasteur, who recently died in Paris, emphatically declared that life can never be generated except by antecedent life, so that there is a miracle somewhere along the line. However remote the ages when life was first seen, or however imperceptible its movements, a miracle was essential to inaugurate existence ; and therefore a miracle

is not mathematically impossible, but absolutely certain and positively necessary. But, further, if miracles are not impossible or improbable, it follows that the records of them cannot be inherently incredible. Indeed, one requires the other. If death could not terminate the career of Jesus Christ who called himself the Giver of life, it must be that his glorious victory over the grave is authentically proclaimed to the world.

Remember that we are considering the only person who has ever appeared above the horizon of human history, who could say without blasphemy, or exposure to ridicule, "I am the Light of the world." Remember that we are not called to deal with ordinary circumstances, nor with ordinary men, but only with one wonderful Man. The question is, was there sufficient reason why God should interpose in his behalf? If it be objected that the miracle of the resurrection ceased, when he came forth from the grave, the answer is, it must necessarily have ceased. As Archbishop Trench says, it was the "proclamation that the King was mounting his throne; who, however, is not proclaimed every day, but only at his accession. When he sits acknowledged on his throne, the proclamation ceases"; but it shall be heralded again by the shouts of attendant angels amid the pomp and pageantry of his second advent, when the innumerable dead shall be caught up together in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.

Arnold of Rugby argued that "miracles were the natural accompaniments of the incarnation—accompaniments, the absence of which would have been still more wonderful than their presence;" and, considering who this wonderful Man was, if his resurrection was wonder-

ful, it would have been still more wonderful if he had not been raised from the dead. If it is true that no amount of evidence is sufficient to attest the credibility of a miracle, the whole of the Old Testament, the whole of the New Testament, the whole of Christianity, the whole conception of an intelligent Creator, is a fable; and the human race is left altogether without hope. We are confronted here with an impossibility which God himself can not overcome. As Professor Godet says, "Creation is the victory over nothingness; the resurrection is the victory of this same power over death, which is the likeliest thing to nothingness known to us. As the creation is the primordial fact in the history of the universe, the resurrection of Jesus Christ must be its central fact. It is that or nothing."

This central fact began to be preached in the most skeptical age that has ever been known, the Augustan age, when the investigation of evidence was reduced to a science. Let no one expose his ignorance by supposing that it was an illiterate and superstitious period. Professor Uhlhorn has shown in his admirable book, "Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," that literature and philosophy and art had reached the height of their excellence. He writes, "'During the whole month of April,' Pliny relates, 'there was scarcely a day in which some one did not recite a poem.' 'We suffer from a superfluity of sciences,' Seneca had already remarked."

Again Professor Uhlhorn writes, "Never before nor since, has the world been so opulent in treasures of art. To say nothing of Rome, even provincial cities so abounded in lofty edifices, statues, and other works of sculpture, as greatly to exceed those of our capitals which

are richest in such treasures. . . . "Culture, in a word, now tended to become universal. Numerous schools afforded to multitudes opportunities for knowledge hitherto available to only a few. The cheapness of books, and easily accessible public libraries, subserved the same end. Martial speaks of books which cost four or six sesterces, a trifle more than twenty or thirty cents. The equivalent of a page of print cost from about two to two and a half cents. The diffusion of books was also great." Never had the human intellect attained to a nobler eminence, and information was widely spread among the people.

The scholars, and statesmen, and orators, and poets, and nobles had recoiled from the mythologies of darker ages, and viewed every new doctrine with suspicion. The New Testament furnishes abundant evidence of this. Thus while Paul was tarrying in Athens, "Certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics encountered him. And some said, What will this babbler say? other some, He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods: because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection." *Acts* xvii. 18. So he writes to the Corinthians: "The Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness." *1 Cor.* i. 22, 23. Jewish bigotry, Roman power, and Greek culture, were forced to give way to the triumphant advance of Christianity; not as the adherents of Mohammedanism were converted, with a sword at the throat, but in every instance the witnesses to the risen Lord were hourly exposed to horrible death; and by the close of the first century at least five hundred thousand men believed in Jesus and the resurrection.

Can any one imagine that, fronting these forces of scholarly opposition, and marching through the flames of ferocious persecution, and out of the dens of lions, the witnesses could have gained a hearing, unless the miracle of their Lord's resurrection, which they blazoned upon the cross, was established upon incontestable evidence? The foundation of Christian faith, its progress, preservation, and rapid propagation among those who were fully competent to scrutinize testimony, would be unspeakably more astonishing, without his resurrection, than the miracle itself. Either there was a great miracle, or a great fraud; and the latter supposition is inadmissible by the testimony of the skeptics themselves. It shows, therefore, shallowness of understanding, or a thoroughly perverted moral nature, to object to it because it is miraculous and supernatural. A French *savant* wisely said, "In truth, I am not credulous enough to be an unbeliever."

"See, thy Lord himself is risen,
That thou mightest also rise,
And emerge from sin's dark prison
To new life and open skies.
Come to him who can unbind thee,
And reverse thine awful doom:
Come to him, and leave behind thee
Thy old life—an empty tomb."

CHAPTER V.

TESTIMONY OF OUR LORD.

AT the beginning of his ministry our Lord Jesus Christ distinctly taught the fact of his physical resurrection. His enemies sought a sign of his divine commission. "Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews, Forty and six years was this temple in building, and wilt thou rear it up in three days? But he spake of the temple of his body. When therefore he was risen from the dead, his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them; and they believed the scripture, and the word which Jesus had said." *John* ii. 19-22.

Here it is obvious that he spoke of his literal body as a temple. The word in the Greek is *naos*, properly "a dwelling, and the dwelling of a deity;" corresponding precisely with the sanctuary or temple of which Jehovah had said: "Let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them" (*Ex.* xxv. 8); or as David said, "the house that is to be builded for the Lord must be exceeding magnifical, of fame and of glory throughout all countries" (1 *Chron.* xxii. 5); or as Solomon said, "I build an house to the name of the Lord my God, to dedicate it to Him." 2 *Chron* ii. 4. The English word comes from the Latin *templum*, and signifies strictly, "a portion cut off." As the Augurs watched the flight of the

birds, or the Astrologers the movement of the stars, first of all they cut off a space of the sky, that they might notice the birds or the stars, as they came and disappeared, through the selected portion. That portion was the "templum," and expressed the thought of separation to a sacred use. Even Spinoza has declared, "Christ was the temple of God, because in him God had most fully revealed himself."

But notice, it was the body of Jesus which he described as a temple; it was the body of Jesus that was to be destroyed; and it was the body of Jesus that was to be raised up in three days. Hence it was not until he was risen from the dead, that they remembered and believed his word, for they could not be persuaded that the Messiah was to be killed. If, therefore, there was no real resurrection of his body, it is absurd to talk about him as truthful, or to place the slightest reliance upon any promise he ever gave. The theory that his resurrection was a mere symbol of some spiritual idea, and that it never took place, is more utterly dishonoring to him, and more blasphemous in its daring denial of his veracity, than the coarsest ridicule of vulgar infidelity. This is his first distinct prediction of his resurrection.

In his second announcement he places this essential fact as the basis of all his work in redemption and as the very foundation of his Church. It was the confession of Peter that led him to say, "Upon this rock I will build my church"; and "FROM THAT TIME FORTH began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day." How far this was from the thought

of the disciples may be judged by the reply of Peter : "Be it far from thee, Lord : this shall not be unto thee ;" but he received the sharp rebuke, "Get thee behind me, Satan : thou art an offense unto me : for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." *Matt. xvi. 21-23.*

If the going up to Jerusalem was literal ; if the suffering inflicted by the elders and chief priests and scribes was literal ; if the killing was literal ; so was the rising again the third day. To make the preliminaries literal, and the result to which they necessarily led only symbolical, spiritual and fanciful, is a specimen of reasoning suited to an insane asylum, but surely not to be found among men who possess a modicum of common sense. He plainly told his disciples that his body was to endure indignities and tortures ; that his body was to be killed ; and that his body was to come forth from the grave. If he did not mean that his body should really rise, then, as Talleyrand said, "The purpose of language is to conceal thought."

The third prediction of his resurrection was uttered on the Mount of Transfiguration. He there appeared in glory with Moses and Elias, who proved that their souls were not sleeping, for they came in shining garments to speak with their Lord concerning the exodus he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. Three chosen disciples beheld the wondrous vision : "And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead." *Matt. xvii. 9.* Mark adds, "They kept that saying with themselves, questioning one with another what the rising from the dead should mean."

"*Mark ix. 10.* So slow of heart were they to believe in the possibility of his death, they could not at all grasp the thought of his resurrection; and yet he distinctly proclaimed that he himself was to rise again from the dead.

The fourth prediction was made in Galilee, for he was to appear there also. "While they abode in Galilee, Jesus said unto them, The Son of man shall be betrayed into the hands of men: and they shall kill him, and the third day he shall be raised again. And they were exceeding sorry." *Matt. xvii. 22, 23.* Their sorrow must have been exceeding transient, too, for evidently it made no abiding impression on their minds. Amid the splendid anticipations of their coming kingdom it seemed to be impossible for them to grasp the thought that their King should be murdered. Hence their profound disappointment and despair at his crucifixion. Nor can we in any way account for the strange and sudden change which came over them within three days, their fear giving place to fortitude, their feebleness to strength, their bitter bewailings to bold assurances, except on the ground that they believed and knew the fact of his resurrection.

The fifth prediction was given on his last journey. "Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way, and said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes; and they shall condemn him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him: and the third day he shall rise again." *Matt. xx. 17-19.* He here enters into the minute particulars of his sufferings, for he foretells his betrayal, his condemnation to

death by the Jews, his being given over to the Gentiles, the mockery, the scourging, the crucifixion : and if he predicted what occurred before his death, it is equally clear that He predicted what occurred after His death ; that is, the real resurrection following his real murder. The two predictions stand or fall together.

Sixth, closely connected with these repeated testimonies from the Saviour himself, we are to link the many passages which speak of his second coming as the Son of man, thus proving his human nature and preserving his identity. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels ; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." *Matt.* xvi. 27. He was tried for his life before the high priest who put him on his oath, as we would say : "I adjure thee by the living God, that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God." There was no hesitation in his reply : "I am." He distinctly declared that he was the Son of God, and then added : "Ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." *Mark* xiv. 62. "Son of God" was his divine title ; and "Son of man" was his human title, binding him forever to our race.

How could he come as the Son of man, if he was only a disembodied spirit ; or if his resurrection means only a symbol of some vague truth, the perpetuation of some immaterial thought ? He was and is forevermore the Son of God ; but the fact that he claims after death, and in his ascension, and up to the time of his appearing again in the clouds of heaven, to be the Son of man, shows conclusively that his body rose from the grave, that he took a body with him to the right hand of God, and that he

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will return with a body at his second advent. He himself marks the distinction between what is called spiritual resurrection and physical resurrection: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Then follows the further statement that the Father "hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man." Notice the difference between the titles, Son of God and Son of man. As the former he gives life *now* to souls that are dead. As the latter, "The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth. *John* v. 25-29. It is he who connects the two events, regeneration and resurrection; and the first culminates in the second.

His seventh testimony to his resurrection was heard after his death. The risen Jesus appeared to his assembled disciples, "and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." *Luke* xxiv. 46. 47. His death and resurrection are indissolubly related to remission of sins. The one made atonement: the other is the proof that his atonement was accepted. The latter, therefore, is the corollary, complement, or complement of the former. "He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." *Rom.* iv. 25. As Professor Godet says: "According to the first half of the verse three facts appear—man sins; God condemns; Christ dies. According to the second proposition of the verse, three other facts are quite as closely bound together—Christ expiates; Christ rises again; God

justifies." His resurrection, therefore, is no isolated fact. It was a necessary event in the eternal purpose of God looking to our redemption, for if he had not come forth from the grave, Satan would have gained the victory. If men cannot believe in it on his own testimony, "neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

Luke xvi. 31.

"Our Lord is risen from the dead,
Our Jesus has gone up on high ;
The powers of hell are captive led,
Dragged to the portals of the sky.
There his triumphal chariot waits,
And angels chant the solemn lay:
'Lift up your heads, ye heavenly gates !
Ye everlasting doors, give way !'"

CHAPTER VI.

TESTIMONY OF THE EVANGELISTS.

THERE are four independent records of our Lord's resurrection, each of which establishes without a shadow of doubt the fact that his body came forth from the grave. It is plain that the writers of the narratives were artless as children, that they had no purpose to serve except to tell the truth, that they did not imitate one another, nor copy from any document that forms the basis of their statements. The remarkable thing about them is, the entire independence of each witness. Every man has his own account to give, and is not in the least concerned to bring it into agreement with any other man's account. There is obviously no collusion, and there is certainly no contradiction.

One may supply certain incidents which the others omit, precisely as witnesses may speak in court of a certain person who was present at a transaction without denying that other persons also were present. Moreover, it is important to notice that the history of the resurrection which each evangelist presents is in perfect harmony with the design of each in his particular Gospel. Matthew specially describes the Lord Jesus Christ as the King of the Jews ; Mark, as the obedient Servant of Jehovah ; Luke, as the Son of man ; and John, as the Son of God. Whatever differences may be found in their

testimony can be readily explained by remembering the intention with which the writer composes his particular sketch.

Matthew recites what occurred immediately after the death of Jesus. "When the even was come, there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple: he went to Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the rock: and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed." Meanwhile the Jews, knowing that the crucified One had said, "After three days I will rise again," asked the Roman governor to station a band of soldiers about the tomb, lest the disciples should come by night, and steal him away. "Pilate said unto them, Ye have a watch: go your way, make it as sure as ye can. So they went, and made the sepulchre sure, sealing the stone, and setting a watch."

"In the end of the sabbath," keeping in mind that the Jewish Sabbath commenced in the evening, "as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone, and sat upon it. His countenance was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men. And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come, see

the place where the Lord lay. And go quickly, and tell his disciples that he is risen from the dead; and, behold, he goeth before you into Galilee; there shall ye see him: lo, I have told you." *Matt.* xxvii. 57-66; xxviii. 1-7.

Such is Matthew's testimony, the principal points being the death of Jesus, the request of a rich man to bury the body, the great stone which he and his attendants rolled to the entrance of the sepulchre, the precaution of the Jews, the sealing of the stone, the placing of a band of soldiers as a guard to watch the dead King, the coming of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, the appearance of the angel who was the first witness to announce the resurrection, and the departure of the women.

Mark informs us that "Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable counselor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. And Pilate marveled if he were already dead: and calling unto him the centurion," who had superintended the execution, "he asked him whether he had been anywhile dead. And when he knew it of the centurion, he gave the body to Joseph." We have the same account of wrapping the corpse in fine linen, and rolling a stone to the door of the sepulchre, which Matthew gives, with the added remark that "Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid," the name of the other Mary, mentioned by Matthew, being here supplied as the mother of Joses.

"And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, had bought sweet spices, that they might come and anoint him. And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun

[or at dawn]. And they said among themselves, Who shall roll us away the stone from the door of the sepulchre? And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great. And entering into the sepulchre, they saw a young man sitting on the right side, clothed in a long white garment; and they were affrighted. And he saith unto them, Be not affrighted: Ye seek Jesus of Nazareth, which was crucified: he is risen; he is not here: behold the place where they laid him. But go your way, tell his disciples and Peter that he goeth before you into Galilee: there shall ye see him, as he said unto you." *Mark* xv. 43-47; xvi. 1-7.

Mark adds the names of Mary the mother of Joses, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, to Mary Magdalene; but it is easy to see at a glance that the record is substantially the same. He is more minute than Matthew, as usual in his descriptions, descending to greater particulars, as in harmony with his design of showing the faithful, painstaking Servant. Hence the angel is called "a young man," as appropriate to this Gospel, and Peter is carefully and personally mentioned; but the essential features of the narrative are in thorough agreement.

Luke says, "Behold, there was a man named Joseph, a counselor; and he was a good man, and a just: (the same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God." We have a repetition of the statement that he obtained permission of Pilate to take the dead body from the cross, and that he wrapped it in linen, "and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid," the

last clause being peculiar to Luke. So, without giving their names, he tells us that "the women also, which came with him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how his body was laid." Here we find the gospel of the Son of man in the broadest aspects of his work, and in his widest relations to the human race. Hence, two men appear in shining garments at the empty grave, whereas only one angel is prominent in Matthew, and "a young man" in Mark, as suited to their special object in preparing a biography of the Lord.

"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And it came to pass, as they were much perplexed thereabout, behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen: remember how he spake unto you when he was yet in Galilee, saying, the Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the third day rise again. And they remembered his words, and returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things unto the eleven, and to all the rest. It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and other women that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles." *Luke* xxiii. 50-56; xxiv. 1-10. So far, then, there is not the feeblest clash or conflict in the testimony of the synoptic Gospels, but only strengthened evidence as the record advances.

The Fourth Gospel tells us that when the soldiers were directed to hasten the slow and torturing work of crucifixion, "they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already." Hence they did not crush his bones, as they did with the two robbers who were crucified at the same time, "but one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water," showing the reality of his death, and, according to high medical authority, proving a rupture of his heart. "After this Joseph of Arimathea, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus: and Pilate gave him leave. He came therefore, and took the body of Jesus. And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight." The corpse being wrapped in linen was placed in a new sepulchre, "wherein was never man yet laid."

"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre. Then she runneth, and cometh to Simon Peter, and to the other disciple, whom Jesus loved, and saith unto them, They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him. Peter therefore went forth, and that other disciple, and came to the sepulchre. So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. And he stooping down, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, and the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen

clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself. Then went in also that other disciple, which came first to the sepulchre, and he saw, and believed. For as yet they knew not the scripture, that he must rise again from the dead." *John* xix. 32-42 ; xx. 1-9.

From this it appears that Peter and John had run to the sepulchre, and found it empty. The orderly arrangement of the grave-clothes, the napkin lying by itself at the natural distance of the head from the body, convinced John that the body had not been removed by friends or foes. There was all the evidence of a calm, quiet, self-possessed resurrection, "and he saw, and believed." He and Peter returned to the city. Mary Magdalene, who had followed them to the tomb, remained standing and weeping alone, but she was not alone at her first visit, for she did not say to Peter and the disciple whom Jesus loved, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and *I* know not where they have laid him," but "*we* know not where they have laid him." *John* xx. 2. Hence other women were with her, although she was left behind when the risen Lord revealed himself.

In summing up the evidence fairly, let us notice the points of agreement between the witnesses. 1. Jesus was crucified. 2. He was dead. 3. His body was taken from the cross, and buried in a new sepulchre. 4. It was Joseph of Arimathea who obtained permission of Pilate to remove the corpse. 5. It was not in the sepulchre early in the morning the third day after his death. 6. Mary Magdalene came to the grave. 7. He actually, literally, physically, arose from the dead. These seven points in which there is most perfect agreement include

everything that is essential and important, or of the least value, in the narrative. The four witnesses precisely harmonize in every particular about every leading feature of the miraculous transaction; while there is clearly no collusion, no hint of an oft-told tale, no straining after effect, but the simplicity of little children, singular independence of each other, and absolute disregard of any fear from the danger of contradicting what the others said.

It may be well to glance at the discrepancies, as they are called, for none will allege any contradictions. Matthew tells us that Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, came early to the sepulchre; but he does not say that no other women were present. It was needful, according to Jewish law, that there should be two witnesses to appear for the king of the Jews. Mark tells us that Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome, came; but he does not say that there were no other women, while three in Scriptural usage is symbolical of service in thought, word, and deed. Luke tells us that the women who followed him from Galilee, came; but he does not say that there were no other women, and then specifies Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, "wife of Chuza, Herod's steward," and Mary the mother of James, and other women, as representatives of the people in Galilee, and of the Gentiles, reaching out to the ends of the earth. John names Mary Magdalene; but he does not say that there were no other women with her; and he also mentions Nicodemus as assisting Joseph in the burial of the Lord, while none of the other evangelists say that Nicodemus was absent. Two prominent men suitably bore witness to the Son of God, who is the center of the

two divisions of the word of God, the Old and the New Testaments.

If one of these evangelists wrote his history, and it was circulated before the others, why did not the last three copy the first, which a schoolboy could easily have done? If they wrote at the same time, or if they never saw the history first issued, how do you account for their complete concord in all that affects the main fact of which they testify? If they had tallied with each other in every little particular, the skeptical critics would have said that they had formed a conspiracy; if one adds the names of certain women unmentioned by the others, they say that there is a discrepancy. Why did they record these several names except by the direction of the Holy Spirit? How did their minds keep steadily in view, without expressing their purpose, that they were to set forth the Lord Jesus Christ as King of the Jews, as Jehovah's faithful servant, as Son of man in connection with the Gentile world, as Son of God, even in the attendant circumstances of his death and resurrection? Here we see nothing of man's failure and ignorance, but the positive proof that their pens were guided by the unerring inspiration of the Spirit of God to record the great truth that Jesus arose from the grave.

Any fair and intelligent person will be constrained to see that the four evangelists are like four witnesses brought into court, one by one, who have not conferred together on the evidence they are to offer, and who do not know what the others have said until they retire from the presence of the judge. They report different aspects of the same fact, only one does it with greater fullness than his fellow-witnesses. All of them affirm in the most

unequivocal manner the one fact of our Lord's resurrection. On this the accounts are altogether unanimous; the diversity in the details shows that no previous agreement, no prepared plan, guided them in their testimony.

“The morning kindles all the sky,
The heavens resound with anthems high,
The shining angels as they speed,
Proclaim, ‘The Lord is risen indeed!’
Vainly with rocks his grave was barred,
While Roman guards kept watch and ward;
Majestic from the spoiled tomb,
In pomp of triumph, he has come.”

CHAPTER VII.

TESTIMONY OF OTHER WITNESSES.

THE professors and preachers who deny the resurrection are constantly asserting that their opinions are entitled to great weight, because they are experts in the line of the higher critical study. When one thinks of the more than seven hundred and fifty different views of the authorship, date and meaning of the various books of the Bible, which they have given to the world, the answer of the old lawyer to the student who asked him to define "conflicting testimony" seems to be entirely correct: "Conflicting testimony is expert testimony." These professors have made the theological seminaries "a den of thieves," as they are properly called by real Christians in Germany, for they rob the Scriptures of all their significance, and enter like burglars into the sanctuary of God. It is nothing to them that the risen Jesus is said to have manifested himself in the most open manner, since they have already prejudged the case, and can allow no fact that is miraculous and supernatural.

1. He appeared to Mary Magdalene. This was early on the third day after the crucifixion. There was no time for a myth to form, and there was no possibility of hallucination, or optical illusion, or a ghostly and intangible manifestation. "Jesus saith unto her, Mary. She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to

say, Master. Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not ; for I am not yet ascended to my Father : but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend [am ascending] unto my Father, and your Father ; and to my God, and your God." *John* xx. 16, 17. He spoke to her in audible language, and might have been held and handled ; but he must fulfill the Scripture, "There shall be no man in the tabernacle of the congregation when he goeth in to make an atonement in the holy place, until he come out." *Lev.* xvi. 17. He must first present himself immediately before God, and until this is done, the stain of a human finger cannot be left on his priestly garments in their unsullied beauty.

2. He appeared to the women, running with fear and joy, from the empty grave. "As they went to tell his disciples, behold, Jesus met them, saying, All hail. And they came and held him by the feet, and worshiped him. Then said Jesus unto them, Be not afraid : go tell my brethren that they go into Galilee, and there shall they see me." *Matt.* xxviii. 9, 10. It is obvious that during the little interval which had elapsed between the time he did not permit Mary to touch him, and the time when the women, at his invitation, held him by the feet, he had ascended into the most holy place, and was back again to receive the homage of these adoring and loving hearts.

3. He appeared on the same day to two disciples who were walking from Jerusalem to Emmaus. He accompanied them on their journey, in broad daylight, and on a public highway. He talked with them at considerable length, for he said unto them, "O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken :

ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." It necessarily required some time to go over the five books of Moses, and all the prophets, and all the Scriptures concerning himself; and at the close of the interview they said to him, "Abide with us: for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent." *Luke xxiv. 13-29.*

4. He appeared to Peter; for when the two Emmaus disciples returned to Jerusalem, they were met with the information, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." *Luke xxiv. 34.* No record is kept of this solemn scene, as we might expect. It was a personal thing between the Master and his unfaithful servant. It is well, therefore, that no one was permitted to narrate what transpired between them; although if the story had been forged, it is certain that it would have been adorned with all sorts of sensational incidents.

5. He appeared to "the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them." How many were with the eleven we have no means of knowing. There may have been a few, there may have been seventy, there may have been "an hundred and twenty," who met soon after in a large upper room. *Acts i. 13-15.* But there were certainly more than eleven, who "were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit." He asked them to handle him, and see, declaring that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have." Not only so, but he showed unto them his hands and his feet, and ate before them a piece of broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. "And he said unto them, These are

the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day." *Luke* xxiv. 37-46. If this is a true account, then Jesus rose from the dead in a real body. If it is not a true account, then it is the height of absurdity to talk of any truth whatever in the gospel.

6. "Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. And when he had so said, he showed unto them his hands and his side. Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord. Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." *John* xx. 19-23. Bishop Westcott is sure that this sixth appearance is the same which was last mentioned, as recorded in Luke. Although the opinion of so eminent a scholar and so devout a student of God's word is entitled to great weight, there are reasons for thinking that he is mistaken.

The accounts are entirely different. In Luke they were terrified and affrighted; in John they were glad. In Luke he showed that he is alive, having a body that

could be handled, and that could eat; in John there is not a word of this, but only the giving of their great commission, "As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you." In Luke he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures; but in John he breathed on them, and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." It is clear, therefore, that the scene in John was subsequent to that in Luke, qualifying them fully for service, and conferring upon them authority as his representatives. In Luke he appeared unto "the eleven gathered together, and them that were with them;" in John there were only ten, for Thomas had gone out.

7. After eight days he appeared again, Thomas being present. This doubting disciple refused to believe the testimony of his fellow-apostles. "The other disciples therefore said unto him, We have seen the Lord. But he said unto them, Except I shall see in his hand the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. And after eight days, again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." *John* xx. 25-29. If this occurred, Jesus arose; if it did not occur, cursed are they that believe.

Bishop Westcott in his capital book called *The Reve-*

lation of the Risen Lord, has shown that to Mary Magdalene was given the Revelation through Love; to the women returning from the tomb, the Revelation through Service; to the two Emmaus disciples, the Revelation through Thought; to the assembled disciples, the Revelation through Faith; to the apostles, the Revelation through the Spirit; and to Thomas, the Revelation of his Deity. He also tells us that Dr. Arnold of Rugby, when stricken with mortal agony, was seen lying still, his hands clasped, his eyes raised upward, as if engaged in earnest prayer, and he suddenly repeated firmly, reverently, thrillingly, "And Jesus said unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed." How many souls have been comforted and strengthened by these words to poor, troubled Thomas, eternity alone can reveal!

8. He appeared unto seven disciples on the shores of the Galilee lake. They had toiled all night in fishing and caught nothing. But when the morning was come, Jesus stood on the shore and directed them to cast the net on the right side of the boat. Then they inclosed a great multitude of fishes, and as soon as they landed they saw a fire of coals and fish laid thereon, and bread. "Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine." He entered into conversation with Peter, probing his heart to test the sincerity of his love, giving him a command to feed his lambs and tend his sheep, plainly predicting the manner of the apostle's death, and saying concerning John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou me." Here he is seen in broad daylight, gives to the tired and hungry disciples bread and likewise fish, speaking articulately in their presence. There is no

room for a myth, for hallucination, for optical delusion, for a ghostly visitation ; and all that infidels can do is to say that the beloved John deliberately lied ; and all that skeptical critics can do is to say that the narrative is a "forgery," or an "unbelievable legend." *John* xxi.

9. He appeared not only in Jerusalem, and on the shores of a lake, but on a mountain. "Then the disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him they worshiped him : but some doubted." *Matt.* xxviii. 16, 17. Observe the perfect candor of the evangelist. He might have omitted the clause, "but some doubted" ; and he would have omitted it if he had not been consciously truthful, aiming only to relate facts as they occurred. He does not seek to make the impression that there was such an overwhelming demonstration of the reality, vividness and certainty of the Saviour's identity that it was impossible for any one to question it for a moment. Some may have thought that they were under a hallucination, or misled by an optical illusion, or that they had seen a spirit ; but after "Jesus came and spake unto them," of course all doubt vanished.

10. He appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, the greater part of whom were living some twenty-five years later. This statement is found in an epistle universally acknowledged to be genuine, in which we are told as fundamental to the gospel, how "that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures ; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Some of these appearances are enumerated : "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve : after that, he was seen of above five hundred

brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep." It is true that we have not the personal testimony of each of the more than two hundred and fifty men; but we have the evidence of the apostle, whose veracity in the light of his history, his character, his conduct, his teachings, his powerful influence for good upon the progress of the world, cannot be questioned.

11. He appeared unto James, for the same apostle says, "After that, he was seen of James." Nothing has been preserved concerning the time and place, and purpose of this appearance, beyond the fact that "he was seen of James," and it is useless to speculate where Scripture is silent. It is enough to know that we have another witness to the reality of our Lord's resurrection.

12. He appeared to all of the apostles. He was seen of James, "then of all the apostles." This is clearly an additional statement to the announcement made at the beginning of Paul's enumeration, "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve." In this second statement, "then of all the apostles," he evidently includes, not only the twelve, but no doubt the seventy, sent out, according to Luke, two by two, into every city and place, whither the Lord himself would come. *Luke x. 1.* The word *apostle* means "one sent as a messenger or agent;" and certainly the seventy are included, or all who testified of Jesus Christ during his ministry.

13. He appeared to the disciples just before his ascension: "To whom he showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of the things pertaining to the

kingdom of God : and, being assembled together with them, he commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me." Then follows the assurance that they should be baptized with the Holy Ghost ; that the kingdom of God should be restored to Israel in the proper times and seasons ; that they should receive power after that the Holy Ghost had come upon them ; that they should be witnesses unto him to the uttermost part of the earth. " And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up ; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel ; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven ? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." *Acts* i. 3-11.

14. He appeared unto Paul : " Last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time," or an " untimely birth." *1. Cor.* xv. 5-8. Elsewhere the apostle says, " Am I not an apostle ? am I not free ? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord ?" *1. Cor.* ix. 1. The story of his conversion is very remarkable : " Saul, yet breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, and desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus : and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven : and he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto

him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. . . . And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought him into Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink." *Acts ix. 1-9.*

It is enough at present to say that there could have been no hallucination in the new convert. The first mention of him is in connection with the martyrdom of Stephen: "As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison. *Acts viii. 3.* Nor was there any chance for optical illusion, because he was on a crowded highway leading into a populous city, he saw a light above the brightness of the noonday sun, he saw that light at midday, he heard the voice of Jesus distinctly speaking to him, he was blinded by the dazzling glory; and he promptly and persistently entered upon a career of the most intense devotion to the Nazarene, whom he had hated and sought to crush. In that long career he exhibited the utmost good sense, soundness of judgment, freedom from fanaticism, exalting every virtue, rebuking every vice, elevating every husband, wife, child, citizen, and servant, who are effectually reached by his influence. If such a man did not tell the truth, there is no truth,—there are only shams and lies; and belief in

God himself is but a deception and mockery, leaving us to say of evil, "Thou art God."

15. He appeared to the apostle John "in the isle that is called Patmos." He was seen clothed with majesty like a garment, girt about the breasts with a golden girdle, his head and hairs bright and pure as the spotless snow, his feet like unto fine brass, his voice as the sound of many waters, and "his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength." No wonder the beloved disciple tells us, "When I saw him, I fell at his feet as one dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying, Fear not; I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore; and I have the keys of death and of Hades." Revised Version *Rev.* i. 9-18. Many years had passed since John had leaned his head on the breast of Jesus at the last supper, and through all his laborious and wearisome life he had so longed for a sight of that lovely face! Now that he beholds him in glory the soul of the lonely exile is overwhelmed with awe, but the tender touch reassures and strengthens him, and he never fears again. He sees the risen Redeemer, living for evermore, and holding in his imperial hand the keys of the unseen world.

16. The Holy Spirit is a most important witness of our Lord's resurrection, according to the word, "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." *John* xv. 26. Hence the apostle Peter says, "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost,

whom God hath given to them that obey him." *Acts* v. 30-32. The apostle Paul likewise tells us, that the Lord Jesus Christ was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." *Rom.* i. 4. To every real Christian who has lived since the death of Christ, the Holy Spirit confirms the truth of his resurrection, working in the experience of the genuine believer the full assurance wrought in the Old Testament prophets, who were "searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." *1 Pet.* i. 11.

17. The angels are his witnesses. It was seemly that they should be sent on a special mission at each of the three great events in the earthly career of their Lord. At his birth in Bethlehem of Judea, while the shepherds were keeping watch over their flock by night, "the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them: and they were sore afraid." *Luke* ii. 9. When the women came to his empty grave, "behold, two men stood by them in shining garments: and as they were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth, they said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? He is not here, but is risen." *Luke* xxiv. 4-6. At his bodily, literal, visible ascension, "two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." *Acts* i. 10-11. Surely it was becoming that his resurrection should be announced by

angelic ministry, and made known to the hierarchy of the skies.

18. The soldiers upon whose spears and swords and shields the glory of the resurrection first flashed, were his unwilling witnesses. It is true that they do not say they saw him, but they admit that the body was not in the tomb the third day. They might be asked how they could testify to what happened when they were asleep ; what led them to believe that the body of Jesus had been stolen ; why they supposed that it was stolen by his disciples ; when according to their own confession they were unaware of what took place. There is not a court on earth that will admit as evidence the testimony of witnesses who will undertake to establish a fact which occurred while they were locked fast in the unconsciousness of slumber ; and therefore as these soldiers could affirm nothing more than the idle assertion that the disciples stole the dead Jesus while they slept, they prove that he really rose from the dead.

19. The chief priests and scribes are themselves his witnesses. They arrest the apostles, they put them into prison, they beat them, they scourge them, they command them to speak no more of the resurrection ; but they never attempt to disprove it by the least counter evidence. While they had the first preachers in their power, a few days after the crucifixion, they might have charged them with fraud in stealing the body, and justly brought upon them public indignation as arrant impostors. But there is not a hint of their attempt to do this ; they only sought to silence the witnesses.

It would have been an easy and natural and unavoidable thing, occurring to any man of common sense, to

appoint members of their court, or a committee of intelligent citizens, ordering them to visit the tomb, and report whether the crucified body was still there. The fact that they did not take so simple and practical a method of exposing the fraud, if fraud there was, proves that there was no fraud: and hence the Jewish Sanhedrin becomes a powerful witness to establish the reality of our Lord's resurrection.

The Roman governor, Festus, told king Agrippa that the Jews had certain questions about Paul, "and of one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive" (*Acts* xxv. 19); and even Agrippa was so impressed by the apostle's bold announcement of our Lord's resurrection that he was constrained to confess, "Almost thou persuadedest me to be a Christian." *Acts* xxvi. 27. Can any man in his senses believe that the highest court among the Jews, and various tribunals, before which the apostles were again and again tried, would have failed to prove that the resurrection was a cheat, if it had been possible to do so? Therefore kings, governors, and the Sanhedrin are unconscious witnesses that Jesus Christ actually rose from among the dead.

20. Many that came out of the graves after his resurrection are his witnesses. "Behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent; and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." *Matt.* xxvii. 51-55. He thus manifested himself to be "the firstborn from the dead" (*Col.* i. 18); and showed that his own resurrection was no isolated

phenomenon, but "the firstfruits" of the victory over death (1 *Cor.* xv. 20), in which believers and all they have loved and lost, if in Christ, are to be sharers. Every one of these risen saints testifies to the reality of his resurrection, for it is said that "many *bodies* of the saints which slept arose," proving that his body also arose, as the pledge of the triumphant exodus from the tomb of all who follow him; and they "appeared unto many" as the undeniable evidence of their own resurrection through the power of his resurrection.

21. When Stephen was about to die, "he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." *Acts* vii. 55, 56. He saw Jesus, he saw him as the Son of man, he saw him, not sitting as he is usually represented after his ascension, but standing, rising up from his Father's throne, to meet and welcome his faithful servant. That he was seen proves that he was risen.

Above all, he "was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father" (*Rom.* vi. 4); God "raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God." 1 *Pet.* i. 21. If the united testimony of such witnesses, God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, angels, apostles, more than five hundred brethren at once, the women, Paul, Stephen, the soldiers, the Jewish Sanhedrin, cannot establish the fact of our Lord's resurrection, no evidence of any kind is sufficient to prove any event in human history. Shall we be told that all of this goes for nothing, and that our conscious knowledge of the power and sweetness of the grace that saves, added to the mil-

lions of happy lives and triumphant deaths, springing from the resurrection of our Lord, must be regarded as a hideous lie?

No wonder that the infidel Jew, Renan, leaves behind him in his last work a stinging rebuke of those who claim to be Christians, while denying the historical reality of the resurrection. He said, and in view of approaching death, he no doubt said it sincerely, "One fundamental thesis to which I cling more firmly than ever, is that, not only did Jesus exist, but that he was great and beautiful, although a thousandfold more real than insipid earthly greatness, than insipid earthly beauty, but his charm was known to but a dozen persons, really. These, however, had that love for him, that it became contagious and imposed itself on the world. We believe, then, that there is an historical reality in the gospels. That reality is the foundation of Christianity." That foundation, he might have added, is the resurrection of our Lord; and shall we be told, in the light of all the evidence, it never occurred? Nay, we must believe it, we do believe it; and in the face of skepticism say at the rocky sepulchre, "He is not here."

"Hallelujah! Hallelujah!
Finished is the battle now:
The crown is on the Victor's brow!
Thence with sadness!
Sing with gladness,
Hallelujah!"

CHAPTER VIII.

TESTIMONY IN THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES.

IN the opening chapter we are not only told that Jesus showed himself alive after his suffering, by many infallible proofs, that he spoke to the disciples, that he gave them his commandments, that he audibly promised them the power of the Holy Ghost, that he was seen visibly to ascend up into heaven, but that any man chosen to be an apostle must be a witness of his resurrection. It was determined to appoint among the twelve a successor of the traitor Judas ; and Peter, speaking for the others, said, "Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." *Acts* 1. 21, 22.

There were several qualifications necessary for an apostle, and among them it was essential that he must be a witness of the Lord's resurrection. He must not only have heard about it, but he must have seen the risen Jesus. It was his body, after his crucifixion and departure from the tomb, he must have beheld, not a myth, nor an hallucination, nor an optical illusion, nor a vague shadowy form, nor a spiritual truth, but a real man restored to life, of whom he was to testify from personal

knowledge and actual eyesight. This lay at the very foundation of the Christian Church; and the first inspired teachers, armed with miraculous powers, possessing supreme authority, and sent upon a world-wide mission, constantly affirmed as the result of their own observation that Jesus rose from the dead.

Then followed the day of Pentecost, when the Holy Ghost descended with mighty power to confirm the fact of Jesus' resurrection and ascension. Peter was again the speaker, who said to the Jews in the very city where the Lord was murdered, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death: because it was not possible that he should be holden of it." David is quoted, not as referring to himself, but to Christ: "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell (Revised Version, Hades), neither his flesh did see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." *Acts* ii. 23-33. Here again it is a corporeal resurrection.

In the next chapter a lame man, lying at the beautiful gate of the temple, was healed "in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth." A crowd of Jews collected, to whom Peter said, "Ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and

desired a murderer to be granted unto you ; and killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead ; whereof we are witnesses." He goes on to declare that Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, is in heaven, and that he will come again at the restitution of all things, that he is a prophet, clothed with divine authority, whose voice it is fatal to disregard ; and closes his address with the words : " Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his iniquities." *Acts* iii. 14-26.

In the next chapter the ecclesiastical rulers of the Jews arrested the apostles, " being grieved that they taught the people, and preached through Jesus the resurrection from the dead." Peter boldly said in their defense : " Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other : for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." The apostles were threatened and released ; but observe, there was no attempt to prove them guilty of deception and fraud in their statement of the resurrection. They went out of court to unite with their brethren in prayer and praise, rejoicing that the kings of the earth, and the rulers, " both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel," were helpless against the risen and ascended Christ. " And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus." *Acts* iv. 10-12, 26-33.

In the next chapter the witnesses are once more dragged before the Jewish Sanhedrin, who said to them, "Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him." *Acts* v. 28-32. It is simply unaccountable that these shrewd lawyers and angry judges did not charge the disciples with the theft of the body, or did not show that the body was still in the tomb, if it is true that Jesus did not rise from the dead.

In the next two chapters we have the remarkable defense of Stephen before the same high court. Although accused, he turns accuser, saying, "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers."

He was betrayed and murdered, but he did not remain in their grasp; for Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked up steadfastly into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God." *Acts* vii. 55, 56. Notice the testimony, that he actually sees Jesus, and sees him as the Son of man, still bearing our human nature, still wearing his human title; and therefore, if the

witness is to be believed, the body of our Lord really and truly came forth from the grave.

In the fierce persecution that followed the death of Stephen, Saul having taken a prominent part in his murder, Jesus revealed himself personally to his bitter foe, speaking to him in articulate language, directing him what to do, appointing him as a chosen vessel; "and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God." *Acts ix. 1-20.* Beyond doubt something had occurred which led to this sudden and extraordinary change in the character and conduct of a man, who long afterwards called himself, as he was before his marvelous conversion, "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious." This something was the fact, and it is the only fact in the light of his subsequent history that at all explains the sweeping revolution in his life, that he had literally seen the risen and ascended Lord in his dazzling glory.

In the next chapter Peter is again brought upon the scene, preaching Christ to the Roman centurion and his household: "We are witnesses of all things which he did, both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree: him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." The eating and drinking with him, if the witness is trustworthy and the evidence credible, cannot be understood in any other way than by his corporeal resurrection. Peter declares that it was the irresistible power of God that raised him from the dead, and God "commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he

which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead." *Acts* x. 39-42.

Paul then comes to the front of the history, as Luke, "the beloved physician," was his traveling companion, and wrote the Acts containing a record of the apostle's journeys and discourses. On his first missionary tour we find him preaching to the Jews in Antioch in Pisidia: "When they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre. But God raised him from the dead: and he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people. And we declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us, their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he said on this wise, I will give you the sure mercies of David." *Acts* xiii. 29-34. It is important to keep in mind that it was not of his incarnation at Bethlehem, but of his resurrection from the grave, God said, "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Incarnation would have been nothing without resurrection.

At Thessalonica "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath-days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ." *Acts*. xvii. 2, 3. The theme of his preaching was the suffering and the resurrection of Christ, as it was of the

Old Testament prophets (1 *Pet.* i. 11); and this Jesus is the Christ or Messiah. With such preaching his enemies said of him and his companions, "These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also;" for thus they declared, "There is another king, one Jesus." The same chapter tells us that when Paul went to Athens, certain philosophers of the Epicureans, and of the Stoics, scoffed at him, "because he preached unto them Jesus, and the resurrection;" and then they encountered him on Mars' Hill where he preached the word of God: "Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained; whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead." *Acts* xvii.

Discouraged by the frightful wickedness of Corinth, it was the risen, living Lord who spoke to him words of cheer and courage. *Acts* xviii. 9, 10. Seized by a furious mob in Jerusalem, he could only relate to them his experience at Damascus, when Ananias said to him, "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth." *Acts* xxii. 14. He could tell the crowd thirsting for his blood, I "saw him saying unto me, Make haste, and get thee quickly out of Jerusalem: for they will not receive thy testimony concerning me." *Acts* xxii. 18. Rescued by the Roman soldiers, and confined in a castle, when he was in danger of being pulled in pieces by Jewish bigots, who bound themselves under a curse that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul, "the night following, the Lord stood by him, and said, Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testi-

fied of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." *Acts* xxiii. 11.

Arraigned before Felix, then before Festus, then before king Agrippa, he made his defense: "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" The work of God in the creation, government, and redemption of the world, would have been still-born even at the cross, but for the birth-throes of the resurrection. Unless the existence of a personal God is incredible, is it incredible that he raised his Son, his own Son, his only begotten Son, his well-beloved Son, from the grave? Indeed, it is both natural and necessary that God must thus own him, and endorse him, and testify of him in presence of angels and men and devils, if that Son told the truth when he said, "I and my Father are one." *John* x. 30. Admitting that Christ was what he claimed to be, that he came down from heaven, not to do, as he declares, "mine own will, but the will of him that sent me" (*John* vi. 38); that he came "to seek and to save that which was lost" (*Luke* xix. 10); then Paul was clearly right and credible when, as the Roman Festus expressed it, he proclaimed "one Jesus, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive." *Acts* xxv. 19.

So bound up was the resurrection of the Lord with the whole scope of the Scriptures that Paul does not hesitate to say to Agrippa: "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." The preacher might be considered

insane by a heathen Roman, but he courteously replied, "I am not mad, most noble Festus ; but speak forth the words of truth and soberness. For the king knoweth of these things, before whom also I speak freely : for I am persuaded that none of these things are hidden from him ; for this thing was not done in a corner." It was not done in the night, nor in an obscure place, nor in secret, nor when Paul was alone, but in the broad daylight of the sun, at mid-day, on a thronged highway, near a large city, in the presence of the police force attending him ; and any of his companions might contradict him if they could, for he repeatedly flings his challenge in the face of kings and governors, the Jews and the entire world, willing to be examined and cross-examined, and to seal his testimony with his blood. He and other Christians of whom we read in the Acts of the Apostles could have intelligently sung,

"The open'd skies disclose
The Christ at God's right hand ;
There Jesus, Victor o'er his foes.
As Son of man doth stand !
Hallelujah ! Hallelujah !
Glory to the Son of God !"

CHAPTER IX.

TESTIMONY OF CHOSEN WITNESSES.

WHY did not the risen Jesus appear to his foes as well as to his friends? This question has been asked by thousands, not in a caviling and fault-finding spirit, but in honest perplexity. Perhaps every one who has thought of the subject at all has been sorely troubled by the fact that he did not reveal himself except to a select circle of his immediate followers, when it seems to us that he might have silenced all opposition and quieted skepticism forever, if he had proved to immense multitudes indiscriminately that he was really alive after his death. It is a question that must be fairly discussed; and let us remember that doubt is not unbelief, although cherished doubt may lead to unbelief.

First. It is admitted by infidels themselves that Jesus died and was buried. What became of his body? It was either in the keeping of the disciples, or of those who crucified him. It was either missing from the grave the third day after he yielded up his spirit on the cross, or it still lay undisturbed in the rocky sepulchre. Let us suppose that it was removed by his few humble, illiterate and timid adherents. On this supposition we are brought face to face with insuperable difficulties: 1, they had no opportunity; 2, they were wanting in courage; 3, they possessed insufficient means and influence; 4, they could

have been detected ; 5, they ran a frightful risk of condign punishment without the slightest hope of any conceivable gain ; 6, they could not deceive themselves with the assertion that he had risen ; 7, they were the most sacrilegious thieves, liars and scoundrels the world has ever known, if they stole the body.

But how do you account for the fact that no one accuses them of dishonesty or sinister aims, for even the most virulent infidels acknowledge their sincerity and their purpose, at least, to tell the truth. Nor is it possible to explain their beneficent influence upon the individual, the family and society at large, if they were guilty of a shameful deception in the story of the resurrection. All are constrained to confess that they commended every virtue and condemned every vice, even if they willfully invented and propagated a vile falsehood, and this, too, without the faintest expectation of any reward here or hereafter. If they stole the body they knew that they were liars ; and yet for the sake of a causeless and fruitless lie they endured the loss of all things and a violent death. It is quite evident to any one worthy of the least notice that the body of our Lord was not stolen by his friends.

Assuming, on the other hand, that the witnesses told the truth, when they claim that they saw him alive on the third day after his crucifixion, obviously the burden of proof rests upon those who deny his resurrection. If the body was still in the grave, why did they not expose it to public view ? It was manifestly in the hands, or subject to the disposal, of the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, and only a few days elapsed, until in the presence of a great crowd assembled in Jerusalem, where he was crucified and buried, the apostles boldly announced his resur-

rection; "and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." *Acts* ii. 41. If the crucified body had been carried into the midst of these assembled thousands, and exhibited on an elevated platform, one glance would have overwhelmed the apostles with confusion, and torn up Christianity by the roots.

It may be said, however, that the body was decomposed, and unfit for public exhibition. But the grave could have been visited by the chief priests, scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, or by a committee of respectable citizens, and evidence could have been furnished that the corpse was still there. Thus it would have been quite easy, without any unseemly exposure of the dead man, to convict his disciples of an audacious falsehood; and why was it not done? Simply because it could not be done. It is positively certain that his friends could not have removed his body, for then they could not have believed that he had risen. It is equally certain that his foes would not have removed it, for then they would not have been slow at any moment between the third day and the day of Pentecost to explode the assertion that he was risen from the dead, by a declaration of the true facts in the case. "How, in the presence of the Jewish and Roman rulers," as Strauss himself says, "could the disciples come to make the assertion, when they could examine the neighboring tomb in order to convince themselves of its groundlessness?" To an unprejudiced mind, honestly desirous of knowing the truth, the whole argument is summed up in the question, WHAT BECAME OF THE BODY?

Second. Perfect candor marks the narrative, that the risen Jesus was not seen by unbelievers after his resurrection. Peter says on the day of Pentecost, "This Jesus

hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." *Acts* ii. 32. To the Jews, charged with slaying the Prince and Saviour, whom the God of our fathers raised up and exalted, he declares, "And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost." *Acts* v. 30-32. To the Gentiles gathered about Cornelius he announces, "Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." *Acts* x. 40-41. Paul preached in his sermon at Antioch, "God raised him from the dead: and he was seen many days of them which came up with him from Galilee to Jerusalem, who are his witnesses unto the people." *Acts* xiii. 30, 31. If the apostles lied about the resurrection, it is astonishing that they did not lie a little more, and claim that he was seen of many besides themselves. If these men told and wrote a falsehood, can you imagine that they would have failed to insert that some unbelievers, at least, saw him after his resurrection?

Third. They frankly own that the last place and time the world beheld him, he was on the cross. Jesus without the cross is no Christ, and Jesus without the resurrection is no Saviour. Suppose that he had appeared to the unbelieving world after he rose from the grave; one of two things must have occurred. Either they would have denied that he was the person who was crucified, or they would have laughed at his testimony as a fabrication and fraud. Had they not seen his gracious and countless miracles? The blind received their sight, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed, the deaf heard, the dead were raised up, vast multitudes were healed of all manner

of diseases, or fed with five loaves and two fishes; but who were convicted and converted? Remember what our Lord says: "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." *Luke* xvi. 31.

If a man has "made up his mind," as we say, to reject Christ and Christianity, if what he imagines are his interests lead him in that way, if the gospel interferes with his pleasure, if it cuts the pride of his opinion, if he is preoccupied with his prejudices and prepossessions, if the truth lays an arrest upon his sins, if it arouses his fears, you cannot convince him that two and two make four, or that the sun shines from a cloudless sky at noon. One knows little of human nature, or the tremendous power of depravity, if he thinks that arguments clear and convincing as a mathematical demonstration can convert a skeptic against his will. Infidelity never springs from the intellect, but from the heart; and it is as true to-day, as when Jesus Christ uttered the words, "Ye WILL not come to me, that ye might have life" (*John* v. 40).

Fourth. If the world refused to believe the unanimous evidence of those who testified in the most unequivocal manner to the reality of the resurrection, there is no reason to say that Jesus himself would have been believed. If a man died and was buried, and one, two, seven, eleven, seventy, one hundred, five hundred, witnesses of unimpeachable veracity, solemnly declare that they saw him, talked with him, ate with him, handled him, that they could not be deceived as to his identity or the reality of his resurrection, and their evidence is unworthy of credit, it is childish to claim that our own senses could furnish better evidence. But how far will the skeptic

have the appearances extend, and when and where ought they to cease? If he had appeared to the Jewish priests, or to Tiberius Cæsar and the Roman Senate, this would not have answered, because these men lived long ago. The objection, if carried out to its logical conclusion, would make the appearance of the risen Lord to be necessary, before the evidence would be deemed conclusive, to every man, woman and child then living, or living since, or still living, or living hereafter. In other words, the objection is nonsense.

Beyond question, if the risen Jesus had been seen by unbelievers, they would have rejected him as an impostor, or they would not have been unbelievers; and it is easy to see the use skeptics would have still made of such disallowance of his claims upon the faith of men. In considering the probability of the effect produced by the revelation of the risen Jesus to his foes, do not forget that "the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (*Roman* viii. 7); and that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." *I Cor.* ii. 14.

Fifth. If the risen Lord had shown himself to those who despised his Messiahship, the testimony of his chosen witnesses could not have been so thoroughly sifted. Mere animal sight would have been substituted for the higher mental and moral condition essential to real belief; and the severe and searching investigation through which the evidence of the witnesses has passed would have been lost to us, because the ground on which we stand with regard to the resurrection would have shifted. Tried

before emperors, kings, governors, legal tribunals, at the bar of public opinion, within the grasp of an angry populace, their testimony could not be shaken in the presence of the scourge, the prison, the rack, the cross and the headsman's sword. If Jesus had revealed himself to any number of unbelievers, it is clear that their word would have been less conclusive than the careful examination of the apostles, when the truth of their evidence was so fully tested and so triumphantly proved by their manner of life. If that evidence is insufficient, the skeptic is utterly unreasonable to believe any past event in human history.

Sixth. It would have been wholly out of keeping with the entire design and result of his resurrection, if the Lord had shown himself indiscriminately to unbelievers. It was not in the incarnation, as is so often thoughtlessly said, that he linked humanity to a higher plane, but it was in the resurrection he exalted his believing people to his own elevated place. It was the risen Christ, who sent for the first time a message to those he calls his brethren: "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." *John* xx. 17. It was the resurrection which put a plain and positive and permanent line of separation between believers and unbelievers; and hence, although the apostles do not tell us why, it would have been impossible for the risen Saviour to appear to the latter without a complete reversal of the real design and teachings of the gospel.

Seventh. His appearance only to believers was precisely suited to the new life into which his resurrection introduced them. Bishop Westcott, in his book called *The Gospel of the Resurrection*, has well remarked in

a foot-note : " It has been objected that our Lord revealed himself only to believers or those inclined to believe. If we regard the resurrection as a revelation of a *new* life, it is obvious that it could not be otherwise. In order to establish the belief in the reality of this new existence, it was necessary that some power should exist in the witness to apprehend it. There was a spiritual side to the manifestation of the risen Christ, which could only be discerned spiritually. If it had been necessary merely to show the restoration of the Lord to the condition of an ordinary human life, as in the case of Lazarus, the testimony of different spectators would have been adequate. But if the appearances were designed to be a revelation of a glorified human life, then the manifestation to unbelievers would not only have been contrary to the usual method of the Providence of God, but also, so far as we can see, unavailing. . . . If then the Life of the risen Lord had been simply a renovation or a continuance of his former life, subject to the same conditions, and necessarily destined to the same inevitable close, then the experience of unbelievers would have been sufficient to test, the witness of unbelievers would have been adequate to establish, the reality of the resurrection."

Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, in summing up the evidence in the famous Tichborne trial, some years ago, said in his charge to the Jury : " I now pass from the question of identity of person as based on the opinion of witnesses, to a question which is of quite equal, or of greater, importance, and that is, how far there is, not outward identity or resemblance, *but inward identity of mind.*" If Jesus had appeared to unbelievers, nothing would have been easier, according to this principle of law, than to

deny his identity and to take measures against him as a fraud. They were not in any sense the proper witnesses of his resurrection. They were not capable of conviction nor morally qualified to grasp the fact in its real bearings. Dr. Christlieb has asked, "Why did he refuse, on the demand of his enemies, to give them a sign from heaven? Why did he not at the very beginning hold an audible conversation with his Father up in heaven, to stop the mouths of all doubters and adversaries, and make it easy for every one to believe in him? Why did he not come down from the cross to prove his Divine Sonship?" For the same reason that led him to treat with silence the question of Pilate, "Whence art thou? But Jesus gave him no answer." *John* xix. 9.

Whatever may be perplexing about the question, it is perfectly clear that his manner of appearing after his resurrection is in entire harmony with his method of dealing with men before his death. If we had read in the Gospels that he made a show of himself openly to the unbelieving world, there would have been strong reason to doubt the veracity of the record containing such a statement, because it would have been so thoroughly out of keeping with his character, his teachings, and the mode of his revelation, and treatment of those with whom he came in contact. That he is said to have manifested himself as living, after his passion, by many infallible proofs, only to witnesses chosen for this end, adds immeasurably to the credibility of the narrative.

Remember that even to these chosen witnesses, Jesus was the same, and yet not the same, for "their eyes were holden that they should not know him"; and only in the breaking of bread, "their eyes were opened, and

they knew him." *Luke* xxiv. 16, 31. The longing, loving Mary, although she saw him, knew him not until he called her name. *John* xx. 14-16. How then was it possible for his enemies to recognize the risen One? We can now catch the meaning of the apostle as he writes, "Yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more." *2 Cor.* v. 16. It was by the resurrection he entered for himself and for believers into this new and glorious life, a life which can never be touched by sin and death, and with which unbelievers have no fellowship.

Not of them, but of believers alone, it is said, "Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." *Romans* vi. 4. Again, "God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved); and hath raised us up together." *Eph.* ii. 4-6. Again, "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." *Col.* ii. 12. Hence it could not be that the risen Christ revealed himself to unbelievers any more than he does now; so perfect are his ways, so complete is Scripture.

"Life eternal! heaven rejoices,
 Jesus lives, who once was dead;
 Join, O man, the deathless voices,
 Child of God, lift up thy head!
 Lord! in all thy power and glory,
 Still thy thoughts and eyes are here,
 Watching o'er thy ransomed people,
 To thy gracious heart so dear."

CHAPTER X.

TESTIMONY OF HIS MONUMENTS.

INFIDELS have often tried to account for the influence of Jesus Christ, and the consequent belief in his resurrection, by supposing that he took advantage of the current Jewish desires for the coming of their Messiah. The Old Testament prophets constantly spoke of him as a mighty King, who would raise up the prostrate banner of Israel; and it is assumed that he fell in with the popular predictions, professing himself to be the expected Prince who was to work for their national deliverance. That is to say, the theory makes him a shrewd and unprincipled demagogue, who conformed to the opinion of the multitude for a selfish purpose. A glance at the history will discover how utterly absurd, as well as irreverent, is the charge of such shameful imposture.

So far from being true, the facts show that when the people "would come and take him by force, to make him a king," he immediately withdrew himself (*John* vi. 15); that he had not "where to lay his head" (*Luke* ix. 58); that he borrowed a penny to illustrate obedience to Cæsar (*Matt.* xxii. 19); that he worked a miracle to pay his temple dues (*Matt.* xvii. 27); that he was "meek and lowly in heart," instead of appearing in royal state (*Matt.* xi. 29); that he rejected the respected traditions of recognized religious authorities (*Matt.* xv. 1-6); that he set aside

the enactments of the law (*Matt.* v. 38-44; that he exposed the honored Pharisees in the hypocrisies of their prayers and alms (*Matt.* vi. 1-7); that he said, Jerusalem was not the only place where men ought to worship (*John* iv. 21); that the boastful seed of Abraham had become the children of the devil (*John* viii. 39-44); that the time was coming when those who were proud of their descent from Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, would find themselves thrust out of the kingdom of God. *Luke* xiii. 28.

Truly, this was a singular method of seeking to ingratiate himself with the rulers or the masses, when his teachings ran directly contrary to their notions and prejudices, so that from the very commencement of his ministry to its close, they attempted to kill him. To the former he said, "Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?" To all he said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (*Matt.* xxiii. 33, 38); "and when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." *Luke* xxi. 20. Yet among such people, to whom he frequently predicted his crucifixion and resurrection, he reared certain monuments as perpetual memorials of the truth of his doctrines, the validity of his claims, and the reality of his resurrection.

It is customary in all intelligent nations to preserve the remembrance of certain important events by constant observances. Thus the Jews have long kept the Passover to celebrate their miraculous deliverance from Egyptian bondage, and the Feast of Purim to commemorate their wonderful escape from impending doom in Persia, through the heroic efforts of Queen Esther. In England there were annual festivities for many years, that recalled the

“Gunpowder Plot” of Guy Fawkes, November 5, 1605, two hundred and ninety years ago. France will not soon forget the capture and destruction of the Bastile, July 14th, 1789; and the 4th of July, in the United States, is ushered in every year with noisy demonstrations in honor of the Declaration of American Independence.

It would be hard to convince these nations that there is no historical basis for their annual celebrations, because the reply would immediately be made that it is absolutely impossible to impose a story, which is entirely without foundation, upon a country of educated citizens, and lead them generation by generation, and year by year, to regard it as really true. Some one of keen observation, some higher critic of history delving into every imaginary nook and corner, would be certain to detect the fraud; and hence the glory and distinction given to the day by popular observance may properly be considered as monuments, attesting the reality of the occurrence thus perpetuated, especially when not a word can be said against the transaction so signally immortalized. There are three such monuments intimately associated with the resurrection of Jesus.

First. The Lord's day has been observed week by week in all civilized and moral communities, and it stretches back through the centuries to the very day when he is said to have risen from the dead. The remembrance of his birth is preserved in a curious way, for the most vindictive infidel is compelled to recognize it in all his business transactions, whenever he has occasion to use the number of the year. Trade, banking, commerce, correspondence, would have no legal existence without the significant “*Anno Domini*,” the year of our Lord, placed

on documents and authoritative letters. So the Lord's day is woven into the structure of society. France, in the delirium and whirlwind of her atheism, determined to reject the universal law, but was obliged to return to it when reason resumed her throne.

How did it occur that this world-wide institution dates to the exact time of our Lord's resurrection? The apostles were Jews, trained to the strictest observance of the Jewish, or seventh-day Sabbath. They had known nothing else; they had never heard of any other sacred day; and nothing in the life of the Saviour gave greater offense to their countrymen than his disregard of their traditions concerning the Sabbath. All of their religious convictions and hopes were bound up in the seventh day, and not only was this day enforced by law and custom, and the deeply rooted prejudices of the apostles themselves, but it was proclaimed amid the blackness and darkness and tempest and trumpet of Sinai. It was woven into the texture of Judaism, and bound up in the life of the nation and of every individual.

Yet without the enactment of a new statute the disciples took up the first day of the week. It was on the first day their Lord arose out of the grave. On the first day he appeared to them; on the next first day he again appeared: on the first day the Holy Ghost descended, thus inaugurating a new era, and linking the first day with the new creation, as the seventh day was linked with the old creation, when "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made. *Gen. ii. 3.* Now God incarnate had finished the work of redemption, and, rising triumphant from the tomb, had ascended on high as head

of the corner, leaving his people to sing with thanksgiving, "This is the day which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice, and be glad in it." *Ps.* cxviii. 24.

History relates that when the disciples met on any morning of the Lord's day the salutation would be, "Christ is risen," to which the answer would be returned, "Yes; Christ is risen indeed," as it is still the custom among Russian peasants, it is said, every Easter morning. No other foundation for this perpetual monument has ever been named by the most skeptical criticism, except that mentioned in the New Testament as associated with the Lord's resurrection. Pliny speaks of Christians meeting together on the first day of the week to sing hymns of praise to Christ; and as you can trace the remarkable observance of this day to the very day when he rose from the dead, it is certain that the Lord's day, in the absence of any conflicting testimony, may be regarded as a standing proof that the event itself occurred; for it is absurd and impossible to imagine that an observance of such significant import started in a myth, hallucination, optical illusion, in nothing at all.

The second monument is the Lord's Supper. Instituted the night before the crucifixion, it has been celebrated ever since by all Christians in all lands. We find the apostle Paul saying in an epistle, accepted even by infidels as genuine, "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him" (1 *Cor.* xvi. 2); and among other acts of worship there was a preaching service, for we are told that "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them." *Acts* xx. 7. They broke bread, or partook of the Lord's

supper as it is elsewhere called, in remembrance of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ; "for as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." 1 *Cor.* xi. 20-26.

The words "till he come" establish conclusively, not only that he died, but that he rose, for it would be senseless to talk of his coming unless he came forth from the grave, and ascended into heaven. It was not his soul or spirit that died and rose, but his body, as he said, "This is my BODY, which is broken for you." 1 *Cor.* xi. 24. Such is the meaning of the Lord's Supper. It is a memorial of the physical death and physical resurrection of Christ. It can be traced back century by century, year by year, week by week, day by day, to the precise time when he died and rose, and it can be traced back no further, nor to any other foundation on which the monument stands. Thus we are connected by means of a second ordinance, and by a chain in which there is not one link missing, to the origin of a rite solemnly kept in all succeeding ages by every true Christian. A practice which has prevailed in the entire Church from the resurrection until now, a practice which involves the highest and most sacred form of communion, a practice which has been thoroughly investigated by multitudes of the most intelligent scholars, could not have sprung from delusion or a dream.

The third monument is Christian baptism. This ordinance was commanded by our risen Lord when he said to the disciples, "Go ye therefore, and teach [make disciples of] all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." *Matt.* xxviii. 19. As the Lord's Supper sets forth his death

for us, so baptism sets forth our death with a crucified and risen Christ; "For as many . . . as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." *Gal.* iii. 27. Hence his resurrection is the prominent feature of baptism, for it is the symbol of our oneness with him who was dead and is alive again. "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," or as Professor Beet renders it, "United in growth with the likeness of his death, we shall be also with that of his resurrection." *Rom.* vi. 5. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him." *Col.* ii. 12. "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (*1 Pet.* iii. 21); that is, a conscience that can bear examination before God, because the resurrection of Christ, proclaimed in our baptism, proves that he has met every demand of law and justice in our behalf.

Thus baptism, administered somewhere daily since the day of Pentecost, when "they that gladly received his word were baptized" (*Acts* ii. 41), becomes a witness to the truth of our Lord's resurrection. The Church was founded on an empty grave, it was built upon an empty grave, it has grown and increased and expanded to "the uttermost part of the earth" on an empty grave; and if the skeptics and critics could succeed in tearing away the rock of our Lord's literal, corporeal resurrection, the whole edifice would fall into a bottomless abyss. But their blows are ineffectual; they are assailing the Rock of Ages. The angel still says, "He is not here."

“ Vain the stone, the watch, the seal ;
Christ hath burst the gates of hell :
Death in vain forbids his rise ;
Christ has opened Paradise.

Lives again our glorious King ;
Where, O death, is now thy sting ?
Once he died our souls to save ;
Where thy victory, O grave ? ”

CHAPTER XI.

TESTIMONY FROM DENIAL OF HIS RESURRECTION.

THE apostle Paul defines the gospel as embracing three cardinal facts: 1st, "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures:" 2d, "that he was buried"; 3d, "that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." This is followed by the citation of seven witnesses: 1st, "the scriptures," mentioned twice; 2d, "he was seen of Cephas;" 3d, "then of the twelve;" 4th, "after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once;" 5th, "after that, he was seen of James;" 6th, "then of all the apostles"; 7th, "last of all, he was seen of me also." He does not say that these witnesses thought, or imagined, that they saw him, but he was *seen*.

There were those, however, in the Corinthian church who had been led sadly astray about the resurrection. They were like the Athenian philosophers, of whom it is said, "When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked." *Acts* xvii. 32. Or there were prominent teachers among them, professing to be Christians, like Hymenæus and Philetus, "who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already" (*2 Tim.* 2. 18), holding to some kind of spiritual resurrection. Or there were those, like some of modern times, who objected to the resurrection on the ground that it

was miraculous and supernatural. All such men the apostle sternly rebukes, and overthrows their ignorant and infidel arguments, by showing the inevitable result of denying this essential truth of Christianity.

First. "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain." The word for "preaching" is "a proclamation, a public annunciation," coming from a verb which means "to publish, to proclaim as a herald." The word for "vain" signifies, "empty, having nothing, empty-handed, fruitless, to no purpose, fallacious, false." He went about the world boldly proclaiming like a herald an empty, fallacious and false tale, if Christ be not risen, and frankly admits that he was a deliberate cheat and liar. On the supposition that he dissembled or was deceived, the sooner his preaching was ended, the better it would be both for himself and his hearers. His proclamation was idiotic twaddle, and he gave to those who listened to his sermons only empty chaff that could never be of any value to the soul here or hereafter.

Second. "Your faith is also vain." Faith accepts as true credible testimony, human or divine, and must accept it, or there is something radically wrong in the mental or moral constitution of the man who refuses to believe. "There is but one thing without honor," says Carlyle, "smitten with eternal barrenness, inability to do or to be: and that is unbelief. He who believes no thing, who believes only the shows of things, is not in relation with nature and fact at all." Another and far nobler old Scotchman, Dr. Andrew Bonar, was approached at the close of an evening service by a skeptic who said, "I do not believe there is a God." Seeing the venerable minister smile, he asked with some feeling,

“Are you laughing at me?” “No,” was the reply, “but I was thinking that if all the grasshoppers on earth were to say there is no sun, it would not alter the matter.” The man afterwards confessed that he was a fool; and so ought any one who refuses to believe Jesus Christ, and those by whom he was seen after his resurrection. Certainly the faith of a person who professes to be a Christian, and gives up the resurrection, is empty, fruitless, fallacious, false.

Third. “Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God; because we have testified of God that he raised up Christ.” We pretend to be witnesses whom God hath sent forth to herald the resurrection of his Son, and we are discovered on examination to be false witnesses of God, against God, before God, in the presence of God, utterly unmindful of the One who “looketh on the heart.” *1 Sam.* xvi. 7. It adds immensely to the hideous character of the falsehood, that the apostle was found a false witness of God, because he rudely and recklessly defied the wrath of the Almighty, and was guilty of that fearful blasphemy, which “hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation,” or, as the Revised Version renders it, “is guilty of an eternal sin.” *Mark* iii. 29. Tremendous indeed is the danger of denying the resurrection of Christ.

Fourth. “If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain.” Here the word translated “vain” is entirely different from the one which is so rendered when the apostle says, “Then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain.” In the latter verse the term he uses means “ineffective, bootless, groundless, deceptive, useless, unprofitable, erroneous *in principle*, corrupt, perverted;” and in the

form of a noun it is translated "superstition." The words "faith" and "believe" occur more than five hundred times in the New Testament, for they are interwoven in the entire texture of Christian experience, in the commencement and continuance of Christian doctrine and hope and life. If Christ be not raised, all is gone; and faith is ineffective, groundless, useless, unprofitable, erroneous, and a silly superstition.

Fifth. "Ye are yet in your sins." It is not more true that "Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures," than it is "that he was buried," and "that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." Upon the fact, therefore, of his resurrection depends all that we are told elsewhere—that "he gave himself for our sins" (*Gal. i. 4*); that "upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high" (*Heb. i. 3*); that "now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (*Heb. ix. 26*); "who his own self bear our sins in his own body on the tree" (*1 Pet. ii. 24*); that "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God" (*1 Pet. iii. 18*); that "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." *1 John i. 7*. If Christ be not raised, there was no atonement, no sacrifice, no reconciliation, no redemption, no way of escape from the curse and power and penalty of sin; "ye are yet in your sins."

Sixth. "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." If Christ be not raised, he has effected no deliverance, and then extinction of being, or a fearful punishment, will be the common doom of all.

The prophets; the apostles; the martyrs who were faithful unto death; the truly good and great whose lives were filled with praiseworthy deeds; the fathers and mothers leaving the precious legacy of a pious example and believing prayer and unflinching faith that gave them comfort and courage in many a sore conflict; the children whose departure has brought with it evermore a dreadful shadow upon heart and home; the precious babes whose last breath made the stoutest soul shake and shudder as if smitten by a storm—all are perished. Human life is a sad and startling dream, with no God to order it, with no Christ to care for us, with no shelter from sorrow, but instead, a dark and blind chance, or the iron mechanism of hard and unreasoning laws; and it is useless to sing at the graves of our dead,

“One sweet voice ennobles death,
And still for eighteen centuries saith
Softly—‘Ye meet again.’”

Seventh. “If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.” Well might the apostle state such a conclusion in view of his incredible hardships, innumerable labors, and incessant sufferings; for if nothing lies beyond, the hazardous and toilsome experience he encountered in the present world could only close in frightful and irreparable disappointment. But in a measure it is true of all Christians. They have been exercised to deny self, to forego temporary pleasure, to lay the check of discipline upon the gratification of natural appetites, to be deprived of passing enjoyments that would interfere with the attainment of nobler aims; and if it all comes to nothing, if Christ be not raised, if

he is still dead, our faith is a deception and our hope a delusion. If he is miserable who has never had hope, he is far more miserable who has lost hope, finding his griefs and struggles, his heartaches and scalding tears, his achievements and attempts, his endurance and pain, end in deep despair.

Either admit that Christ rose from the dead, or confess that under the rule of a righteous God the best of men are often the most wretched, and the truest of men perish unrecompensed; that the gospel is a falsehood, although beyond dispute it is the purest system of faith and morals the world has ever seen; and that the reward of the Saviour's wonderful life and death is annihilation even to the most faithful. No wonder the apostle breaks forth into the exultant exclamation, at the close of his argument, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." *1 Cor. xv. 1-20.* The firstfruits are part of the harvest; the beginning of the harvest, the pledge of the harvest; and the resurrection of Christ is the earnest of the resurrection of believers. Well, therefore, may we bid farewell to our loved and lost "in the sure and certain hope" of meeting them again in the Morning that has no cloud and no evening, for they are not dead, but sleeping.

"Of all the thoughts of God that are
Borne inward unto souls afar
Along the psalmist's music deep,
Now tell me if there any is,
For gift or grace surpassing this—
'He giveth his beloved sleep.'"

CHAPTER XII.

TESTIMONY OF THE EPISTLES.

THE resurrection of our Lord is associated with every doctrine and duty enjoined in the teachings of the inspired apostles. It is no isolated fact; it is the central truth of divine revelation: the key that unlocks the meaning of Scripture; and the answer to the craving of the human heart. Hence the attempt to get rid of this great and real event in history is madness. A few years ago a book by Count Tolstoi was read, setting forth his views of New Testament teachings. It consisted mainly of wild and rickety exegesis; and when it was discovered that he regards the resurrection of our Lord as narrated merely to show that the principle he established shall be perpetuated after his death, the writer was at once dismissed from attention. He may be an entertaining novelist, but he is woefully lacking in common sense and sound judgment.

It is amazing beyond expression that men professing to be Christians should deny the reality of the Saviour's resurrection, on the ground that it is miraculous and supernatural, when its account is contained in a book, every page of which is filled with the miraculous and supernatural. Take away these elements, and it is obvious at a glance that the Bible is no longer the Bible.

The word for resurrection, *anastasis*, in itself implies

that it is no symbolical or spiritual transition that is meant. It is a word which occurs forty-two times in the New Testament, and in every instance it sets forth a literal resurrection. Three times it is rendered "rising again" (*Luke* ii. 34); "the first *that should rise*" (*Acts* xxvi. 23); "dead *raised to life again.*" *Heb.* xi. 35. Parkhurst defines it as "*a standing on the feet again, or rising, as opposed to falling.*" It is therefore a very significant word. A man has fallen down in death. He stands on his feet again, and this rising is *anastasis*. There is a compound word, *exanastasis*, which is found but once, where the apostle writes, "If by any means I might attain unto the [out] resurrection, [the one] from among the dead." *Phil.* iii. 11. There is another word, *egeiro*, always used in the form of a verb, except once, which occurs eighty times in connection with the resurrection of the dead, and indicates the power *by* which, or the state *from* which, the dead are raised up. These are the words which tell us that Jesus Christ was thrown down in death, and then stood upon his feet by the power of God. Let us glance at the manifold bearings of this stupendous occurrence in its relation to Christian experience and hope.

1. The resurrection of our Lord demonstrates his divinity as the Son of God. The gospel of God, which he promised before through his prophets, we are told, is "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which 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.* i. 1-4.

2. Belief in the resurrection is absolutely essential to

salvation. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." *Rom.* x. 9. The way, therefore, by which sinners are to be saved is so definite and distinctly marked out that "the wayfaring men, though fools," need "not err therein." *Isa.* xxxv. 8.

3. The resurrection is immediately connected with our justification. The righteousness Abraham had by faith, imputed or reckoned to him, was recorded in the Scripture, and "it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." *Rom.* iv. 23-25. It is impossible to overstate the value of the precious truth, that the believer is justified in a risen Christ, for Christ's resurrection is a visible proof that his atoning sacrifice upon the cross has been accepted at the bar of God in behalf of all who trust in his cleansing blood.

4. The resurrection fully displayed the glory of God, for it called forth the adoration of his power and perfections, "that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." *Rom.* vi. 4. There could have been no walk in newness of life but for his resurrection, and hence it was caused by the outshining of God's majesty, who showed that the coming forth of his Son from the grave was essential to our sanctification.

5. The resurrection not only conforms us to Christ in a holy life, but points to a life of blessed immortality for

soul and body hereafter. "If we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." *Rom.* vi. 5. If we have been planted, or "united in growth," in the baptism that is the symbol of his death, we shall also share in the victory and splendor of his resurrection. He was fallen down in death and buried, but stood on his feet again in everlasting life imparted to all united to him.

6. The resurrection thus links us to One who is above the reach of death. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him." *Rom.* vi. 9. Nor has it any dominion, so far as it is the curse and consequence of sin, over his people; because his resurrection has so changed their relation to "the king of terrors" (*Job* xviii. 14), that it can be said to them with assured confidence, "Death is yours." *1 Cor.* iii. 22.

7. The resurrection is the source of all fruit-bearing in the Christian life. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." *Rom.* vii. 4. It is not by struggling nor weeping nor vowing, but by entering through faith into the knowledge of Christ's risen life, and by walking in fellowship with him, "that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." *Eph.* iii. 20.

8. The resurrection is a witness that the body is redeemed and shall come forth from the grave in the energy of our risen Lord. "If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies

by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." *Rom.* viii. 11. Both the human-divine and the divine-human titles are given him to show how sure is the hope, through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, of our mortal bodies rising from the tomb, as he did, in unending glory.

9. The resurrection proves that Christ has already come up from the dead, and never needs to come up again. "Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead)." *Rom.* x. 7. He has once descended into the awful abyss of death, and having once paid the dreadful penalty of sin, he is now lifted forever beyond the reach of the dark billows, and associates with himself in the heavenly places all who are "risen with Christ." *Col.* iii. 1.

10. The resurrection becomes a sign and seal of the believer's security. "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." *Rom.* viii. 33, 34. His death, wonderful as it was, would have been wholly unavailing, if it had not been said, "Yea rather, that is risen again," for this was essential to his ascension even at the right hand of God, and to his ever prevalent intercession in behalf of his poor people.

11. The resurrection exhibits the omnipotence of God, with whom there is nothing great and nothing small. "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power." *1 Cor.* vi. 14. Bring the living God into the scene of death, and all difficulties vanish like mists on the mountains before the rising sun, all the objections of feeble human reasoning disappear like straws in the sweep of a cyclone. The same omnipotence,

already displayed in the resurrection of Christ, is certain to be manifested in the resurrection of every believer.

12. The resurrection gives the assurance, not only of the raising up of apostles, but the raising up of common Christians, who really trust and love the Saviour, however much they deserve rebuke for their many faults and failures. "Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and shall present us with you." *2 Cor.* iv. 14. The highest will not stand any better than the lowest in the resurrection, as all are alike in their state of justification before God.

13. The resurrection is the secret of a consecrated life. "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." *2 Cor.* v. 14, 15. Many are sorely perplexed to know how they may attain to holiness, for which they long; and the answer is, live every day, every hour, every moment, at home as abroad, in little things as great, for him who died for them, and rose again.

14. The resurrection is the pledge that Christ's life is our own, and that it can be said to the believer, thy soul "shall be bound in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God." *1 Sam.* xxv. 29. "Though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak with him, but we shall live with him by the power of God." *2 Cor.* xiii. 4. The same person who died, now lives; and if the strongest of us are made weak in death, the weakest of us shall be made strong by the power of God.

15. The resurrection places Christ at the right hand of God, the sufficient source and spring of all grace and all supplies for his chosen and of all bestowments for their need. "Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead)." *Gal.* i. 1. Because he is the risen Lord, he is uniformly invoked as the object of worship in the Epistles, while grace and peace proceed from his divine authority in no less manner and measure than from the Father.

16. The resurrection reveals God, "and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." *Eph.* i. 19-21. The most helpless being in the universe was the crucified Jesus, when he was laid in the rocky sepulchre: the most powerful being in the universe, resistless as God in his sway, is the risen Christ.

17. The resurrection exhibits the exaltation of our Lord, as the result and reward of his sufferings. "He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. *Phil.* ii. 8-11.

18. The resurrection is the stimulus to heavenly-mindedness. "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things or the earth." *Col.* iii. 1, 2. A sinner linked by faith to the risen Christ is one that looks down from heaven upon earth, and not one who looks from the world, to which he has been crucified, toward heaven.

19. The resurrection presents an object of believing expectation and steadfast hope amid the ten thousand attractions and enticements that tempt us to idolatrous attachment to things temporal and visible. "Ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, who delivered us from the wrath to come." *1 Thess.* i. 9, 10. The risen Christ has taken us out of the low sphere of earthly existence.

20. The resurrection gives us our only comfort when the heart is rent at the graves of our dead. "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." *1 Thess.* iv. 14-18.

21. The resurrection is an essential part of the gospel.

Hence the apostle in his last letter to his son Timothy solemnly charges him, "Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel." *2 Tim. ii. 8.*

Perhaps it is well to close with this hurried outline of Paul's testimony, although there is much that might be said of his other epistles, and of the inspired writings given by other apostles. Take away the resurrection, the bodily resurrection, the literal resurrection, of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you leave nothing of Christianity itself but a delusion and a dream. It is not strange, therefore, that the apostle concludes his great argument in his epistle to the Hebrews with the lofty benediction: "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen." *Heb. xiii. 20, 21.*

"All hail, triumphant Lord!
The resurrection, thou!
All hail, incarnate Word!
Before thy throne we bow:
Captivity is captive led,
For Jesus liveth, who was dead."

CHAPTER XIII.

TESTIMONY OF THE APOSTLE PAUL.

THE testimony, just gathered, from the epistles of Paul, shows how prominent is the resurrection of our Lord in his teachings, and how fundamental it is to the entire system of revealed truth. But the value of the evidence depends largely, of course, upon the character of the witness; and hence it is necessary to glance at the story of his conversion, and at his subsequent life as confirming the truth of the story.

Bishop Westcott, a thoroughly competent critic, writes as follows :

“ The letters of St. Paul are amongst the earliest, if not actually the earliest, writings in the New Testament. Of these one important group has been recognized as certainly genuine, even by the most skeptical critics. No one doubts that the Epistles to the Corinthians, Galatians and Romans were composed by St. Paul, and addressed to the churches whose names they bear. Nor is there much uncertainty as to the date at which they were written. The most extreme opinions fix them between A. D. 52-59, that is under no circumstances more than thirty years after the Lord's death (A. D. 30-33). . . . In each of the Epistles the literal fact of the resurrection is the implied or acknowledged groundwork of the apostle's teaching.”

In these confessedly genuine epistles the apostle says, “ Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord ? ” 1 *Cor.*

ix. 1. Again, "I have received of the Lord," that is, he did not receive it of Peter or John or James, or any of the other apostles, but, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread." 1 *Cor.* xi. 23. Again, "Last of all he was seen of me also." 1 *Cor.* xv. 8. Again, "Paul, an apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead." *Gal.* i. 1. Again, the gospel of God is declared to be "concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which 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.* i. 3, 4.

In a book by the Rev. G. S. Bowes, B. A., "Late Scholar of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge," the following incident is related, by Lyttleton who is described in the *Encyclopædia Britannica* as "a statesman and man of letters," and "one of the ablest Whig debaters of the House of Commons:"

"Mr. Gilbert West and Lord Lyttleton, both men of acknowledged talents, had imbibed the principles of infidelity from a superficial view of the Scriptures. Fully persuaded that the Bible was an imposture, they were determined to expose the cheat. Mr. West chose the resurrection of Christ, and Lord Lyttleton the conversion of St. Paul, for the subject of hostile criticism. Both sat down to their respective tasks, full of prejudice and a contempt for Christianity. The result of their separate attempts was truly extraordinary. They were both converted by the endeavors to overthrow the truth of Christianity. They came together, not, as they expected, to exult over an imposture exposed to ridicule, but to lament their own folly, and to congratulate each other on the joint conviction that the Bible was the word of God."

Of Lord Lyttleton's argument on the conversion of St. Paul, so distinguished a literary man as Dr. Johnson has declared, according to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, that it is one "to which infidelity has never been able to fabricate a specious answer." It is to be regretted that this magnificent argument cannot be presented at length, but as lack of space compels a brief condensation, perhaps enough may be given to convince any fair-minded person that the reasoning of the statesman is unanswerable and his position unassailable. He first narrates the circumstances attending the sudden change in the life of Paul, and then states his leading proposition.

"Now it must of necessity be, that the person attesting these things of himself, and of whom they are related in so authentic a manner, either was an impostor who said what he knew to be false with an intent to deceive; or he was an enthusiast, who, by the force of an over-heated imagination, imposed on himself; or he was deceived by the fraud of others, and all that he said must be imputed to the power of that deceit; or what he declared to have been the cause of his conversion, and to have happened in consequence of it, did all really happen; and therefore the Christian religion is a divine revelation."

On the supposition that Paul was an impostor, Lord Lyttleton continues, he must have been influenced by the hope of advancing himself in temporal interest, credit and power, or by the gratification of his passions in the new field upon which he so unexpectedly entered. It is impossible to imagine that he was controlled by a desire for wealth.

The certain consequence of confessing Christ was the loss of all he had, and all hope of acquiring more. Years afterwards he said to the Ephesian elders, "I

have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me." *Acts* xx. 33, 34. In one of his epistles, admitted to be genuine, he writes, "Even unto this present hour we both hunger and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwellingplace; and labor, working with our own hands" (*1 Cor.* iv. 11, 12); "having nothing." *2 Cor.* vi. 10.

As to credit or reputation, that too lay wholly on the side of those he forsook. The sect he embraced was under the greatest and most universal contempt of all then in the world. The chiefs and leaders of it were men of the lowest birth, education and rank. They had no one advantage of parts and learning, or other human endowments, to recommend them. . . . The very Author and Head of their faith had been condemned as a criminal, and died on the cross between two thieves. Hence he writes in one of his epistles, conceded by infidels to be genuine, "Being reviled, we bless: being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we intreat: we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day." *1 Cor.* iv. 12, 13.

Certainly, then, the desire of glory, the ambition of making to himself a great name, was not his motive to embrace Christianity. Was it then the love of power? Power over whom? Over a flock of sheep driven to the slaughter, whose Shepherd himself had been murdered a little before? All he could hope for from that power was to be marked out in a particular manner, for the same knife which he had seen so bloodily drawn against them. In indisputably genuine epistles he applies to himself,

as the result of his own experience, an Old Testament Scripture, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter." *Rom.* viii. 36. "Why stand we in jeopardy every hour? I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily. If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" *1 Cor.* xv. 30-32. "Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus. . . . For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake." *2 Cor.* iv. 10, 11.

But still, it may be said, there are some natures so fond of power, that they will court it at any risk, and be pleased with it even over the meanest. Let us see, then, what power St. Paul assumed over the Christians. Did he pretend to any superiority over the other apostles? Nay, he writes, "I am the least of the apostles" (*1 Cor.* xv. 9); and when compelled to compare himself with them, it is rather his superior sufferings he mentions: "Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labors more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness." *2 Cor.* xi. 23-27. So writes the man who speaks

of himself as "less than the least of all saints." *Eph.* iii. 8.

Now, that there have been some impostors, who have pretended to revelations from God, merely to give a loose rein to irregular passions, and set themselves free from all restraints of government, law or morality, both ancient and modern history shows. But the doctrine preached by St. Paul is absolutely contrary to all such designs. His writings breathe nothing but the strictest morality, obedience to magistrates, order, and government, with the utmost abhorrence of all licentiousness, idleness or loose behavior under the cloak of religion. . . . St. Paul innovated nothing in government of civil affairs, he meddled not with legislation, he formed no commonwealths, he raised no seditions, he affected no temporal power. On the other hand, he writes to the Corinthians, "Why do ye not rather take wrong? why do ye not rather suffer yourselves to be defrauded? . . . Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God." *1 Cor.* vi. 7-10. "We have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man." *2 Cor.* vii. 2.

If, then, it appears that St. Paul had nothing to gain by taking this part, let us consider, on the other hand, what he gave up, and what he had to fear. He gave up a fortune which he was in a fair way of advancing. He gave up that reputation, which he had acquired by the labors and studies of his whole life, and by a behavior

which had been blameless, touching the righteousness which is in the law. He gave up his friends, his relations, and family, from whom he estranged and banished himself for life. He gave up that religion, which he had profited in above many of his equals in his own nation, and those traditions of his fathers, of which he had been more exceedingly zealous. . . . Let us see now what inconveniences he had to fear: The implacable vengeance of those he deserted; that sort of contempt which is hardest to bear, the contempt of those whose good opinion he had most eagerly sought; and all those other complicated evils, the least of which were enough to have frightened any impostor, even from the most hopeful and profitable cheat. But where the advantage proposed bears no proportion to the dangers incurred, or to the mischiefs endured, he must be absolutely out of his senses, who will either engage in an imposture, or being engaged, persevere. All that the apostle gained by the imposture, if imposture it was, is expressed in the mournful confession, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable" 1 *Cor.* xv. 19.

Lord Lyttleton then supposes that Paul entered into a confederacy or conspiracy, with the other apostles, as Peter and James and John, to impose this stupendous fraud upon the world. But how could he gain these men to become his confederates? Was it by furiously persecuting them and their brethren, as we find that he did to the very moment of his conversion? He was "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord," at the time he entered upon his eventful journey to Damascus. He himself confesses

that "when they were put to death, I gave my voice against them. And I punished them oft in every synagogue, and compelled them to blaspheme; and being exceedingly mad against them, I persecuted them even unto strange cities." *Acts* xxvi. 10, 11. It is worse than absurd to imagine that such a man would aid the apostles in their deception and deceit, or fall a victim to their delusions and designs. They could not be forced by his savage persecutions to own that they were impostors, and did they form a plot with the chief persecutor to put themselves in his power? He tells us that after his conversion he did not go to Jerusalem to see the apostles, for three years; and that "when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed." *Gal.* i. 18; ii. 11.

But if the apostles were not in league with Paul, might not Ananias have been, who came to him in Damascus, while stricken with blindness and struggling in darkness of soul? This Ananias is mentioned nowhere else, and we are only told that he was "a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there." *Acts* xxii. 12. These two men were entirely unacquainted with each other, and it is inconceivable that a total stranger became the confidant and accomplice of an impostor in carrying on a wicked fraud. The accomplice gained nothing whatever, and it is necessary to assume that, without consulting other Christians, he risked the danger of detection and punishment, with no hope or desire or remotest prospect of private advantage. Paul never saw him again, nor does he show the slightest sign of an effort to ingratiate himself with one who held his life and reputation in his hands, nor with the apostles whose

silence it was important for him to purchase, if they were alike impostors. It is far more sensible to conclude that he told the truth when he wrote : " Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have behaved ourselves in the world ; " and, " Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not ; but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully ; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." 2 *Cor.* i. 12 ; iv. 1, 2.

It may be alleged, as it has been seriously argued by infidelity, that Paul saw a bright meteor which in his ignorance of scientific truth, he mistook for a vision. But how could a meteor speak to him, and distinctly say, " I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." How could a meteor direct him to " arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do " ? How could a meteor lead Ananias to declare, " The Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost " ? Paul himself tells us, " I could not see for the glory of that light ; " but how could Ananias relieve him from the blinding effects of a meteor, and announce, " The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth " ? Of all the shallow theories that have been urged to account for the apostle's conversion, the meteor theory is the most stupid. It was impossible for him to be deluded by a natural phe-

nomenon, or by a phantom of his own creation, for years afterwards he boldly proclaimed in the presence of king Agrippa, and a Roman governor, and a crowd of distinguished and intelligent men, "This thing was not done in a corner." It was not done in some obscure part of the earth, nor at night, nor in the presence of Christians; it was done on a crowded thoroughfare, near one of the most famous cities of antiquity; it was done at mid-day; it was in the midst of policemen or soldiers, selected for their courage and zeal, to bring prisoners bound to Jerusalem; it was done in the very instant of his being engaged in the fiercest and hottest persecution against the disciples of the Lord, no circumstance having occurred to change his opinions or alter the bent of his disposition. No, "this thing was not done in a corner;" and there were witnesses who could deny his evidence and impeach his testimony if it had been possible to disprove his word. Why did not some man appear to contradict him? Why did king Agrippa, who knew all that could be said against him, respond, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian"?

There is but one other conjecture admissible on the part of unbelief. Sceptics may insist that Paul was an enthusiast; and our author truly says: "These are the ingredients of which *enthusiasm* is generally composed; great heat of temper, melancholy, ignorance, credulity, and vanity or self-conceit."

That Paul was an earnest man is apparent on the surface of his writings, but that he kept himself in admirable control is equally apparent in his thoughtful speech to the men of Athens, "I perceive," as the Revised Version renders in the margin, "that ye are somewhat religious"

(*Acts* xvii. 22); or as the archbishop of Athens well translates it, "that ye are specially given to religions." His self-control is seen in his claim of Roman citizenship to prevent the centurion from scourging him (*Acts* xxii. 25); in his quick perception that the Jewish council which tried him was composed of Pharisees and Sadducees, and in his crying out, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question" (*Acts* xxiii. 6); in the information he conveyed to the chief captain of the purpose and plot of the Jews to assassinate him (*Acts* xxiii. 18); in his appeal from the Roman governor to the tribunal of Cæsar for trial (*Acts* xxv. 11); in his courteous reply to Festus, "I am not mad, most noble Festus" (*Acts* xxvi. 25); in his instructions concerning fast days and feast days, different kinds of meat, the relative duties of husband and wife, parent and child, master and servant, ruler and subject; and on almost every page of his epistles.

As to his melancholy, let the words he addresses to his brethren, in the epistles admitted to be genuine by the infidels, be a sufficient answer, "Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer" (*Rom.* xii. 12); "Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost" (*Rom.* xv. 13); "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (*1 Cor.* xv. 57); "and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation" (*2 Cor.* i. 3, 4); "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (*2 Cor.* ix. 15); "Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in

infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 *Cor.* xii. 9, 10. He was not a melancholy man, who could speak of himself as "sorrowful, yet always rejoicing" (2 *Cor.* vi. 10); not as rejoicing, yet always sorrowful, but sorrowful, yet always rejoicing.

So far from being ignorant, the apostle was brought up, as he tells us, "at the feet of Gamaliel" (*Acts* xxii. 3), who was called "the glory of the law," and he was a master both of Jewish and Greek learning. He knew that "excellency of speech or of wisdom" was of no value in the things of God; but apart from his inspiration and the "demonstration of the Spirit and of power," he was able to cope with the strongest intellects of his time. The churches he planted were in the most enlightened portions of the world, among the Greeks of Asia and Europe, among the Romans, in the midst of science and philosophy, metaphysical speculations and logical subtleties, dogmatic opinions and curious inquiries into the secrets of nature, while a settled skepticism prevailed about all religions. "Now in this enterprise St. Paul was to contend, 1st, with the policy and power of the magistrates; 2dly, with the interest, credit and craft of the priests; 3dly, with the prejudices and passions of the people; 4thly, with the wisdom and pride of the philosophers." Yet this humble man held his way triumphantly against the mighty influence of Plato and Aristotle, Epicurus and Zeno, carrying the proclamation of the resurrection everywhere; and the infidel is challenged to produce one verse or one line he ever wrote, that is in conflict with modern knowledge of astronomy, geography,

geology, or any ascertained facts in the most recent scientific discoveries.

Nor was credulity an element of his natural constitution. He was quite familiar with the whole history of the Lord Jesus Christ. He knew that he had wrought innumerable miracles, according to unimpeachable testimony; that the officers sent to arrest the meek and lowly Nazarene had said to the Jewish Sanhedrim, "Never man spake like this man" (*John* vii. 46); that Christ claimed to be the Son of God (*John* x. 36); that he cried upon the cross, "It is finished" (*John* xix. 30); that he was proclaimed, a few days after his crucifixion, to be risen from the dead (*Acts* ii. 32); that the Jewish rulers did not pretend to exhibit the dead body, nor even to send a delegation of respectable citizens to examine the tomb, but only sought to silence the witnesses; yet Saul or Paul remained unconvinced. On the contrary, he took a prominent part in the murder of the first martyr, and "made havoc of the church" up to the very day of his memorable journey to Damascus. As he said to king Agrippa, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." *Acts* xxvi. 9.

He was as far removed from vanity or self-conceit as from credulity. There is not a word that savors in the least of either, but he confesses, "We are fools for Christ's sake"; and it was his boast to say, "By the grace of God I am what I am." *1 Cor.* iv. 10; xv. 10. Self was dethroned and was dead, for he announces, "I am [Revised Version, have been] crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the

Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." *Gal.* ii. 20. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. . . . From henceforth let no man trouble me : for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus" (*Gal.* vi. 14, 17), the brands, the scars, the stigma, the proofs of his supreme ownership. In one of his last letters he speaks of himself before his conversion, as "a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious : but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. . . . This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; of whom I am chief." *1 Tim.* i. 13, 15. He expresses the fear "lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure." *2 Cor.* xii. 6, 7.

Never did he exhibit the power of imagination common to enthusiastical minds. "I had rather speak five words with my understanding," he tells us, "that by my voice I might teach others also, than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue." *1 Cor.* xiv. 19. He refers to a remarkable vision he had more than fourteen years before he wrote, and refers to it in three brief sentences, while he speaks of himself in the third person, and is content with the statement that he "heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." *2 Cor.* xii. 2-4. Now, had it been the effect of a mere enthusiastical fancy, can it be supposed that, in so long a period of time, he would

not have had many more raptures of the same kind? Would not his imagination have been perpetually carrying him to heaven? His estimate of these extraordinary gifts and graces can be inferred from his own language: "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity [love], I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity [love], I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity [love], it profiteth me nothing." 1 *Cor.* xiii. 1-3. This is not the language of an enthusiast.

Paley in *Horæ Paulinæ* truthfully remarks: "St. Paul's letters furnish evidence—and what better evidence than a man's own letters can be desired?—of the soundness and sobriety of his judgment; and his morality is everywhere calm, pure, and rational; adapted to the condition, the activity, and the business of social life, and of its various relations; free from the over-scrupulousness and austerities of superstition, and from what was more perhaps to be apprehended, the abstractions of quietism, and the soarings and extravagances of fanaticism."

The rationalist Keim, speaking of the facts which Paul must have possessed, from his pre-eminently logical mental character, says: "This knowledge of the apostle is not the fruit of a blind acceptance of unexamined Christian tradition, picked up here and there, but, as the case of his inquiry into the evidences of the resurrection shows, was arrived at by means of a lucid, keen, searching, skeptical

observation, comparison, collection, and collation of such materials as were accessible to him."

Renan says of these same epistles, "they possess absolute authenticity, thorough sincerity and freedom from legendary corruption." The German infidel, Strauss, after calling the resurrection of Christ, as formerly stated, "the centre of the centre, the real heart of Christianity as it has been until now," adds, "does not Paul say, 'If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain'? This apostolic saying can not be explained away." Here, then, we have a witness who comes up to the standard set by Arnold of Rugby, a man "who loves the truth with all his heart and can not endure error"—a man of whom "we may be satisfied that he had good sources of information at hand, or else he would not have written at all."

It is not surprising, therefore, that Lord Lyttleton, having honestly examined the testimony, character and life of Paul, surrendered, as he did, to the recognized divinity, resurrection and ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ. So the apostle, of whom he writes so powerfully, held on his way to the end, declaring to king Agrippa, "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." *Acts* xxvi. 22, 23. At last he was led by a guard of soldiers from his lonely dungeon in Rome to the place of execution, and as he moves forward, without a single earthly friend upon whom he could lean, the old man raises the victor's shout: "I am now ready to be offered,

and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith : henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day : and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." 2 *Tim.* iv. 6-8.

Well may Conybeare and Howson close their interesting volumes called *The Life and Epistles of St. Paul*, with the finely chosen words : "Thus died the apostle, the prophet, and the martyr ; bequeathing to the Church, in her government and discipline, the legacy of his apostolic labors ; leaving his prophetic words to be her living oracles ; pouring forth his blood to be the seed of a thousand martyrdoms. Thenceforth, among the glorious company of the apostles, among the goodly fellowship of the prophets, among the noble army of martyrs, his name has stood pre-eminent. And wheresoever the holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge God, there Paul of Tarsus is revered, as the great teacher of a universal redemption and a catholic religion—the herald of glad tidings to all mankind."

"It is not death to bear
 The wrench that sets us free
 From dungeon chains—to breathe the air
 Of boundless liberty.
 Jesus, thou Prince of Life !
 Thy chosen cannot die ;
 Like thee, they conquer in the strife,
 To reign with thee on high."

CHAPTER XIV.

TESTIMONY BEFORE CHRIST CAME.

THOSE who have read the Old Testament carefully cannot fail to see that its pervading thoughts cluster about a personal Redeemer. The writers give more than three hundred predictions concerning him, mentioning his race, his tribe, his ancestors, his birthplace, his attributes, his names, his ministry, his sufferings, his death, his resurrection, his ascension, his intercession, his second coming and universal sovereignty. From the time that sin entered into the Garden of Eden until the last of the prophets up to the appearing of the Messiah, their commanding theme, in one form or another, is the character and career of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is both divine and human, bearing titles which could be worn by no creature, however exalted in rank, and yet burdened by unsurpassed sorrows, despised and rejected of men, bruised and wounded, and crying out in the depths of his abandoned anguish, like some weary warrior in desperate and despairing conflict. But through it all he comes forth victorious; and "his name shall endure forever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." *Ps.* lxxii. 17. His authority will be so undisputed, that even his enemies will be restrained from an outward exhibition of their hostility:

“Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee” (*Ps. lxvi. 3*); or, as it is in the margin, “yield feigned obedience.” It is of him it is said in the sure word of prophecy, “He shall speak peace unto the heathen: and his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth.” *Zech. ix. 10.*

Strange to say, his triumph comes through brief defeat, his perpetual reign through transient death, his glorious resurrection through the dark tomb. / In the first promise concerning him the Lord God spoke of the contest between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman: “It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.” *Gen. iii. 15.* From that time onward, the shedding of blood becomes the prominent doctrine of the Old Testament, as the only means of making atonement for the inherent and inveterate sinfulness of men. It is seen in the blood which Abel offered as a sacrifice to the Lord, while the opposition of the human heart to the humbling truth is shown in the fury of Cain, who killed his brother. *Gen. iv. 4-8.* It is seen in the sacrifice of every clean beast and every clean fowl, when Noah worshiped, and the Lord was satisfied. *Gen. viii. 21.* It is seen in the redemption of Israel from Egyptian bondage, through the blood of a spotless lamb. *Ex. xii. 13.* It is seen in all acceptable approach to God by divine enactment, in the burnt offerings, the peace offerings, the sin offerings, the trespass offerings, which were of blood. *Lev. i.-vii. /*

Sometimes two victims were selected, as when the blood of the slain goat was sprinkled upon the mercy seat and seven times before the mercy seat, and a live goat bore away the forgiven sins of Israel to a land of separation.

Lev. xvi. So two birds, or sparrows, were chosen for the outward sign of the cleansing which the sin-cursed leper had experienced through the mercy of God, one of the birds being killed in an earthen vessel over running water, and the living bird, being dipped in the blood of the slain bird, was let go, to fly with his blood-stained wings toward heaven. *Lev.* xiv. The crowning fact of all these typical ceremonies is the great truth: "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul" (*Lev.* xvii. 11); and it is the blood that is carried by the risen and living Sacrifice into the presence of God. *Heb.* ix. 22-26.

But there is a good deal more than figures and shadows concerning the resurrection of our Lord. It is plainly and distinctly taught. For example: "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee." *Psa.* ii. 7. Surely the apostle Paul, who spoke in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth, is competent to tell us the meaning of this Old Testament Scripture. "We declare unto you glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." *Acts* xiii. 32, 33. We have the authority therefore of an inspired apostle for saying that this was not written of the birth of our Lord at Bethlehem, but of his resurrection from among the dead.

Thus again it is written: "Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption." *Psa.* xvi. 9, 10. Here too, the apostle Peter, inspired by the Holy

Ghost on the day of Pentecost, is the best expositor of the passage. "Men, brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne; he seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell, neither did his flesh see corruption. This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses." *Acts* ii. 29-32. There can be no doubt, then, that the resurrection of our Lord's body was definitely taught in the Old Testament.

/In another place it is said, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

But the prophecy does not close with the contempt and rejection of men, nor with the substitutionary sufferings of the sin-bearing Christ, upon whom all of our iniquities were made to meet. It goes on to say: "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the

pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge [the knowledge of himself], shall my righteous servant justify many [bring righteousness unto many]; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." *Isa. liii.* Death, then, is not all; but resurrection, and intercession, and overcoming the strong, and unending triumph, follow the suffering. ✓

It is just what the apostle Peter teaches: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." 10 *Pet. i. 1, 11.* It is just what the apostle Paul teaches: "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." 1 *Cor. xv. 3, 4.* Here too God tells us, "For the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death," or rather, as it is in the margin, "in his deaths." He was buried, therefore, but rose in victory from the tomb, and liveth forever to intercede for his friends, and to subjugate his foes.

It is true that some expositors maintain that there is no allusion to the Lord Jesus Christ in this wonderful chapter. But the Church for eighteen hundred years has

gazed with gratitude and joy upon the striking picture of the Redeemer, drawn in *Isa. liii.*, and the chapter is directly declared to be fulfilled by the Saviour, in *Matt. viii. 17*; *Mark xv. 28*; *Luke xxii. 37*; *John xii. 38*; *Acts viii. 28-35*; *Rom. x. 16*; *1 Pet. ii. 24, 25*.

There are many other places in the Old Testament, which clearly imply his resurrection. Thus the Lord said unto Moses, "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him." *Deut. xviii. 18*. Peter, quoting these words and commenting on them, declares they were fulfilled in Christ, and adds, "Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you." *Acts iii. 22-26*.

The psalmist exclaims, "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." *Ps. cx. 1*. Our Lord applies this language directly to himself, and as he then was a living man, walking among men, he could only sit at the right hand of Jehovah by resurrection, *anastasis*, falling down in death, and standing on his feet again. *Matt. xxii. 44*. When all nations are gathered against Jerusalem to battle, "Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east; . . . and the Lord my God shall come, and all the saints with thee." *Zech. xiv. 2-5*. If the battle, Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives are literal, so are the feet; and this implies on his part a literal resurrection.

In like manner, all those Messianic psalms, at least

fifty in number, of which the New Testament writers make such constant use, asserting that these passages bear immediately upon the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, could have no significance unless they set forth his real and physical resurrection. They portray the bitterness of his suffering, and also his subsequent exaltation and glory. They assure us that there is something more than the perpetuation of his principles, for the man Christ Jesus fell down in death, and lives again by the power of God. The same is true of the two hundred and forty-five passages which speak of his second coming in majesty. "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men [or, as it is in the margin "in the man"]; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." *Ps.* lxxviii. 18. In his offices as Prophet, Priest and King, and in all his mighty redemption wrought out in behalf of his people, it was plainly promised, hundreds of years before he was born in Bethlehem, that he should rise from the dead.

" All his work and warfare done,
He through heaven now is gone,
And, beside his Father's throne,
Still is pleading for his own :
Hallelujah !

" Asking gifts for sinful men,
That he may come down again,
And, the fallen to restore,
In them dwell for evermore :
Hallelujah ! "

CHAPTER XV.

TESTIMONY OF SCIENCE AND NATURE.

MANY books have been written, and written by scientific men, on "The Harmony of the Bible with Science." Most of our colleges and universities have professorships endowed for the purpose of showing this harmony. A few years ago a manifesto was issued and signed by 617 of the ablest scientists of Great Britain, many of whom require four or five lines in small letters, and in abbreviated form, to print the honorary titles conferred upon them for their scientific attainments. This manifesto is now deposited in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, England. It begins as follows :

" We, the undersigned students of the natural sciences, desire to express our sincere regret that researches into scientific truth are perverted by some in our own times into occasions for casting doubt upon the truth and authenticity of the Holy Scriptures.

" We conceive that it is impossible for the word of God as written in the book of Nature, and God's word written in the Holy Scriptures, to contradict one another, however much they may appear to differ.

" We are not forgetful that physical science is not complete, but is only in a condition of progress, and that at present our finite reason enables us to see as through a glass darkly, and we confidently believe that a time will come when the two records will be seen to agree in every particular."

Such scientists as Sir Isaac Newton, Leibnitz, Sir

John Herschell, Faraday, Sir David Brewster, Sir John Maxwell, Sir Edwin Pearson, Sir John Richardson, Sir J. William Dawson, Maj. Gen. R. I. Nelson, Col. W. H. Sykes, the Duke of Argyle, Professor Dana, Professor Hitchcock, Professor Mitchell, Professor Maury, Professor Sedgewick, and hundreds of others, just as able, honest, learned, and sound in judgment as any of the skeptics, have never had any difficulty in believing in the resurrection of Christ, on scientific grounds. Virchow, the prince of scientists, was once a guest of Prof. Simpson of the University of Edinburgh, who is eminent, not only for his scientific knowledge, but as a Christian. The latter at family worship was reading the 15th chapter of First Corinthians, and, pausing for a moment, he said to Virchow, "Can science bring any objection to the doctrine of the resurrection?" The great German authority instantly and earnestly replied, "None whatever."

The principal argument urged against the resurrection proceeds upon a misapprehension of the teachings of the Scripture. It is nowhere affirmed, as commonly alleged, that every particle of matter which has ever entered into the body must be gathered and raised up. Hence it is sheer ignorance to talk of scattered bones; burnt ashes; carcasses eaten piecemeal by worms, or swallowed whole by ravenous beasts and monsters of the deep; dead human flesh disappearing in gases, or decomposed into the food upon which others are sustained, or taken up into animal or vegetable life. The apostle rebuked one who denied the resurrection in his day: "Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die" (1 *Cor.* xv. 36); and Dr. Candlish guards us against the "miserable driveling of modern infidelity, compared with

which the inquiries of these old speculators,—fools, as the apostle justly called them,—were yet at all events respectable. It was not with them a question of particles and atoms.”

Science tells us that we lose something like a seventh part of the matter of our bodies, and acquire a seventh of new matter, every year, or that the matter and particles of our bodies undergo an entire change every seven years. The body of the embryo is not that of the infant, nor the body of infancy that of childhood, nor the body of childhood that of youth, nor the body of youth that of full maturity, nor the body of maturity that of old age. But the identity is the same. A criminal who commits an atrocious murder, but succeeds in concealing himself for twenty one years before he is arrested, might truthfully plead that his body had undergone three entire changes, and that he did not have the same hand which fired the pistol, or held the dagger, or administered the poison; but the court would properly judge that he is the same murderer, notwithstanding these changes.

The principle of identity which governs the formation of the body in this life, shall govern it in the resurrection and the judgment. There is nothing, therefore, in the Bible or in reason for the assertion that all the particles which ever entered into the body, shall be gathered up, or that the matter which is buried in the grave, must be brought together, when it is no more essentially a part of ourselves, than are our bodies at any other stage of our existence. The organism is one, despite the modifications of form and size; and if science has taught any truth clearly, it is that an organism, once existing, can never be wholly annihilated.

The apostle in the passage just quoted presents a striking analogy to the resurrection. "That which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." The seed decomposes, decays, dies; but its identity is preserved, for wheat produces wheat, barley produces barley, oats will bring forth oats, and this out of death. The only difference is that in the resurrection,

"For each one body that in the earth is sown,
There's an uprising, but of one for one.
But for each grain that in the ground is thrown,
Threescore and fourscore spring up thence for one,
So that the wonder is not half so great
Of ours, as is the uprising of the wheat."

A Christian farmer was approached by a young man who was troubled about the resurrection. "I had the same feeling," quietly remarked the countryman, "when I was planting my beans some time since. 'Is it possible,' said I to myself, 'that such dry things can live again?' I believed in their resurrection, though I could not reason out the matter. And in spite of my not being able to explain it, they did rise again." "Yes," said the young man; "but man, when buried, remains where he is laid." "Then man is of less worth in God's eyes than a bean," answered the farmer; and he went on to show that, as a bean is raised by a power outside of itself, so it will be with man. On his quoting from Corinthians about Christ being seen after his resurrection by Peter and others, he was told, "Yes; but they were his partisans." Where-

upon the other, turning to Matthew and the Acts of the Apostles, replied, "Were the judges and the priests and the soldiers also his partisans? They were the first to believe."

All nature is eloquent with the truth of the resurrection. It looks as if God had cast creation into a mould, that should testify mutely to the coming of Christ from the grave. The earthly father and son are but types of the eternal Fatherhood and Sonship in heaven; the union between husband and wife but shadows forth the precious relationship between the divine Bridegroom and the Church; and so the construction of material things speaks to the circumcised ear of the greatest event in human history. The day dies into the night, and is buried in darkness, only to appear again in the morning light. The winter lays its arrest upon vegetation, and the life-giving sap descends to the roots, and lies hidden in the ground, which becomes a general sepulchre under its sheeting of snow or frost; but the branching trees and fragrant shrubbery and green herbage, that appear withered and dead, come forth in the vernal season of the year, which itself is only the harbinger of fuller fruitage:

"Spring's real glory lies not in the meaning,
Gracious though it be, of her blue hours;
But it is hidden in her tender leaning
To summer's richer wealth of flowers."

From the acorn deposited in the earth, there springs first the little slender stalk, which a child's foot may trample down, enclosed in two seed-lobes that involve and nourish the embryo plant, and then perish. From the germinant shoot comes the sapling, and at last the giant oak

that hurls back the storm from its gnarled arms. But the monarch of the forest originally lay in the buried acorn.

A diamond is defined in the dictionaries as "a mineral consisting essentially of carbon," and it is little less than miraculous to see dull, lustreless charcoal transfigured into a costly gem sparkling on the bosom of beauty. Gold or silver, embedded in the rock and encrusted with mud, is still the same gold or silver that passes through the furnace, or underneath the hammer, and becomes the most precious of metals. The dirty rags gathered out of the gutter are picked and washed and shaped in the mill into the finest fabric, worthy of use by the most dignified and the most dainty. Scarcely can we look in any direction without being amazed at the presumption that can limit the power of God, or question the reasonableness of the resurrection. We feel like Sidney Smith, the English essayist, who, walking in the garden with a friend on New Year's day, noticed a crocus which had burst through the frozen earth, and gazing at it silently for a few seconds, he reverently exclaimed, "The resurrection of the world!"

Nature, so far as she teaches at all, points to the empty grave of Jesus, although there is no speech nor language, and her voice is not heard. Science, so far as she teaches at all, points in the same way, although we must remember that the science of to-day is the exploded superstition of to-morrow. Surely neither science nor nature can breathe an intimation of unreality against the resurrection of Christ, if he was what he claimed to be, not *a* son but *the* Son of God, if he was what all admit, the most wonderful man who has ever appeared on the earth. If only the dreary cross and the dismal crown of death

awaited dim at the close of his marvelous career, the evolution of history would have come to an abrupt termination. Redemption itself would have ended in a frightful failure, unless the travailing throes of his agony had resulted in the birth-throes of his resurrection.

He himself was a deceiver, for seven times he announced his resurrection; the four evangelists are pretenders, and the sweet stories of the gospel are untrue; the apostles with all their beneficent influence are false witnesses; the hundreds who said they saw him after he was risen are deliberate liars or silly dupes; the Church with its comforting and uplifting power for countless millions through more than eighteen hundred years is but a hideous mockery; and the hope of a ruined world is buried forever, if that grave in Judea still contains the dust of the sleeping Jesus. Prove, if you please, that science and nature say nothing in favor of his resurrection, but the inferences and deductions of science and nature are not worth a straw in contrast with the overwhelming evidence that has been furnished, "He is not here."

"Come see the place where Jesus lay,
 And hear angelic watchers say,
 'He lives who once was slain:
 Why seek ye the living midst the dead?
 Remember how the Saviour said,
 That he would rise again.'
 The First-begotten from the dead
 For us he rose, our glorious Head,
 Immortal life to bring;
 What though the saints like him shall die?
 They share their Leader's victory,
 And triumph with their King."

CHAPTER XVI.

HIS RESURRECTION OUR OWN.

THE apostle arrests his great argument on the resurrection by exclaiming, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept." *1 Cor. xv. 20.* The meaning of the "firstfruits" can be easily gathered from the Old Testament. Closely connected with the passover feast, the memorial of Israel's redemption through the death of a spotless lamb, God commanded his people: "Ye shall bring a sheaf of the firstfruits of your harvest unto the priest: and he shall wave the sheaf before the Lord, to be accepted for you: on the morrow after the sabbath the priest shall wave it." *Lev. xxiii. 10, 11.* Notice that it was on the morrow after the sabbath, that is, on the first day of the week, the resurrection day.

Dr. Edersheim and other writers who are familiar with the customs of the Jews, say that the sheaf of barley was taken in later times from the vicinity of Jerusalem. On the eve of the festival an appointed committee of the Sanhedrin went out into the fields, and selected and bound together the finest ears. On the following evening, these were cut with all possible publicity, and solemnly borne to the temple. Such was the firstfruits, and not until it had been offered to the Lord, could the reaping begin. The firstfruits became, therefore, an earnest of

the harvest, a part of the harvest already gathered, an acknowledgment that the entire harvest was dedicated to Jehovah.

In an important sense, then, the resurrection has commenced. ✓ Christ rose from the dead, not merely as the pledge that his people shall also rise ; but when we remember the intimate and indissoluble union between the two, he the Head, and they the body, they *have* risen in the unchangeable purpose and plan of God. Hence it can be said, he “ hath raised us up together ” (*Eph.* ii. 6) ; “ Ye are risen with him ; ” and, “ If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.” *Col.* ii. 12 ; iii. 1.

✓ The sentence of death, as the penal consequence of sin, has been pronounced and executed upon believers in the person of their divine Substitute, and they are only waiting for the fulfillment of their sure and certain hope. “ Christ the firstfruits ; afterward they that are Christ’s, at his coming.” *1 Cor.* xv. 23.

✓ Eternal life they now have, and shall continue to have it after the body is laid in the grave. Death is no interruption even to that life. It is a life whose continuity stretches, in one unbroken and unending line, from the moment of being linked to Christ by faith, onward through everlasting ages. It is not a new life imparted when the body is raised up, but that is only an incident in the life already bestowed. It is identically the same life throughout, for it is a life depending on a resurrection ; it is a life flowing from a resurrection ; it is a life fulfilled, filled full, in a resurrection. It is not strange, therefore, that the apostle deals in stern and sorrowful indignation with the denial of the resurrection, as it affects either the re-

surrection of our Lord or of believers, for the two stand or fall together.

At the outset of his discussion he distinctly defines the gospel, putting into the van and forefront of all his teachings, "That Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures." When he says "that Christ died," he states a historical fact; when he says that he "died for our sins," he states a Christian and essential doctrine. "If Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins." Not only are we yet in our sins, but Christ is yet in his imputed sin; for he died for our sins, and if Christ be not raised, our sins are yet around him and upon him in his hopeless grave. On the other hand, if he arose, it still remains true that his resurrection is not complete until believers arise as he did; for if they continue in the grave, the appalling fact stares us in the face, "Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." They are not saved, but lost forever.

In view of his resurrection, the word of God speaks of his dead as "fallen asleep." The Prince of Life, the Lord of Glory, said of the dead daughter of Jairus, "She is not dead, but sleepeth;" and the wailing and weeping crowd laughed him to scorn, knowing that she was dead; but he took her by the hand with the gentle command, "Damsel, arise." *Mark* v. 35—43. When he heard that Lazarus was dead, he said to his disciples, "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep." *John*. xi. 11. He did not call him our "late friend," as we do; nor does he say, our friend is dead, but our friend "sleepeth." So when

he arose we are told that "many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." *Matt.* xxvii. 52, 53. Not the souls, but the bodies, came out of the graves, the beginning of the great harvest.

From this time forward sleep properly describes the condition of the believer's body in death. Stephen encountered a violent death, but he breathed a prayer of forgiveness for his murderers; "and when he had said this, he fell asleep." *Acts.* vii. 60. "Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." *Cor.* xv. 51. "I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." I *Thess.* iv. 13, 14.

The same beautiful expression is found in the Old Testament as a suitable description of a life passed under the shield of Jehovah's covenant and brought to its close in hope. It is because the Lord Jesus Christ is the theme of Scripture in his sacrificial death, resurrection, and ascension and second coming, the words are so often found, "He fell asleep." When Jerusalem shall be delivered by the returning and recognized King, "many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake." *Dan.* xii. 2. They shall come forth from the slumber of the grave; "Thy dead shall live; my dead bodies shall arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead."

R. V. *Isa.* xxvi. 19. Our word *cemetery*, meaning in Greek "a sleeping place," and the German "God's acre," for a graveyard, express the same thought, as it is also found in the fine inscription which Dean Alford directed to be placed on his tomb, "The inn of a traveler on his way to the New Jerusalem." More than seven hundred years before his advent at Bethlehem he raises the victor's shout for his people: "I will ransom them from the hand of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." *Hos.* xiii. 14. "For so he giveth his beloved sleep." *Ps.* cxxvii. 2.

"But some man will say, How are the dead raised up? and with what do they come? Thou fool, that which thou sowest is not quickened, except it die: and that which thou sowest, thou sowest not that body that shall be, but bare grain, it may chance of wheat, or of some other grain: but God giveth it a body as it hath pleased him, and to every seed his own body." It is the same seed which is buried and dies, and yet it is not the same numerically, nor in appearance. There is a vast difference between the seed decaying and decomposed in the damp, dark earth, and the seed waving its golden head in the bright sunshine; but it is the same seed. You will never find one kind of seed producing a foreign kind of seed; but barley brings forth barley. Thou sowest wheat, and it is wheat that has resurrection; thou sowest barley, and it is barley that has resurrection.

"So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption"; for the most lovely form becomes repulsive in death. Arrayed once, it may be, with exquisite attractiveness and grace; commanding passionate admir-

ation for its beauty ; at the ruffian touch of death the eyes that thrilled the beholder lose their lustre ; the soft and smooth skin is discolored ; the bloom on the cheek is gone ; the musical voice is hushed ; the rounded limbs are wasted ; and the bursting heart cries out, as Abraham did when he sought a burying place for his beloved Sarah, "that I may bury my dead out of my sight." *Gen.* xxiii.

4. The most famous of men and the fairest of women are compelled to exclaim with Job, "I have said to corruption, Thou art my father : to the worm, Thou art my mother, and my sister." *Job* xvii. 14. "It is raised in incorruption." No more shall the foul taint of disease cling to the body ; no more shall decline and deterioration and dissolution shatter its strength. Then shall we know the full meaning of the words, that our Saviour Jesus Christ "hath abolished death, and brought life and incorruption to light through the gospel" (*R. V.* 2 *Tim.* i. 10) ; for God "hath begotten us again unto a lively [living] hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." 1 *Pet.* i. 3, 4.

"It is sown in dishonor." The pageantry of the most imposing funeral is but the hollow mockery of human greatness. The body may lie in state, and soldiers stand about the velveted catafalque, and surging crowds sweep around the corpse to catch a last glimpse of the distinguished dead, and muffled drums may beat, and strains of military music throb upon the air, and the thunder of heavy guns roll over the vast throng of spectators ; but how indifferent to it all is the hero. His ears are dull, his eyes are closed, his tongue is palsied, his cheek is

cold, his hands are rigid ; and the proudest monument reared to his memory but tells the story of one who was conquered, and fell in the strife. "It is raised in glory." The believer's enrollment as a citizen is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ : who shall transfigure the body of our humiliation, that it may be fashioned like unto the body of his glory. *Phil.* iii. 20, 21.

"It is sown in weakness." There is nothing on earth more helpless than a dead body. It cannot see, nor hear, nor speak, nor feel, nor lift a finger to defend itself against destruction. It might be girt with fire, or exposed to the attacks of wild beasts, or lie in the pathway of a furious flood, but it cannot guard itself against dangers, nor raise a cry of alarm. But weaker even than a dead body, is the dust into which it turns. A breath may blow it away, or it may be scattered by the hand of a child. "For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts ; even one thing befalleth them : as the one dieth, so dieth the other ; yea, they have all one breath ; so that a man hath no preëminence above a beast : for all is vanity. All go unto one place ; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." *Ecc.* iii. 19, 20. "It is raised in power." The same impotent body shall yet experience the exceeding greatness of God's power, according to the energy of the might of his strength, when he raised his Son from the dead, who hath said, "He that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations : and he shall rule them with a rod of iron ; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers." *Rev.* ii. 26, 27.

"It is sown a natural body." The word here used is

psychical, or *soulual*, that is, "pertaining to the lief or soul; in the New Testament, animal, as distinguished from spiritual;" and twice it is translated "sensual." *Jas.* iii. 15; *Jude* 19. Such a body is not fitted for the higher and holier employments and enjoyments awaiting us in the resurrection state. "It is raised a spiritual body." In other words, it is a body conformed to the heavenly world, although it is still a body, and suited to the uses of the spirit, as distinguished from what concerns this mortal life. Often in our language soul and spirit are mentioned interchangeably or synonymously; and in this sense the believer, waking from the sleep of death, may well say with Browning,

" The soul retreated from the perished brain,
Whence it was wont to feel and use the world
Through these dull members, done with the long ago,
Yet I myself remain: I feel myself:
And there is nothing lost."

All of this incorruption, glory, power, and more than tongue can utter, and more than the imagination can conceive, we owe entirely to the resurrection of Christ. We rise in him. We rise because he has risen. We rise as he has risen. We rise to be as he is, and where he is, "His body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all;" and if he did not literally come forth from the grave, it is foolish to speak of any resurrection for his people, or of any truth in the gospel. It is Jesus, remember, who says of the believer, and not of his soul, but of his body, and says it four times in a single discourse, "I will raise him up at the last day." *John* vi. 39, 40, 44, 54.

The apostle links Christ's resurrection unto our own with hooks far stronger than steel, and exclaims with perfect confidence, "When this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" *1 Cor. xv. 54, 55.* He cites the evidence of two of the Old Testament prophets, Isaiah and Hosea, to prove how completely death is swallowed up by the triumph of redeeming grace, and how the yawning grave is trampled under the feet of the risen and reigning believer. "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

The time is surely coming when the bodies of our humiliation shall shine in the likeness of Christ's glorious body; when death and the grave shall be cast into the lake of fire; when the long agony of separation from our beloved ones shall be exchanged for the rapture of everlasting reunion; when the mother shall again clasp her precious child to her longing heart; when suffering creation shall no more groan and travail together in pain, in the gladness and liberty of sharing in the redemption of the body; and even all this, wonderful as it is in itself, is but a looking forward to a still further blessedness and exaltation in the "new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (*2 Pet. iii. 13*), when "there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain." *Rev. xxi. 4.* Thenceforth there is never again, in all man's history, a death; thenceforth there is never again, on all the earth's surface, a grave!

“Lift your glad voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man cannot die :
Vain were the terrors that gathered around him,
And short the dominion of death and the grave.
He burst from the fetters of darkness that bound him,
Resplendent in glory to live and to save.
Loud was the chorus of angels on high,
The Saviour hath risen, and man can not die.

“Glory to God, in full anthems of joy !
The being he gave us death can not destroy :
Sad were the life we must part with to-morrow,
If tears were our birthright, and death were our end ;
But Jesus hath cheered the dark valley of sorrow,
And bade us, immortal, to heaven ascend.
Lift then your voices in triumph on high,
For Jesus hath risen, and man shall not die.”

CHAPTER XVII.

HIS RESURRECTION AND RETURN.

BISHOP WESTCOTT truly remarks: "Next to the fact that Christ rose from the dead, the topic most frequently insisted on in the apostolic writings is that he will come again from heaven." He might have added that this topic is more frequently insisted on in the teachings of the Lord Jesus himself, than are his references to his resurrection, numerous and plain as these are in his discourses. There is passage after passage, sometimes an entire chapter or two chapters, sometimes a single verse or two verses, in which he dwells upon the subject of his personal and literal return as of paramount importance.

In the abundance of the material at hand, nothing more can be done in a brief space, than to present an illustration in each of the four Gospels; and it will be seen at a glance, that no spiritual advent, nor providential event of any kind, as death, or the destruction of Jerusalem, or the descent of the Holy Ghost, can possibly be intended. It is worthy of notice that the first proclamation of his real return immediately follows the first proclamation of his real crucifixion and resurrection. "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father, with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works." *Matt.* xvi. 27. If his death upon the cross,

and his departure from the tomb, were literal, so is his coming.

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.” An old English version properly reads, “But of that day and hour no man maketh known,” and some of the best critics admit that this is correct. The apostle Paul uses the word in the same sense: “I determined not to know (that is, make known) anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.” *1 Cor.* ii. 2. Retaining the translation of our Authorized Version, which informs us that even the Son does not know of that day and hour, we may well say with Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander: “That such a declaration should be made at all, is wonderful enough, but scarcely credible on any supposition, or in any sense, if made in reference to the date of the destruction of Jerusalem.” The declaration is at once explained by the words of our Lord in another place: “It is not for you to know times or seasons, which the Father hath appointed by his own authority.” *Acts* i. 7, Revised Version. It belongs to the Father to appoint the day and hour of his Son’s return; and hence he says: “Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cock-crowing, or in the morning: lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.” *Mark* xiii. 32-37.

It will be a day and hour of darkness and disaster, as it was in the days of Noah and of Lot, which makes pertinent the searching and solemn question, “When the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?” *Luke* xvii. 26-30; xviii. 8. “Upon the earth distress of

nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And THEN shall they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory." *Luke xxi. 25-27.*

So our risen Lord, after distinctly predicting Peter's death, said to him concerning John, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, he shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?" *John xxi. 22, 23.* So far were the disciples from regarding death and the second coming of Christ as one and the same thing, they understood their Lord to intimate that John might remain until his return, and at once concluded that the beloved disciple could not die. Substitute for the words of Jesus the popular thought of his second coming: "If I will that he tarry till he die;" and see how utterly absurd and stupid is the common conception of his personal return.

The first message, which broke upon the silence and awe with which they beheld their risen Lord ascend in a bodily, tangible and visible form into heaven from the Mount of Olives, was the cheering promise of the two men in shining apparel: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." *Acts i. 11.* Shortly afterwards Peter testifies, God "shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy

prophets since the world began. . . . Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities." *Acts* iii. 20-26.

In the first epistle Paul was inspired to write, he describes his brethren as those who had "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God; and to wait for his Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come." He confidently expects to meet them in resurrection glory: "For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming?" He beseeches God in their behalf, "to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints." He reminds them, "If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him." He assures them that "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout: . . . and the dead in Christ shall rise first." He warns them that "the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night." He prays for them, that "your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming," or, as the Revised Version has it, "at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 *Thess.* i. 9, 10; ii. 19; iii. 13; iv. 14, 16; v. 2, 23.

But it is unnecessary to multiply similar quotations. It is enough to say that out of 7,959 verses in the New Testament, by careful and repeated count, 345 verses are occupied with the personal second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, or one verse in every twenty-three. These

verses do not teach some vague, shadowy, misty, spiritual something or other, a mere symbol of truth, as certain interpreters feebly imagine that Christ did something or other, which somehow or other, in some way or other, had some bearing or other, on the great question of our salvation. The resurrection is explained away by them, the second coming of our Lord is explained away, and only a dark and dreary fog is left, through which poor souls struggle forward to an uncertain and unknown eternity. No; these verses, and hundreds of others like them, set before us a definite hope, "to wit, the redemption of our body." It is true that "the body is dead because of sin" (*Rom. viii. 10*); or is there a body on earth perfect in beauty or form or health, nor without the seeds of some lurking disease which, sooner or later, assails and destroys life. As another has said, "We have distempers, disproportions, distortions, disorders, disarrangements, answering to the dislocation of our inward harmony and revealing our sin." Yet it is like the débris of an olden temple, where we see a carved capitol hurled to the ground, or a fallen column prostrate across a broken arch, the very ruins attesting the former grandeur of the structure. But if Christ never return in person, death indeed is an "everlasting sleep" for the body, and Satan and sin are the conquerors, retaining possession of the field.

All is changed in a moment, however, when we remember that Christ literally arose. What was a dishonor shines with the brightness of undying splendor; what was a deep humiliation becomes the pathway to an unending glory; what was a terrible defeat, ends in the grandest victory ever achieved on earth; as he carries with him

to the skies the redeemed spirit and soul and body of the believer amid the shouts of rejoicing angels. It was this high destiny and dignity that awaits the whole man which led the apostle to exclaim with amazement and indignation, when some of the Corinthians were tempted to defile the body, "What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" *1 Cor.* vi. 19. It was this which caused him to declare that he kept under his body like an athlete, or struck it under the eye, and led it about as a captive slave; "lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" [Revised Version, "should be rejected."] *1 Cor.* ix. 27. It is of the body as well as the ransomed soul it is written, "When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." *Col.* iii. 4.

What an immense host shall rise to meet him at his return! It is estimated that ten million bodies were buried in the catacombs under Rome, and most of these were probably Christians, who sleep "in the sure and certain hope of a blessed resurrection." But they form only a small fraction of the innumerable multitude who shall come forth in obedience to the commanding summons of the Son of God. Even believers who were misled into a denial of the literal resurrection of the body shall awake to a glad surprise. In the city of Hanover is a graveyard which has been closed for a number of years—the Garden Graveyard. A few paces east of the unassuming little church is a monument tottering from its foundations. It is built in the form of steps, and the massive stones are secured by heavy iron clasps. The monument was erected in the year 1782. Besides the usual family inscriptions, at the base of the monument are engraved

these lines :—“ This sepulchre, purchased for all eternity, is not permitted to be opened.” Opposed to this determination of man, a beech-seed, perhaps carried by the wind, found its way into the crevice of the foundation. In the course of years this little seed grew to be a strong, luxuriant tree, mocked the proud inscription on the monument, raised the massive stones from their foundation, and rent the strong iron clasps asunder. So shall it be when all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and come forth : and it is this which causes the Christian to stand, “ looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” *Tit. ii. 13.*

“ That blessed hope ” has been the solace and support of the saints in all ages. Fifteen hundred years before the first coming of Christ, Job sustained his failing and fainting heart amid the astounding afflictions that broke over him, like all the billows and waves of God’s tempest : “ Oh, that my words were now written ! Oh that they were inscribed in a book ! That with an iron pen and lead they were graven in the rock forever ! But I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth : and after my skin hath been thus destroyed, yet from my flesh,” like one looking out through a window, “ shall I see God : whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another. My reins are consumed within me,” with earnest desire for that day. *Job. xix. 23-27*, Revised Version. In answer to the cry of faith is heard the last sweet promise of the Bible, “ Surely I come quickly. Amen.” And the longing heart responds, “ Even so, come, Lord Jesus.”

THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST.

- “ O shine again, ye angel host,
And say that he is near ;
Though but a simple few at most
Believe he will appear.
- “ Ye heavens, that have been growing dark,
Now also ye are dumb ;
When shall the listeners say, ‘ Hark !
They’re singing—he will come.’
- “ Lord, come again, O come again,
Come even as thou wilt ;
But not anew to suffer pain,
And strive with human guilt,
- “ O come again, thou mighty King,
Let earth thy glory see ;
And let us hear the angels sing,
‘ He comes with victory.’ ”

THE END.

