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DID  
JESUS RISE?

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JAMES H. BROOKES.

1. Jesus Christ —  
Resurrection

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BROOKES

# DID JESUS RISE?

A BOOK WRITTEN

*TO AID HONEST SKEPTICS.*

BY

JAMES H. BROOKES,

Author of "Is the Bible True," "Outlines of the Books of the Bible," "The Holy Spirit," "Israel and the Church," "Maranatha," "Is the Bible Inspired?" etc.

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## P R E F A C E .

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IF Jesus did not rise from the grave, the Christian's faith rests upon a fable, and the Christian's hope is a delusion. But, on the other hand, if He did really rise, no further argument can be demanded to establish His claim, as the Son of God, upon our confidence and obedience; no other evidence is needed to prove that He is the only Saviour of men. To the consideration of this question, the attention of the honest skeptic is respectfully invited in the following pages.

Nor must he forget that the question is to be considered by itself, entirely apart from various subjects with which it is too often confounded. Whatever opinion he may feel at liberty to form about the days of creation, or the universality of the deluge, or the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, or Jonah and the great fish—whatever may or may not be true in Astronomy, Evolution, Geology, or any other science, the inquiry still remains, Did Jesus Rise?

The critics would probably say that there is nothing new and original in the discussion here presented; to which there is a two-fold reply; first, if there were any thing very new and original on such a topic, it would probably be very worthless; and second, it is not the aim of the book to exhibit the writer's skill, but to tell the truth in the plainest and simplest manner possible. It is his one desire to be helpful to souls, struggling amid doubts and difficulties, and to be the means of saving some to the praise of our risen and coming Lord.

## C O N T E N T S .

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I. Different Views, - - - - -	7
II. Different Accounts, - - - - -	18
III. Paul's Testimony, - - - - -	32
IV. Was Paul a Credible Witness, - - - - -	46
V. When did the Witnesses Live, - - - - -	59
VI. The Witnesses Examined, - - - - -	79
VII. Historical Monuments, - - - - -	93
VIII. It Behoved Him to Rise, - - - - -	108
IX. Unwilling Witnesses, - - - - -	120
X. Fifty Additional Proofs, - - - - -	132

# DID JESUS RISE?

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## I.

### *DIFFERENT VIEWS.*

IT is obvious that this question not only directly affects the credibility of the Gospel narrative, but it involves the very existence of Christianity. It is plainly taught in the Old Testament that the Messiah would rise from among the dead; Jesus of Nazareth claimed to be that promised Messiah, and distinctly and repeatedly declared that He would rise; each of His four biographers, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John affirms that He did rise on the third day after His death; and from that time the doctrine of His resurrection became interwoven in all of the preaching and writing of His apostles, who laid it at the foundation of the church, and linked it with every hope of the human race.

It is sometimes thoughtlessly said that the religion He established by His sublime life and by His more than heroic death would survive, even if His resurrection could be disproved. But surely a religion that has no better support than a silly delusion or deliberate falsehood is worthy of universal contempt and rejection. Hence it is frankly admitted at once, that if the sincere inquirer after truth is convinced by any kind of evidence which may be brought to his attention, or by any process



of reasoning, of the continuance of Jesus one hour in the grave beyond the close of the third day subsequent to the crucifixion, he is bound to disregard and despise every word of the Bible, and every argument by which its friends would seek to win his faith and obedience.

On the other hand, if it can be shown beyond a reasonable doubt that Jesus actually rose from the dead, it is respectfully submitted that no honest man can withhold from Him his reverence, his confidence, and his submission. No other proof of His divine mission to earth can be asked; no other evidence of the truth and infinite importance of His doctrines can be demanded. Let the report be fully confirmed, which has descended to us through many centuries, that He actually came forth from the grave after real death, and confessedly there is no further ground for controversy, no further room for hesitation. All other miracles sink into insignificance in the presence of this stupendous display of God's presence and power, and it carries along with it across the ages without the possibility of successful or sincere denial the supernatural origin and supreme authority of the Sacred Scriptures.

Intelligent infidels are quick to see that this is the battle-field on which victory is to be won for the divine or merely human conception and character of the whole New Testament. Strauss, the ablest of them all, well speaks of it as "the burning question," and as he approaches its discussion truly says, "Here then we stand on that decisive point where, in the presence of the accounts of the miraculous resurrection of Jesus, we either

acknowledge the inadmissibility of the natural and historical view of the life of Jesus, and must consequently retract all that precedes, and so give up our whole undertaking, or pledge ourselves to make out the possibility of the result of those accounts, *i. e.* the origin of the belief in the resurrection of Jesus without any corresponding miraculous fact. The more immediately this question touches all Christianity to the quick, the more regard we must pay to the sensibility with which every unprejudiced word that is uttered about it is received, and even to the sensible effect which such words may have upon him who pronounces them ; but the more important the point is, and the more decisive on the other side, for the whole view of Christianity, the more pressing is the demand upon the investigator to set aside all these considerations, and pronounce upon it in a perfectly unprejudiced, perfectly decided spirit, without ambiguity and without reserve."

Up to the time of Strauss, infidelity generally had a summary way of dealing with the resurrection of Jesus. It assumed that the story from first to last was a fraud, artfully planned and perpetrated by a number of scoundrels for their own ignoble purposes, without having even a shadow of foundation in fact. Or if there were those who recoiled from the position to which such a view forced them, they adopted what is known as the naturalistic theory of the resurrection. They claimed that Jesus did not really die upon the cross, but only fell into a swoon, from which He recovered by the cool air of the cave that received His body, that

being thus restored He came forth from the grave and, after living for awhile, died a natural death, all of which led His disciples to look upon His revival as an actual resurrection.

It is not surprising that even Strauss set aside with undisguised disdain such a method of meeting "the burning question." It does not in the least relieve the apostles and early Christians from the charge of wilful deception and falsehood, but detracts immensely from their common sense as well as their honesty, by supposing that they regarded a mere recovery from a swoon as a literal resurrection from the dead, and that after the natural death of Jesus some time later, they continued to believe and teach that He was still alive. Practically it comes to the same thing as the wretched view against which it was designed to form a kind of protest, for it fastens upon all the first disciples of Christ the dark stain of deliberate imposture.

But no one really believes that such an accusation is true. That a number of men could resolve to go forth among the nations in order to establish a religion which teaches the purest morality, even its enemies themselves being the judges, a religion that strenuously insists upon truth and uprightness, and threatens to cast all liars into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone forever and ever, a religion of which sincerity and righteousness are essential principles, while hypocrisy is uniformly denounced with fiercest invective—that in order to carry out their nefarious plan these men agreed to act in the name of One who had been publicly put to death, but whom they falsely repre-

sented as risen from the dead, thus uttering a wilful lie in the very act of forbidding falsehood—that in the prosecution of their purpose, marked by this self-contradictory and absurd mode of procedure, they endured the loss of home and country and kindred and friends, submitting to all manner of privation and suffering and death itself, for no possible gain in this world, and for no possible good in the world to come, seeing they pronounced against themselves the sentence of everlasting condemnation—is indeed to suppose a state of things which is morally impossible. Some men are greatly troubled about miracles, because they violate the laws of nature, as many ignorantly affirm, but there is no miracle in the Bible that so violates the laws of nature, as the fact, if it be a fact, that the conduct of the apostles in regard to the resurrection originated in a fraud.

Strauss perceived this with a single glance of his quick eye, and therefore invented a theory of his own, which saves the sincerity of the apostles at the expense of their judgment. He knew that no man who had an intellect above that of a brute, or a heart above that of a demon, could be induced to believe that the men who wrote the four gospels and the other twenty-three books of the New Testament were unprincipled knaves and unscrupulous liars, and hence he suggested the mythical view of the resurrection. That is, he utterly discards the idea of wilful deception on the part of those who promulgated the story; but he takes it for granted that a considerable time elapsed before the story was published, and that exaggerated statements,

and unintentional misrepresentations of the fact had meanwhile gained currency. He thinks, contrary to the truth in the case, that the disciples of Jesus expected His resurrection, and owing to a certain elevation of their mental and moral life, they imagined it to have taken place. He tries to satisfy himself and his readers with the view that the resurrection has nothing more of a true and historical basis than the mythology of the ancient Greeks and Romans that gradually assumed shape and beauty, or the legends associated with some of the world's heroes, that are so often mercilessly exposed by the keen knife of modern criticism.

But that he did not satisfy even the skeptics is shown by the fact that during his life-time his mythical theory gave place to another suggested by Renan, which may be best described in his own Frenchy and flashy style. Referring to the reported interview between Christ and Mary Magdalene on the morning of the resurrection he exclaims, "Divine power of love! sacred moments in which the passion of a hallucinated woman gives to the world a resurrected God." Again speaking of the alleged appearance of Jesus to the disciples on the night following he says, "The doors were closed, for they were afraid of the Jews. Oriental towns are hushed after sunset. The silence accordingly within the house was frequently profound; all the little noises which were accidentally made were interpreted in the sense of the universal expectation. Ordinarily, expectation is the father of its object. During a moment of silence, some slight breath passed over the face of 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 people for ages. At the same time that the breath was perceived they fancied that they heard sounds. Some of them said that they discovered the word *shalom*, 'happiness' or 'peace.' This was the ordinary salutation of Jesus and the word by which He signified His presence. No possibility of doubt; Jesus is present; He is in the assembly. That is His cherished voice; each one recognizes it. This idea was all the more easily entertained, because Jesus had said that whenever they were assembled in His name, He would be in the midst of them. It was, then, an acknowledged fact that Jesus had appeared before His assembled disciples, on the night of Sunday. Some pretended to have observed on His hands and His feet the mark of the nails, and on His side the mark of the spear which pierced Him. According to a widely spread tradition, it was the same night as that on which He breathed upon His disciples the Holy Spirit."

Such is Renan's treatment of the greatest event that has ever occurred, or the greatest lie that has ever been told, in the history of the world. The weak imagination of an excited, nervous woman, the childish, or rather, insane state of mind on the part of a few men, which mistook the murmur of the evening breeze through an open casement for the articulate words, thrice repeated, "Peace be unto you," and for a visible and tangible form which they handled, is according to this amusing romance writer the only foundation for the Church

and Christianity and the Bible, and all that these terms imply, during the last eighteen hundred years. It is a curious comment upon the good sense of the people in Europe and America, and an apt illustration of the readiness with which the sinful heart takes up with any trash which is aimed at Christ and His gospel, that the silly books of this gaudy French novelist had at first an immense sale.

Renan is not yet an old man, but he has lived long enough to see his ludicrous account of the resurrection utterly rejected by infidelity, and forced to give place to the latest theory of unbelievers, which is advanced by Keim. According to this new light Jesus did not rise in bodily form, but His spirit actually appeared to the disciples, assuring them that He was living forever more and imparting such instructions as were needed to direct them in spreading His doctrines over the face of the earth. It seems strange that one who cannot believe in the resurrection of the body, however clearly established by unimpeachable testimony, can yet easily believe in ghosts, and accept without hesitation supernatural visitations from the unseen world. But so it is very often, for as a class infidels are of all men the most credulous and superstitious, justifying the remark of Charles the Second to a skeptic of his day, when the king said to him, "you are a queer fellow; you believe everything but the Bible."

Thus have been sketched the different views, and, it may be added, all the views that are possible of the resurrection of Jesus, as advanced by those who reject as untrue the narratives contained

in the four gospels. First, it is said by "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" that the story, which has gained implicit and universal credence among the best and most intelligent people for eighteen centuries, has no foundation whatever in fact, but was a deliberate fraud perpetrated for sinister ends. Second, it is asserted by others that the body of Jesus, having been buried during a swoon, was really seen by His disciples after his restoration to consciousness, but subsequently returned to the grave under the consuming stroke of actual death. Third, it is claimed by Strauss and his followers, that a belief in His literal resurrection gradually grew, like the myths that gathered about the lives of William Tell, John Smith and Pochahantas, and various celebrities, to be scattered by a scholarly and impartial criticism as the mists disappear before the rising sun. Fourth, it is affirmed by Renan and his jejune school that the entire history is only a beautiful romance, fit to be brought out amid suitable scenery on the boards of a French theatre. Finally, modern spiritualism is invoked to explain the mystery; and the reality of the resurrection, with all its immortal hopes and tremendous issues, is resolved into a mere apparition, a ghostly visitant from hades.

Comparing, or rather, contrasting these theories with the artless and straightforward narratives found in the four gospels, we at least know that we are not dealing with shifting and conflicting conjectures, but with solid and consistent statements, whether true or false. Nor is it necessary to insist that the writers of the four gospels were witnesses



of the resurrection, for it was not seen by any mortal eye. Apart from the four narratives, therefore, in which two of the writers claim to have beheld the risen Lord, they are to be treated at this point of the argument not as witnesses, but as historians, nor is it even urged, just now, that they were inspired. Even granting, then, the truth of the utterly unfounded assertion that they did not live until one hundred, or one hundred and fifty years had passed after the death of Christ, the credibility of the testimony of two of them is in nowise affected. It often occurs, that historians of a period subsequent to the times they describe are more accurate than those who wrote as the transactions they relate actually transpired. Excitement, personal prejudice, party passion, insufficient data, and other defects and difficulties inseparable from human organization and infirmity may interfere with that calm, judicial state of mind that is so essential to a well-balanced judgment and an impartial account, however sincere the purpose of the narrator to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. For example it is frequently said that the time has not yet come to write a history of our civil war, because it is taken for granted that those who were actors in that deplorable scene of fratricidal strife cannot furnish a dispassionate record of its rise, progress, and end, nor do justice to the character and motives of the leaders on both sides.

Hence it does not make a particle of difference whether Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, or the writers who are called by their names, lived during

the days of Jesus, except as two of them intimate that they saw Him subsequent to the resurrection, or whether they lived two centuries later. A vast amount of needless controversy has arisen over this question, infidels foolishly thinking that they have destroyed all evidence of the resurrection, when they boldly assert that the four writers did not exist until a hundred and fifty or two hundred years after the time assigned for the event, and many Christians foolishly thinking that the whole battle is lost unless it can be shown that these writers were on the earth previous to the crucifixion. That they wrote during the first century will in due time be established beyond the possibility of doubt, and to the entire satisfaction of every candid mind, but it is not at all essential to the point now under consideration. The proof of the resurrection rests only to the smallest degree upon their personal testimony, for, as already stated, they do not assert that they were eye witnesses of the fact, and therefore apart from what they subsequently saw they are to be treated as historians, whose credibility must be determined like the credibility of other historians by their opportunity for obtaining correct information, by the impression they make of fairness, intelligence, and truthfulness, and by their agreement with one another.

## II.

### DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS.

**T**URNING then to the first of the four historians, of whom Strauss says, "We, as well as Baur, have always considered, and still do consider, the Gospel of Matthew as the most original, and, comparatively speaking, the most trustworthy," we find him testifying that Jesus on the cross cried with a loud voice, and yielded up His spirit; that many women were there, beholding afar off, who had followed Him from Galilee, ministering unto Him, among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children; that a rich man of Arimathæa, named Joseph, who also himself was Jesus' disciple, went to Pilate, and begged the body, and, obtaining the consent of the Roman Governor, 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 rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed, while Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were sitting over against the sepulchre.

The account then proceeds as follows: "In the end of the sabbath [that is, about dusk of Saturday], as it began to dawn toward the first of the week, came Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary, to see the sepulchre. And, behold, there was a great earthquake, [or as the margin correctly renders it, there *had been*]: for the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back

the stone from the door, 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. [We must not confound the visit of the women here with the visit of Mary Magdalene and the other Mary the previous evening, when the body of Jesus was still in the tomb, for we have simply a narrative of events, without defining the intervals of time, according to the custom of Matthew everywhere in his gospel]. 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. And they departed quickly from the sepulchre, with fear and great joy, and did run to bring his disciples word. . . . Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him : but some doubted." Pray consider carefully whether a forger would have added the clause, " but some doubted?"

Mark, the second of the historians, informs us that Jesus cried with a loud voice on the cross, and yielded up His spirit ; that there were also women looking on afar off ; among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less, and of Joses, and Salome ; who also, when He was in Galilee, followed him, and ministered unto Him, and many other women which came up with him

unto Jerusalem ; that Joseph of Arimathæa, an honorable counsellor, which also waited for the kingdom of God, came, and went in boldly unto Pilate, and craved the body of Jesus. Mark does not hint at his reason for using the word *boldly*, but John's gospel tells us Joseph was a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, showing an undesigned coincidence worthy of notice. Pilate, having ascertained the death of Jesus from the Roman Centurion, gave permission to Joseph to dispose of the body, and he bought fine linen, and took Him down from the cross, and wrapped Him in the linen, and laid Him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of Joses beheld where he was laid.

The account then proceeds as follows: "And when the sabbath was past, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Salome, had brought 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. 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. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre ; for they trembled and were amazed : neither said they any thing to any man ; for they were afraid.”

Luke, the third of the historians, writes that Jesus cried with a loud voice on the cross, and gave up His spirit ; that all His acquaintance, and the women that followed Him from Galilee, stood afar off, beholding these things ; that a man named Joseph, a counsellor, a good man, and a just, who had not consented unto the counsel and deed of the Jewish Sanhedrim, a man of Arimathæa, a city of the Jews, who also himself waited for the kingdom of God, went unto Pilate, and begged the body of Jesus ; that he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in stone, wherein never man was laid before ; that the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulchre, and how His body was laid ; and they returned, and prepared spices and ointments ; and rested the sabbath day, according to the commandment.

The account then proceeds as follows : “ 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. And their words seemed to them as idle tales, and they believed them not."

John, the fourth of the historians, states that Jesus on the cross bowed His head, and gave up His spirit; that after this Joseph of Arimathæa, being a disciple of Jesus, but secretly for fear of the Jews, besought Pilate that he might take away the body of Jesus; that Pilate gave him leave; that he came, and took the body; and there came also Nicodemus, who is not mentioned by Matthew, Mark, and Luke, although it will be observed that they do not say that he was not present, nor do they say that Joseph was alone; that the two wound the body in linen clothes with the spices, and laid it in a new sepulchre, wherein was never man yet laid.

The account then proceeds as follows: 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. [Notice the force of the word *we*, plainly implying that other women had been with her]. 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. Then the disciples went away again unto their own home. But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping: and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white, sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain. And they say unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She saith, unto them. Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. And when she had thus said, she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, and knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and



I will take him away. Jesus saith unto her, Mary! She turned herself, and saith unto him, Rabboni; which is to say, Master.”

Such are the four accounts, and it will be observed that they agree precisely in all of their leading characteristics and features. They all affirm that Jesus actually died upon the cross, not in a swoon betokening physical and mental exhaustion and weakness, but crying with a loud voice, and hence in possession of all His faculties. They all affirm that His body was given by Pilate to Joseph, although John adds that Nicodemus joined him in the last rites of respect to the dead. They all affirm that the body was laid in a new sepulchre, three of them mentioning the great stone that was placed at its entrance. They all affirm that He rose from the dead on the first day of the week, and that the sepulchre was found to be empty. Is this not enough to make out the case, so far as the narratives go, in any court in the land? Would any court throw out such testimony, because of apparent discrepancies in the minor and unimportant details of the several statements? The word “apparent” is used designedly, for it can be proved that there are no real discrepancies, but admitting their existence, can they weaken the force of the positive and united testimony borne to the fact of the actual death and actual resurrection of Jesus?

Even while this is going through the press, three articles appeared in *The Century Magazine*, all relating to the battle of Shiloh, fought on the 6th and 7th of April, 1862, and all written by able, and distinguished, and, no doubt, conscientious men.

Gen. Grant who commanded the Federal army says, "The effective strength of the Union force on the morning of the 6th was 33,000 at Shiloh. Lew Wallace brought 5,000 more after nightfall. . . . There was not a time during the 6th when we had more than 25,000 men in line. On the 7th Buell brought 20,000 more." Gen. William Preston Johnston, son of the General who commanded the Confederate army, and was killed during the battle, says that Grant "had an army of 58,000 men in camp, nearly 50,000 of whom were effectives. Buell was near at hand with 37,000 more." Gen. Grant says the story that Gen. Prentiss and his command "were surprised and captured in their camps is without any foundation whatever." General Bragg says of the attack upon Prentiss' command, "The enemy was found utterly unprepared, many being surprised and captured in their tents, and others, though on the outside, in costumes better fitted to the bed-chamber than to the battle-field." Gen. Preston says, "General Johnston then went to the camp assailed, which was carried between 7 and 8 o'clock. The enemy were evidently surprised. The breakfasts were on the mess tables, the baggage unpacked, the knapsacks, stores, colors and ammunition abandoned." Gen. William Johnston says that his father planned the battle, and gave peremptory orders to attack, in the face of earnest opposition from Gen. Beauregard. On the other hand, Gen. Jordan, another Confederate officer who took part in the battle, states that Gen. Beauregard insisted upon the assault in the face of General Johnston's objections.

There are many other discrepancies and positive contradictions in the three accounts, and if they are to be treated as infidelity treats the New Testament narratives of the resurrection, it is certain that there was no battle of Shiloh ever fought—the whole story is a lie, and belief in it is a silly delusion. Nay, according to the reasoning of skepticism, Napoleon Bonaparte never existed, as Archbishop Whately has clearly shown in his admirable little book, “Historic Doubts;” and not only so, but never has an event of any importance occurred, about which the testimony of two or more witnesses was given.

Suppose that four men of unimpeachable integrity, with no conceivable selfish or sinister motive to actuate them, solemnly declare in a simple, sincere, unaffected manner, that they saw a person murdered, would the fact that they might slightly disagree as to the number of witnesses present, or as to the very moment the fatal blow was given, invalidate their testimony concerning the act itself? But suppose upon closer examination it is discovered that there was really no disagreement, that none of the witnesses said *only* so many persons were present, but one just supplied what the others omitted, or stated the time according to his reckoning, or spoke from the particular stand-point he occupied in relation to the event, would not the apparent discrepancies fully confirm the truth of the whole narrative? They would certainly prove the absence of all concert or collusion between the narrators, and convince every reasonable man not only of their independence but of their credibility.

If the four accounts of the resurrection of Jesus had corresponded word for word, how certain it is infidelity would have sneered at the manifest token of a secret agreement between the four writers for fraudulent purposes! And yet when they exactly agree as to the main points, and apparently differ only in trivial details, still infidelity cavils, awakening serious doubt whether it desires to know the truth. It is certain that one of these four narratives was written and published before the three that followed it, and that it was in the hands of the men who prepared their separate treatises. Why did they not servilely copy one another, for a school boy could have done this, and why are not skeptics candid enough to admit that they would have done it, if they had desired to perpetrate a fraud? It seems hard that their obvious honesty is the very ground upon which they are rejected as unworthy of confidence.

But let us take for granted that which indeed is easily discovered upon a careful study of the four gospels, the distinct design of each writer in the preparation of his biography of Jesus, and many things otherwise obscure will become plain. Matthew wrote of Him specially as King of the Jews, and specially for the Jews. Mark wrote of Him as the obedient servant of Jehovah, thus predicted and set forth in the prophets, having the Romans particularly in view in his narrative. Luke wrote of Him in His widest relations to the human race as the Son of man, having the cultured Greeks prominently before his mind. John wrote of Him as the Son of God for the comfort chiefly of believers.

Now if the different accounts of His death, with the apparent discrepancies in the inscription placed by Pilate on the cross, and the different accounts of His resurrection with the apparent discrepancies in the visits of the women to the sepulchre, and in His appearances and the appearances of the angels, are thoughtfully considered in the light of the established and recognized principle just stated, if the difference between the Jewish and Roman mode of reckoning time is considered, if just and necessary allowance is made for the change in the meaning of words translated from Greek into English, if the different stand-points occupied by the historians is remembered, it will be found that the various narratives are in perfect harmony with the distinct designs of the four writers in the different gospels.

But let us go further, and see that the order of events may have been as follows: The earthquake and the resurrection occur before any one reaches the tomb; the women come to it very early, and find it empty; Mary Magdalene returns, and informs Peter and John; these two start upon a run, John in advance, but Peter arriving soon after, and with characteristic impetuosity entering the sepulchre; Mary Magdalene following; Jesus appears meanwhile to the other women; Peter and John return home; Mary lingers behind, sees Jesus, and reports to all of the disciples. Or, to enter a little more minutely into particulars: (1) Mary Magdalene and the other Mary did not go alone to the sepulchre early in the morning, but were accompanied by the other women. (2) When they drew

nigh, and discovered that the stone was rolled away, Mary Magdalene instantly hurried to Peter and John. (3) Meantime the other women saw the vision of angels, were told of the resurrection and commanded to communicate the tidings to the disciples. (4) John first, then Peter, then Mary came to the sepulchre, the two men soon returning home, the woman remaining behind weeping. (5) She saw the angels, and immediately afterwards the Lord Himself. (6) The other women, who were hurrying back to the city were met by the risen Jesus, and permitted to worship Him. (7) Following this, which plainly occupied but a few minutes, were His appearances to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, then to Peter, and finally to the eleven as they were assembled in the evening.

When, therefore, the only discrepancies of any moment are so easily reconciled, without straining at effect, and without violence to the context, when the only discords that jar harshly upon the most sensitive ear are so readily reduced to harmony, is it not most ungenerous for skeptics still to spurn the entire narrative, and to brand the writers as vile impostors or deluded fanatics? Is then their character, in other respects unassailed and unassailable, to go for nothing? Is the charm of their style, is the marvellous beauty of the story they tell, is the transparent honesty of their statements concerning themselves, is the profundity of their doctrine which has called into delighted exercise the best intellects for eighteen centuries; is the comfort they have given to unnumbered millions of sad hearts, is the light they have brought into myriads of

desolated homes, is the pardon they have spoken to countless multitudes of the guilty and despairing sons of men in successive generations, is the power they have wielded to lift the nations, that have at all heeded their voice, to a higher and nobler civilization—is all this to go for nothing, because a cursory reading may reveal inaccuracies in the mere filling up of the great picture that exhibits the resurrection of Jesus?

But how comes it that very many of the very best minds, aye, of the very best legal minds, long accustomed to the examination and cross-examination of witnesses, and quick to detect the slightest flaw in evidence, have never discovered the discrepancies and contradictions which skeptics profess to find in the accounts of that resurrection? It will not be denied that the most distinguished jurists of Europe and America have been as a rule, devout, sincere Christians, and it will not do to say that they were weak, or superstitious, or cowardly, or inferior in any respect to the infidels of their day. Hence it would be well for those who are disposed to think that the story of the resurrection is an old wives' fable, if they would escape merited ridicule for stupid ignorance or inordinate self-conceit, to remember that their peers, to say the least, in intellect and knowledge firmly believe that Jesus rose from the dead.

If He did not, what became of His body? All who have the lowest degree of intelligence know and admit that He died, and was buried, and hence it is most pertinent to inquire, What became of His body? It was certainly in the hands either of His

friends or His foes. If the former had it in possession, and pretended that He rose, although He remained in the grave, they are the most stupendous liars this world has ever seen, but no one but a brute too low to deserve the slightest notice believes that. If His foes had control of it, why did they not exhibit it, when a few days after His death, all Jerusalem was stirred to its depths by the announcement made on the streets that He was risen, and three thousand believed it in one day? All that His enemies had to do was to show the body, or to give some better explanation of its disappearance than the silly invention, that His few timid disciples had stolen it from the midst of a band of sleeping soldiers, and they would have dispelled the illusion forever, and plucked up the delicate plant of Christianity by the roots. What became of the body? In the light of this question, the theory of fraud, the theory of a swoon, the theory of a myth, the theory of hallucination, the theory of an apparition, each and all fade into nothingness, and there remains in its sublime proportions, reaching down to hell, towering up to heaven, stretching throughout eternity, the one great inquiry which must be met, What became of the body?



### III.

#### PAUL'S TESTIMONY.

AS already stated, no one but a fool or a mad-man denies that Jesus of Nazareth lived and died. It would show far more sense to deny that Alexander, Hannibal or Cæsar, that Socrates, Plato or Aristotle lived, for there is not a tithe of the evidence for their existence which can be furnished to establish the fact that He, in whom millions of the best and most intelligent people on earth during eighteen centuries have trusted as their Saviour, once walked among men, and suffered upon the cross. Hence infidelity, unless it is willing to disclaim all appearance of common honesty, is forced to meet the question, (What became of His body?)

Happily those who are really anxious to know the truth may be helped towards a satisfactory answer by the perusal of two or three ancient documents, the authorship of which is conceded by all skeptics, who have the least pretension to scholarship. These documents are known as (the epistles to the Romans, to the Corinthians, and to the Galatians.) Upon that to the Romans Dean Alford says, "This epistle has been universally believed to be the genuine production of the Apostle Paul. Neither the Judaizing sects of old, who rejected the Pauline Epistles, nor the skeptical critics of modern Germany, have doubted this." Upon the epistle to the Corinthians he remarks, "As far as I am aware [and, remember, the range of his learning

was almost boundless] the first of these epistles has never been doubted by any critic of note. Indeed he who would do so, must be prepared to dispute the historical truth of the character of St. Paul." Upon the one to the Galatians he declares, "as Windischmann observes, whoever is prepared to deny the genuineness of this Epistle, would pronounce on himself the sentence of incapacity to distinguish true from false. Accordingly its authorship has never been doubted."

With these words of the Christian expositor Baur, Strauss, and Renan would cordially agree. The last named says, "Paul has left elaborate works, and none of the writings of the other apostles can dispute the palm with his in either importance, or authenticity. . . . Though written for the most part between the years 53 and 62, the epistles of St. Paul are replete with information about the first years of Christianity." Again he says, "I would refer to a prominent passage in St. Paul (1 Cor. xv. 5-8), which establishes—first, the reality of the apparitions or appearances of Christ." Strauss also accepts without hesitation the authenticity and genuineness of the epistle to the Corinthians, and tells us that "the earliest writer who gives us any accurate information as to how the belief in the resurrection of Jesus arose among his disciples is the Apostle Paul;" and again, "if we ask when and where the disciples of Jesus saw these apparitions, the most ancient witness, the Apostle Paul, gives us, as we have already mentioned, little or no assistance towards arriving at a result."

It is well, however, to inquire what this most ancient witness testifies in a document of which he is the acknowledged author. "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;" or in other words, he is about to define and explain the meaning of the gospel, or that which is essential to the gospel. "For I delivered unto you first of all [not only first in point of time, but first in point of importance, as ever placed in the fore-front of all his preaching] 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." The creed, therefore, upon which he insists as embracing the gospel is very brief and simple, but it is of immense moment and significance—"Christ died; Christ was buried; Christ rose again the third day."

He then proceeds to cite his witnesses of this fundamental, indispensable, and indisputable fact of Christ's real resurrection. "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of about five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present [about twenty-four or twenty-five years after the resurrection], but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as one born out of due time." Or as he says in another place in this same authentic epistle, when defending himself against some in the Corinthian Church, who had denied his apostolic authority, "Am I not an apostle, am I not

free? have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?" (1 Cor. ix. 1).

But he goes on to show that the literal resurrection of Jesus vitally touches the very existence of Christianity itself. "Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain. 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. For if the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised: and if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept," (1 Cor. xv. 1-20).

It will be observed that the main point of the apostle's argument in this passage is not the resurrection of Christ, but the resurrection of Christians. He does not assert and prove the former, except as it has a direct and altogether essential bearing on the latter. There were some in the Corinthian Church who were weak enough to deny the literal resurrection of their own bodies, owing to scientific objections, or to the mystery connected with it, or to other difficulties in the way of its accomplishment. To these the apostle addresses himself in terms of earnest admonition and indignant rebuke, as he

sets forth seven inevitable and tremendous consequences of rejecting the truth which they had foolishly been led to doubt. First, if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen. Second, if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and it is utterly useless to go forward with the work of proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation. Third, if Christ be not risen, your faith is also vain, for there is no divine person on whom it can rest. Fourth, yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, not only false witnesses, but false witnesses concerning God, and therefore the greatest liars that have ever lived. Fifth, ye are yet in your sins, and must remain in them under a righteous condemnation while eternity endures. Sixth, the dear ones from whom you parted on their dying bed, and whose departure made your heart strings strain as if they would break, have perished forever. Seventh, we are of all men most miserable, because we are forced to endure the loss of all things for the present, and have no hope for the future.

Then recoiling from the horrible results of denying the resurrection of the dead, as involving the denial of the resurrection of Jesus, he exclaims in a lofty burst of praise and triumph and positive testimony and cloudless assurance, "Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept." Of this glorious fact he summons as witnesses the apostle Peter, then the twelve apostles, then the greater part of five hundred brethren, appealing to them, it will be observed when they were yet alive, and when therefore it

would be easy to impeach his testimony if false, then the apostle James, then all of the apostles again, and finally himself. It is a great mistake to suppose that when he says, "I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received," he means that he received the gospel, embracing the death and burial and resurrection of Christ, from the other apostles. As he writes in a preceding part of this same authentic epistle, "I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you" concerning the Lord's Supper, that "as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," (1 Cor. xi. 23-26). Or as he says in another authentic epistle, "I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ," (Gal. i. 11, 12).

He declares, therefore, that it was directly from Christ he received the gospel, which is summed up in the death and burial and resurrection of Jesus; and hence it is simply impossible to explain his belief in the resurrection, and his constant proclamation of it in all of his preaching, upon the swoon theory of Paulus, the myth theory of Strauss, the legendary theory of Renan, or the apparition theory of Keim. Either Paul distinctly saw, and repeatedly conversed with Jesus, after the resurrection, or he was the most egregious liar who has ever written a line, although his lie has been more fruitful of good than any truth yet discovered.)

Strauss has so effectually disposed of the swoon theory that his argument is worth repeating. "It

is quite evident," he says, "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 sepulchre, who crept about weak and ill, wanting medical treatment, who required bandaging, strengthening, and indulgence, could have given to the disciples the impression that he was a Conqueror over death and the grave, the Prince of Life—an impression that lay at the bottom of their future ministry. Such a resuscitation could only have weakened the impression 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."

But how much better is the theory of Strauss himself, when he says, ("Thus the faith in Jesus as the Messiah, which by his violent death had received an apparently fatal shock, was subjectively restored, by the instrumentality of the mind, the power of imagination, and nervous excitement!") Let us see how much the power of imagination, and nervous excitement, had to do with the faith of a man, whom he calls "the most ancient witness," and three of whose epistles he acknowledges to be genuine. The most of this man's life we gather from a book of which Renan says, "There can be no doubt that the Acts of the Apostles were written by the author of the third Gospel [Luke], and form

a continuation of that work. It is not necessary to stop and prove this proposition, which has never been seriously contested." Perhaps it may be as well to add that "the Rev. William Kirk Hobart, LL.D., of Trinity College, Dublin, in his book called *The Medical Language of St. Luke*, finds that Luke, in the third gospel and in the Acts of the Apostles used a great many words both simple and compound, and also many peculiar phrases, or forms of expression, which are not found in the other Evangelists, or even in the classical writers of his day. He examined, likewise, the works of medical writers from the time of Hippocrates to that of Galen, and he adduces evidence that these writers habitually use the same distinctive words and phrases," another proof, by the way of the undesigned coincidences with which the New Testament abounds, and of the truthfulness of Paul when he speaks of Luke as "the beloved physician," (Col. iv. 14).

It may be well also to quote the language of Rawlinson, the distinguished Oriental historian, concerning the myth theory: "In no single respect—if we except the fact that it is miraculous—has that story a mythical character. It is a single story, told without variations; whereas myths are fluctuating and multiform: it is blended inextricably with the civil history of the times, which it everywhere reports with extraordinary accuracy; whereas myths distort or supersede civil history: it is full of prosaic detail, which myths studiously eschew: it abounds with practical instruction of the simplest and purest kind; whereas myths teach by allegory. Even in its miraculous element



it stands to some extent in contrast with all mythologies, where the marvellous has ever a predominant character of grotesqueness which is absent from New Testament miracles. [This Strauss himself admits]. Simple earnestness, fidelity, painstaking accuracy, pure love of truth, are the most patent characteristics of the New Testament writers, who evidently deal with facts, not with fancies, and are employed in relating a history, not in developing an idea. They write that 'we may know the certainty of the things which are most surely believed' in their day. They 'bear record of what they have seen and heard.' I know not how stronger words could have been used to prevent the notion of that plastic, growing myth which Strauss conceives to have been in apostolic times."

Turning now to the account which the beloved physician gives of Paul's conversion, he testifies that when the apostle was known as Saul of Tarsus, he took a prominent part in the death of Stephen, the first Christian martyr, that "he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison," that "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? [The words

which follow in the common text, 'It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks,' are without any authority whatever from the Greek MSS., says the Revised Version. They were put in here by Erasmus]. 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." The narrative then relates his entrance into the city, his continuance three days without sight and without food, the visit of one Ananias to him, and his baptism; "and straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God," (Acts ix. 1-20).

About twenty-five years after the event here recorded, we see Paul standing on the stairs of the Roman Castle in Jerusalem, and addressing his infuriated countrymen as follows: "Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye my defence, which I make now unto you. (And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence: and he saith). I am verily a man which am a Jew, born in Tarsus, a city of Cilicia, yet brought up in this city, at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, and was zealous toward God, as ye all are this day. And I persecuted this way unto the death, binding and delivering into prisons both men and women. As also the high priest doth bear me witness, and all the estate of the elders: from whom also I received letters unto the breth-

ren, and went to Damascus, to bring them which were there bound unto Jerusalem, for to be punished. And it came to pass, that, as I made my journey, and was come nigh unto Damascus about noon, suddenly there shone from heaven a great light round about me. And I fell unto the ground, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecutest. And they that were with me saw indeed the light, and were afraid; but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, what shall I do, Lord? And the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do. And when I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of them that were with me, I came into Damascus. And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. And he said, 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. For thou shalt be his witness unto all men, of what thou hast seen and heard," (Acts xxii. 1-15).

Two years later, during the whole of which time the apostle was in prison, we find him making his defence before King Agrippa, who had come to Cæsarea to pay his respects to Governor Festus, the representative of the Roman Emperor from

whom Agrippa derived his power to reign. He was called Agrippa the Second or Younger, "to distinguish him from his father, Agrippa the First, always called Herod in the Acts of the Apostles, whose miserable end is recorded in chap. xii. 23. When that event took place, the Emperor Claudius, the friend and patron of the younger Agrippa, who had been brought up at Rome, was dissuaded by his counsellors from giving to a youth of seventeen the whole dominion of his father, but bestowed upon him the kingdom of Chalcis which had belonged to his uncle Herod, and afterwards gave him the tetrarchate of his uncle Philip, with certain parts of Galilee and Perea, with the royal title. To this was eventually added the guardianship of the temple, the keeping of the sacred vestments, and the right of nominating the High Priest. Here again the writer's truthfulness and knowledge of his subject are evinced by the precision and the confidence with which he steers through all these complicated changes without once committing even an anachronism or misnomer. Three times, in the course of the New Testament history, we find a Herod on the throne, yet always with some variation in the circumstances, which would have proved a snare to a fictitious writer," (Dr. J. A. Alexander).

Thus it occurred that Agrippa, although a King, was without jurisdiction in Cæsarea, and was only a visitor to Festus, who spoke to him of his remarkable prisoner, and he in turn expressed a desire to see and hear him. Leaving out the courteous and graceful opening of the apostle's address, which has always excited the admiration of literary

men by its skill and elegance of diction, we come at once to the gist of his defence: "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth. Which thing I also did in Jerusalem: and many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests; and 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. Whereupon as I went to Damascus, with authority and commission from the chief priests, at midday, O King, I saw in the way a light from heaven, above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were all fallen to the earth, I heard a voice speaking unto me, and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Then follows his commission to preach the gospel, and he adds, "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. And as he thus spake for himself, Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning doth make thee mad. But he

said, 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. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets ? I know that thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether such as I am, except these bonds," (Acts xxvi.).

There are two other appearances of the risen Jesus to Paul recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, one in chapter xviii., and the other in chapter xxiii. But upon these it is needless to dwell, for if his testimony concerning the appearance on the road to Damascus is not believed, neither would his assertion of subsequent manifestations be received. It is conceded, however by all that up to that eventful journey, he was a savage and unrelenting foe of Jesus and His disciples. Previous to that time, therefore, he could not have been pre-disposed to accept the claims of the crucified One, and hence every fair-minded man will confess that he is compelled to account, in some rational way, for his sudden and remarkable conversion.

#### IV.

##### *WAS PAUL A CREDIBLE WITNESS?*

THERE is but one apparent discrepancy in these three accounts, written and spoken at an interval of twenty-seven years, which deserves the slightest notice. It shows how hard pushed infidelity is, when it seeks to make a handle with which to strike at Christ out of the fact, that in Luke's narrative it is said that the men who journeyed with Paul stood speechless, and in Paul's address before Agrippa, that when they were all fallen to the earth, he heard a voice speaking to him. Even a child can see that there is no contradiction, for the men might have first stood speechless with terror, and then fallen to the earth, or they may at first have fallen to the earth, and then stood, or remained fixed, rooted to the spot, as the word rendered "stood" sometimes means. It shows too how hard infidelity is pushed, when it strives to make a handle with which to strike at Christ out of the fact, that in Paul's speech before Agrippa he adds the phrase, not found elsewhere, "it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" or goads. If infidelity were as wise as it is wary, it would see a reason why the apostle should repeat these words to the king, and not to his countrymen, for they indicate the entire hopelessness and utter uselessness of resisting a mightier power than that of kings, and they are designed to impress Agrippa himself with the danger of striving against his con-

science and God, while they would constitute in his judgment an unanswerable defence of Paul's conduct in yielding obedience to the sovereign behest of the Almighty.

But great stress has been laid upon the difference between Luke's statement, that the men who journeyed with Saul stood speechless, "hearing a voice," and the apostle's speech from the castle stairs, that "they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." A sensible and fair-minded man would be slow to conclude that so accomplished a writer as the beloved physician would permit a glaring contradiction to occur in the brief narrative of the Acts of the Apostles, and a sensible and fair-minded man would pause to reflect, that nothing is more natural than the distinction between hearing a voice and hearing what it says, as nothing is more common than the complaint that a public speaker is not heard, although his voice may be loud enough to fill the entire building or space where the audience is assembled. It so turns out that in the chapter, preceding the one in which the apostle testifies of the resurrection of Jesus, and which infidels admit to be genuine, the same apostle says, "He that speaketh in an unknown tongue, speaketh not unto men, but unto God: for no man understandeth him," (1 Cor. xiv. 2). Now the word rendered *understandeth* is precisely the same that is translated *heard*, when the apostle says, "they heard not the voice of him that spake to me." They heard, but did not understand, as the people heard, but did not understand, when Jesus cried, "Father, glorify thy name. Then came there a



voice from heaven, saying, I have both glorified it, and will glorify it again. The people therefore that stood by, and heard it, said that it thundered," (John xii. 28, 29). They both heard, and heard not, as it surely was with Paul's companions.

Having thus disposed of the alleged contradictions or discrepancies, we are prepared to consider the testimony of the apostle to the resurrection of Jesus, confirmed as it is by the historical narrative in the Acts. Passing by for the present the remarkable statement, that at the time he wrote his authentic epistle, there were more than two hundred and fifty living witnesses who had seen Jesus after His resurrection, it is enough to say that he repeatedly declares he himself had seen the risen Jesus, and heard Him speak in most distinct and articulate language. Nor is it possible to discover in this unequivocal testimony only the power of imagination and nervous excitement. As he boldly says in the presence of Agrippa, "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 done at noon, on a public and thronged highway, near one of the most magnificent cities of the world, in the presence of a number of police officers or soldiers ; and if there was no truth in it, why did not some of them arise and contradict it, and why has it never been contradicted to this day, except when a lot of human vermin crawl out of the cess-pool of their corruption to charge the apostle with fraud or fanaticism ?

It will not avail infidelity in the least to find an

explanation of his belief that Jesus rose, and the rapidly growing belief of vast multitudes that he told the truth, in the credulity of an ignorant and superstitious age. It was anything but an ignorant and superstitious age. On the other hand it was the golden age of literature. Philosophy, oratory, poetry, and the fine arts flourished to a degree that has never been surpassed nor equalled. Such philosophers as Plato and Aristotle, such orators as Demosthenes and Cicero, such poets as Horace and Virgil, such sculptors as Praxitiles and Phidias, such painters as Apelles and Zeuxis had already achieved immortality, and who has surpassed them in modern times? Uhlhorn in his admirable book, "The Conflict of Christianity with Heathenism," truly says, "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. Never again has art so penetrated men's homes, adorning even all the utensils of daily life, and its entire environment. . . . 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. . . . Journeys became the fashion.

Whoever had not seen Greece, and visited the East, whoever had not been in Athens and Alexandria, hardly counted among persons of education; and just as we have to-day our guide-books for Italy and Switzerland, so had the Roman tourist his guide-book which pointed out all the various sights, and designated the temples, statues, pictures, antiquities, which were of special interest. . . . 'During the whole month of April,' Pliny relates, 'there was scarcely a day in which some one did not recite a poem'; and Seneca says, 'we suffer from a superfluity of sciences.'"

There is much more of the same sort, showing conclusively that in wealth, and splendor, and learning, and profound investigation and sharp criticism, the time of the apostle far surpassed the boasted nineteenth century which, with perhaps the exception of the application of steam to machinery, and certain mechanical inventions, is far inferior to it in intellectual achievements. As Uhlhorn remarks, "in comparison with such a profusion of works of art, of palaces and temples, of theatres and baths, of triumphal arches and statues numbered by thousands," in "the grandeur of the public works, the bridges, streets, aqueducts, throughout the entire Empire, whose ruins in Africa and in the Eifel, in France and in Syria, still excite our admiration, the picture as a whole is indeed astonishing," and the most beautiful and wealthy cities of modern times "appear actually poor." Amid such tokens of high culture Paul brings forward his testimony that he had seen and heard the risen Jesus, not in a corner, but on a public road, at midday, in the

presence of many attendants who were certainly not predisposed to believe his story; and yet it remained uncontradicted, it was believed by such crowds at the very time and in the very vicinity where Paul declared it occurred, even by "a great company of priests," every one of whom hated the name of Jesus, that his enemies said, they "have turned the world upside down," (Acts xvii. 6).

If the apostle himself did not believe it, then he was an arrant liar, and a liar for no conceivable end. He had nothing to gain, and every thing to lose, by the lie. He lost a fortune he was in a fair way of obtaining, he lost a reputation of which he was proud, he lost power which he was already wielding, he lost friends of whom he seemed fond, he lost his country to which he was devotedly attached, he lost his religion that was more to him than all the world, he lost life itself. He gained poverty, and disgrace, and suffering, and hatred, and exile, and excommunication from the Jewish church, and death. "Even unto this present hour," he says in an authentic epistle, "we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place; and labor, working with our own hands: being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it: being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the offscouring of all things unto this day," (1 Cor. iv. 11-13). Referring to the other apostles he says, "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. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches," (2 Cor. xi. 23-28). It is true, as often asserted, that persons have endured death in defence of false doctrine, but none have ever passed through a long life of constant privation and toil and pain, and met a cruel martyrdom at last, for what they knew to be a falsehood.

It is well, therefore, to dismiss at once and forever the charge, that was sometimes formerly brought against the apostle, of fraud and imposture, but which happily is never made now except by a very few of most asinine intellect and most beastly degradation, whose souls are not large enough to make it worth while to trouble one's self about them. It only remains, then, to inquire whether we can trace his testimony to the power of imagination and nervous excitement, or, in other words, to fanaticism, which consists in a "wild, unnatural enthusiasm," according to Worcester, or according to Webster in "wild and extravagant notions of religion." Of this we can judge only by the whole tenor of his conduct and teachings. Turning then

to these epistles which infidels admit that he wrote, we find running through them such exhortations as the following: "Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honor preferring one another; not slothful in business; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you; bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men," (Rom. xii. 9-18). Is there anything like fanaticism in this?

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained [or ordered] of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation [or judgment]. . . . Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience' sake. For, for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe no man

anything, but to love one another: for the love that another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law," (Rom. xiii. 1-10). Is there any fanaticism in this?

"Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, 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, 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, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself; is not puffed up; doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things," (1 Cor. xiii. 1-7). Is there any fanaticism in this, even the enemies of the apostle themselves being judges?

But it is needless to enlarge, for the same marvellous common sense, or rather the same super-human wisdom, marks all of his writings from first to last, nor do they contain a single element of

fanaticism. He touches upon every relation a Christian can possibly hold, as husband, wife, parent, child, brother, sister, master, servant, citizen, friend, member of the church, member of society, creature of God, inhabitant of the world, heir of eternity, and discovers and enjoins the various duties that spring out of these manifold relations in such way that it has called forth the warmest commendation of the most thoughtful minds for eighteen hundred years; nor does infidelity even pretend to lay its finger upon a single statement amid his teachings and illustrations, that is in conflict with any admitted fact of modern science. It is true that "the apostolic fathers," and his fellow-laborer Clement among them, made statements and employed illustrations, which can not stand for a moment in the light of our present knowledge. But it is not so with his epistles, which everywhere bear the marks of divine guidance in their singular preservation from error, and in the soundness of their advice.

It is certain, if his precepts were heeded, that husbands would love their wives as Christ loved the church; that wives would reverence their husbands; that fathers would not provoke their children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; that children would honor their fathers and mothers; that masters would give to their servants that which is just and equal; that servants would obey their masters; that rulers would remember they are but the ministers of God; that subjects would abstain from bloody revolution and violence; that all bitterness,



and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking would cease; that no corrupt communication would proceed out of the mouth; that purity would be maintained in every home, and rule in every heart; that theft, and falsehood, and drunkenness, and idleness, and covetousness would come to an end; that contentment, and love, and joy, and peace would reign here below, while the sky would be bright with the promise of coming and everlasting glory.

But while giving utterance to sentiments so lofty and so lovely, he ever speaks of himself with lowly self-abasement, as the least of the apostles, as less than the least of all saints, as the chief of sinners; and although he claims to have had a rare vision of heavenly beauty, he does not allude to it until more than fourteen years had passed, and then as a fool, to use his own language, compelled to it by the necessity that was laid upon him to vindicate his apostolic character and authority. Would a man under the power of imagination, and nervous excitement, deal thus with such an opportunity for self-glorification? Could a man be the pitiable victim of delusion and fanaticism, and at the same time exhibit the humility, the meekness, the cheerfulness, the sagacity and wisdom everywhere observable in the brief writings of the apostle? Many, very many libraries have been constructed out of these writings by eminent scholars, by profound philosophers, by devout Christians; and they still remain unexhausted, a perpetual fountain of saving truth and salutary instruction to all classes and conditions of men.

But, observe, he himself rests the whole of these wonderful writings upon the fact that he saw and heard Jesus after His resurrection. Scarcely do we open the first of the three epistles, acknowledged by the infidels to be genuine, before we are told that 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). Then we read that He "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," (Rom. iv. 25); that "if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," (Rom. v. 10); "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); "Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more," (Rom. vi. 9); that "ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God," (Rom. vii. 4); that "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); that "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. 34); and "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).

There are many similar references to the resurrection in the three authentic epistles, but enough has been said to show that Paul staked everything, and based everything, upon the fact that he saw and heard Jesus after His body came forth from the sepulchre. The highest legal authority has given the four following tests of credibility that must attach to the testimony of a witness who is perfectly trustworthy: (1) The fact must fall within the reach of his senses. (2) He must observe or attend to it. (3) He must possess a fair amount of intelligence and memory. (4) He must be a man of veracity, and free from sinister or misleading interest. That all of these conditions are met by the apostle Paul, when he testifies to the resurrection of Jesus, will not be disputed by any unprejudiced mind. He declares that he saw and heard Him at high noon of a cloudless day on a public road, and at other times, and on other occasions. He closely observed and attended to the appearance and the words. He possessed far more than a fair amount of intelligence, and there is no reason to question the retentiveness of his memory. He was beyond all doubt a man of veracity, and free from selfish motives. Hence if the testimony of a credible witness is to be received, we are bound to believe the resurrection of Jesus. But other witnesses are yet to come.

*WHEN DID THE WITNESSES LIVE?*

**T**HE only course left open to infidelity is to impeach the testimony of those who declare that they saw Jesus repeatedly after His resurrection, and conversed with Him on several occasions. This it dare not undertake by charging the witnesses with deliberate falsehood and fraud, but by the barefaced declaration that they did not live at the time of Christ's crucifixion. There would be as much sense shown in saying that John Adams and Benjamin Franklin and Charles Carroll of Carrollton and George Washington did not live at the time of the American Revolution; and yet the impudent statement is made again and again, chiefly by feeble fledglings from the foul nest of skepticism, who know about as much of what they are so confidently affirming to their astonished mammas and sisters, as a baby knows of algebra.

It is well, perhaps, to remind any who may have been shaken by the utterly baseless assertion, that the ablest men, and men of the purest lives, who have examined the subject, unite in proclaiming the authenticity and genuineness of the four Gospels, or in other words, that these four Gospels relate matters of fact as they really occurred, and were written by the persons whose names they bear. Sir Isaac Newton says, "I find more sure marks of authenticity in the New Testament than in any profane history whatever." Isaac Taylor,

the accomplished scholar and elegant writer and profound thinker, insists that "the integrity of the records of the Christian faith is substantiated by evidence, *in a tenfold proportion*, more various, copious, and conclusive than that which can be adduced in support of any other ancient writings." Chief Justice Bushe, referring to the narratives of the four Gospels, says, "if those facts are not therefore established, nothing in the history of mankind can be believed." Rawlinson, whose competency to deal with such a question, and whose honesty, will not be questioned, writes as follows: "In truth, there is not the slightest pretence for insinuating that there ever was any doubt as to the authorship of any one of the historical books of the New Testament; which are as uniformly ascribed to the writers whose names they bear as the Return of the Ten Thousand to Xenophon, or the lives of the Cæsars to Suetonius. There is indeed *far better* evidence [italics his] of authorship in the case of the four Gospels and of the Acts of the Apostles, than exists with respect to the works of almost any classical writer."

Simon Greenleaf, LL.D., Professor of Law in Harvard University, is unquestionably entitled to be heard with deference upon the credibility of the witnesses who tell us of the death and resurrection of Jesus, for his great work, called a "Treatise on the Law of Evidence," has received the highest commendation as an authority upon the topic with which it deals. The London *Law Journal*, in its notice of the book, admits that "upon the existing law of evidence more light has shone from the New

World than from all the lawyers who adorn the courts of Europe." The *North American Review* spoke of him before his death as "an able and profound lawyer—a man who has grown gray in the halls of justice and the schools of jurisprudence—a writer of the highest authority on legal subjects, whose life has been spent in weighing testimony and sifting evidence, and whose published opinions on the rules of evidence are received as authoritative in all the English and American tribunals."

This great lawyer in 1846 published a book under the title, an "Examination of the Testimony of the Four Evangelists, by the Rules of Evidence as administered in Courts of Justice, with an Account of the Trial of Jesus." The book was republished in England at the instance of the highest dignitaries of the English Church. In it he says, "Let the witnesses be compared with themselves, with each other, and with surrounding facts and circumstances; and let their testimony be sifted as if it were given in a court of justice on the side of the adverse party, the witnesses being subjected to a rigorous cross examination. The result, it is confidently believed, will be an undoubting conviction of their integrity, ability, and truth. In the course of such an examination the undesigned coincidences will multiply upon us at every step in our progress; the probability of the veracity of the witnesses and of the reality of the occurrences which they relate will increase until it acquires, for all practical purposes, the value and force of demonstration."

But if the question be asked of an intelligent

Christian why he believes that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John lived in the days of Jesus, and wrote the narratives ascribed to them, he will reply, apart from the internal evidence of their truthfulness, and many external proofs, and the results of faith as affecting his own consciousness and experience, that he believes it for the same reasons, only far stronger, which lead him to believe that John Milton wrote *Paradise Lost*, that Julius Cæsar wrote his *Commentaries on the Gallic Wars*, that Horace and Virgil wrote the poems attributed to them, that Sallust and Tacitus wrote the histories which bear their name, that Cicero delivered the orations which it is supposed he uttered in the Senate Chamber of Rome. In the first place, there is *prima facie* evidence that these men were the authors of the several works mentioned, because there is no reason, so far as the facts are known, to ascribe them to others. Then it is found that they are quoted or alluded to generation by generation and century by century, in the pages of various writers, up to the very time the alledged authors lived, that no contemporaneous writers disputed their claim, that they can not be traced a day beyond the period when they existed, that the literary style, allusions to manners, customs, and events, and various incidents related, are in conformity with what is otherwise ascertained to be the character and habits and opportunities of these writers; and hence their productions are received without hesitation as genuine.

Well, let us pursue precisely the same mode of investigation with regard to the four gospels, whose

reputed authors will be cited as witnesses for the risen Jesus. In the eighteenth century we have scores and hundreds of eminent Christian writers, all testifying to the existence of Christianity, and all quoting the four gospels as authentic and genuine. "It is only necessary to mention the names of the Wesleys, Whitefield, Dr. Jonathan Edwards, Dr. Adam Clarke, Dr. Whitby, Dr. Leland, Dr. Blair, Dr. Doddridge, Bishop Butler, author of "The Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Course and Constitution of Nature," Dr. Samuel Johnson, Sir Isaac Newton, Edmund Burke who wrote so powerfully in defence of Christianity, and Sir William Blackstone, the distinguished legal luminary, of whom his biographer in Appleton's Cyclopædia states that "in religious matters he was earnest and sincere, without affectation, profoundly believing in the church of England, and conforming strictly to its rules and practices." Even if the great religious movements of the century, and the number of prominent Christian writers, did not prove a wide spread belief in the four gospels, infidels will no doubt gladly admit that the writings of their favorite authors, as Voltaire, Tom Paine, Charles Blount, and Lord Bolingbroke furnish conclusive evidence how largely Christianity engaged the thoughts of men a hundred years ago.

In the seventeenth century, as every one knows, Charles I. was beheaded, and Oliver Cromwell became Lord Protector of England, favoring Presbyterians, and especially Independents, at the expense of Episcopacy; that Henry IV. of France was assassinated, subjecting the Protestants to savage



persecutions ; that in 1641 more than 40,000, some say 150,000 Protestants were massacred in Ireland ; that such Christian writers as Dr. John Lightfoot, Matthew Poole, Bishop Pearson, Dr. John Owen, Dr. Manton, Richard Baxter, Dr. Calamy, Howe, Bates, Bishop Bull, Bishop Burnet, Archbishop Tillotson, Dr. Sherlock, Chillingworth, Stillingfleet, Francis Bacon, Sir Matthew Hale, the eminent jurist and earnest Christian who wrote four books in defence or exposition of the New Testament, John Milton, and John Locke, sent forth their immortal works, as the world calls them, all recognizing the truth of the narratives contained in the four Gospels, and none doubting their authorship.

In the sixteenth century the Protestant Reformation, producing such writers as Martin Luther, Philip Melancthon, the learned Erasmus, Martin Bucer, Ulric Zwingle, John Calvin, William Farel, Theodore Beza, John Knox, besides at least fifty more who devoted their time and scholarship to the exposition and illustration of the scriptures, carries us back still nearer to the four Evangelists, while the rapid spread of Protestantism into many of the countries of Europe, the founding of the order of Jesuits by Ignatius Loyola, the propagation of the gospel by Roman Catholic missionaries in India, China, and Japan, the assembling of the famous Council of Trent, and the horrible massacre of Protestants in France on St. Bartholomew's day, leave no room to doubt the power of the gospel to agitate the minds of men.

In the fifteenth century John Huss and Jerome of Prague were burned at the stake by order of the

Council of Constance, the Moors and Jews were converted to the papal church in Spain by force, the Waldenses were compelled to face the fiercest persecutions; and yet in this dark age the names of about 90 prominent ecclesiastical and theological writers have been preserved, among which those of Thomas a Kempis and Savanarola are the only ones that would in all probability be generally recognized.

In the fourteenth century Mosheim's Church History preserves the names of eighty-two ecclesiastical writers, adding, however, the words, there are "many others, too numerous to mention." Among these the only one who would excite any public interest is John Wickliffe, but all of them refer to the four Gospels under the names which they bear. Christianity, such as it was, made considerable advance in China and Tartary, the Waldenses were persecuted, but Louis of Bavaria, Philip the Fair of France, and Edward III. of England, opposed the arrogance of the Popes, one of whom, Clement V., while he was dining, ordered the Venetian ambassador to be chained under his table like a dog, showing the recognized power of the church. The residence of the Popes during this century was removed to Avignon, and rival Popes for a long time carried on a bitter controversy with each other.

In the thirteenth century the names of fifty-three ecclesiastical writers are given, among whom Roger Bacon, Thomas Aquinas, and Bonaventura are eminent, all recognizing the authenticity and genuineness of the four gospels; Christianity was propagated among the Arabians in Spain; a fifth

crusade was carried on against the Saracens by the combined arms of Italy and Germany; the Inquisition was established in Gaul, and committed to Dominic and his order; King John of England was excommunicated by Pope Innocent III.; the adoration of the Host was introduced by Pope Honorius III.; and a sharp debate arose between the Dominicans and Franciscans concerning the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary.

In the twelfth century the names of fifty-two ecclesiastical writers are given, the best known being Abelard, William of Malmesbury, Thomas a Becket, and Anselm, all quoting the four Evangelists; two famous military and religious orders were instituted, the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and The Knights Templars; another Crusade was undertaken in the interests of Christianity; missionary efforts succeeded in winning over the Slavonians, and Finlanders; the Scholastic Theology had its rise; Academical degrees were introduced, and learning revived.

In the eleventh century we find the names of fifty-three writers on the gospels, Pope Gregory the Seventh being the most prominent; the crusades were carried on with fanatical zeal; various religious orders were instituted; the emperor Henry IV. of Germany went barefooted to the Roman Pontiff; and the Church was supreme in all the affairs of Europe, touching every throne and household by its despotic and irresponsible power.

In the tenth century we have the names of twenty Popes, and thirty-six ecclesiastical writers, none of whom, perhaps, are worthy of special notice ex-

cept Dunstan, archbishop of Canterbury, and Edgar, king of England; the Danes and Polanders and Hungarians were converted to Christianity; and the influence of the monks greatly increased in England, that suffered sorely from Danish invasions.

In the ninth century we find the names of fifty-six ecclesiastical and theological writers, the most noted being Alfred the Great, King of England, who composed a Saxon Paraphrase on the Ecclesiastical History of Bede, and a Saxon Psalter, and who also founded the university of Oxford; and the gospel in a mutilated form was carried to the Swedes, Saxons, Huns, Bohemians, Russians, and Bulgarians, while Methodus made a translation of the Bible for the Bulgarians, which was used by the Russians.

In the eighth century we have preserved to us the names of twenty-one religious writers, several of whom are quite celebrated, as the Venerable Bede, John Damascenus, Charlemagne, Gregory I. and II., Alcuin and Boniface, called the apostle of Germany. The worship of images was authorized by the second council of Nice; masses were offered for the dead; the ceremony of kissing the pope's toe was introduced; and a controversy arose between the Greek and Latin Churches concerning the Holy Ghost's proceeding from the Son.

In the seventh century the names of thirty-six writers on the gospels are preserved; the sixth general Christian Council was held at Constantinople; Pope Boniface IV. received from the emperor Phocas the famous Pantheon; and we find

the archbishoprics of London and York established, with twelve bishoprics under the jurisdiction of each, while Christianity was carried into Holland and parts of Germany; although the century is marked by the rise of Mohammed, who acknowledged the divine mission of Jesus, and claimed to be His successor and the founder of a new dispensation.

In the sixth century we have thirty-eight writers, including Gregory the Great, who sent forty Benedictine monks with Augustine at their head into Britain, and through their influence the Christian faith was embraced by Ethelbert, King of Kent, and by multitudes of his subjects; the fifth general council assembled at Constantinople; female convents were greatly multiplied; Litanies were introduced into the church of France; the Arians were driven out; and the Stylites flourished, who spent their time on the top of pillars in penance.

The fifth century gives us forty-two names of writers on the New Testament, two general Christian councils, one at Ephesus, and one at Chalcedon, and it witnessed the conversion of the Irish to Christianity through the efforts of St. Patrick.

The fourth century hands down fifty-one names of writers who acknowledged the gospels, many of them distinguished, as Eusebius, Constantine the Great, Athanasius, Cyril, Ambrose, Jerome, Augustin, and Chrysostom. The first general council of Bishops was held this century, called together in the year 325 by Constantine the Great, to settle the Arian controversy, and a second general Council was held in the year 381 at Constantinople.

The third century gives us the names of twenty-seven Christian writers, including Origen, Cyprian, Novatian, and Paul of Samosata, and is celebrated in the history of the Church by the sixth persecution under the emperor Severus, the seventh persecution under Decius, the eighth persecution under Valerian, the ninth persecution under Diocletian, and his immediate successors.

This brings us to the second century when, according to the wholly unsupported assertion of infidelity, the four gospels were composed by unknown authors. We have followed a continuous and unbroken succession of writers century by century, and even step by step, far more in number than the eighteen hundred years which have passed since the crucifixion of Christ, all of whom refer to these gospels, or quote them, or make comments upon them as the genuine productions of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John during the first century. Two or three leading events in each century have also been mentioned, merely to indicate how prominent Christianity has been through all of these centuries as a mighty factor in the world's progress. Indeed, it would be impossible to write the history of Europe, without at the same time writing the history of the church, for the two are so interwoven, whether for weal or woe, that they have been inseparable since the days of the alledged resurrection of Jesus.

During this second century we have as religious writers Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, Hegessippus, Theophilus of Antioch, Melito, Tatian, Papias, Claudius Apollinaris, Hermas,

Athenagoras, Clemens Alexandrius, Tertullian, of whom Dr. Lardner remarks "that his quotations from the small book of the New Testament are both longer and more numerous than are the quotations from all the works of Cicero in writers of all characters for several ages," Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus, the unknown author of the Sybilline oracles, Irenæus, Polycrates, Dyonisius of Corinth, Pantæus, Quadratus, besides several fragments of writings by those connected with heretical sects. These men do not say that the four gospels were written in the second century, but on the other hand they explicitly affirm that they were written in the first century. Justin Martyr, A. D. 140, tells us that they were read and expounded in the assemblies of Christians for divine worship on the Lord's day. Irenæus, A. D. 178, says expressly that there were but four Gospels, and mentions by name those we now possess. Clement of Alexandria, A. D. 194, testifies to the four gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as written by those whose names they bear. Tertullian, A. D. 200, received as of divine authority, the four Gospels of Matthew and John who, he says, were Apostles, and of Mark and Luke who were apostolical men. Putting together the statements of all the writers of the second century, says Dr. Sampson, we learn "that there were four gospels universally received, two of them from the Apostles Matthew and John, and two from Mark and Luke, who wrote respectively with the authority of Peter and Paul."

But the testimony of early skeptical writers is

equally conclusive. Dr. Lardner in his elaborate learned, and cautious work of four volumes, entitled "A Large Collection of Ancient Jewish and Heathen Testimonies to the Truth of the Christian Religion, with Notes and Observations," thus sums up the admissions of the emperor Julian, A. D. 360: "He allows that Jesus was born in the reign of Augustus, at the time of the taxing made in Judæa by Cyrenius: that the Christian religion had its rise, and began to be propagated in the times of the emperors Tiberius and Claudius. He bears witness to the genuineness and authenticity of the four Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and the Acts of the Apostles. And he so quotes them, as to intimate that these were the only historical books received by Christians as of authority, and the only authentic memoirs of Jesus Christ, and His apostles, and the doctrine preached by them. He allows their early date, and even argues for it." Of Porphyry, A. D. 260, he says, "it manifestly appears that he was well acquainted with the scriptures of the Old and New Testament. . . . And we have observed plain references to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, and John [indeed, scores of them], and the epistle to the Galatians: and in his remarks upon that epistle, probable references to others of St. Paul's epistles." Of Celsus, A. D. 176, he remarks, "We hence learn that in the time of Celsus there were books well known, and allowed to be written by the disciples of Jesus: which books contained a history of Him, and His teaching, doctrines and works. The books here intended, undoubtedly, are the gospels. And, pos-



sibly, there may be here also a reference to the Acts of the Apostles." Dr. Doddridge says, "An abridgment of the history of Christ may be found in Celsus. . . . It may be also observed that he speaks of Christ, as having taught and suffered very lately. As for the references to the Gospels, we do not find that he quotes any of them by the name of the authors. But he speaks of *the Gospel*, meaning no doubt the history of Christ, as being changed three or four times. . . . All which seems to make it evident that he had more than the book of St. Matthew in his hand. And though the greatest part of his references may be found there, yet there are also many of them in the other Gospels." Then follow more than sixty quotations from the Gospels, found in the writings of this early unbeliever.

Dr. John Leland of Dublin says, "Celsus, a most bitter enemy of Christianity, who lived in the second century, produces many passages out of the Gospels. He represents Jesus to have lived but a few years ago. He mentions His being born of a virgin [and this is succeeded by the principal events in His life, by the account of His death, and by the narrative of His resurrection, as related in the four gospels]. It is true he mentions all these things only with a design to ridicule and expose them. But they furnish us with an uncontested proof, that the gospels were then extant. Accordingly he expressly tells the Christians, 'These things we have produced out of your own writings.' And he all along supposeth them to have been written by Christ's own disciples, that lived, and

conversed, with Him: though he pretends they feigned many things for the honor of their Master.”

But enough surely has been said to prove, by the testimony of the friends and foes of Christianity, that the Gospels could not have been written in the Second Century. Besides this, we have the letter of the younger Pliny, the genuineness of which has never been disputed, written to the emperor Trajan, A. D. 107, asking advice as to his treatment of Christians, many of whom he had punished, as Governor of Bythinia. “Suspending therefore all judicial proceedings,” he says, “I have recourse to you for advice. For it has appeared unto me a matter highly deserving consideration, especially upon account of the great number of persons who are in danger of suffering. For many of all ages, and every rank, of both sexes likewise, are accused, and will be accused. Nor has the contagion of this superstition seized cities only, but the lesser towns also, and the open country.” Tacitus, who was older than Pliny, writing of Christians in an undisputed passage of his history about A. D. 100, describes their savage persecution by Nero A. D. 64, and says “they had their denomination from Christus, who in the reign of Tiberius was put to death as a criminal by the Procurator Pontius Pilate. This pernicious superstition, though checked for awhile, broke out again, and spread not only over Judæa, the source of this evil, but reached the city also: whither flow from all quarters all things vile and shameful, and where they find shelter and encouragement. At

first they only were apprehended, who confessed themselves of that sect : afterwards *a vast multitude*, discovered by them. All which were condemned, not so much for the crime of burning the city, as for their enmity to mankind." Suetonius, writing about the same time, says, "the Christians were punished, a sort of men of a new and magical superstition ;" and Lucian also of the second century is a heathen witness to the spread of Christianity.

But how could it spread at the beginning of the second century to such distant provinces as Pontus and Bythinia, and how could it collect "a vast multitude" of adherents in the imperial city itself between the years A. D. 54 and A. D. 68, the period of Nero's reign, if the four gospels on which it was founded were not then in existence? In the letter of Pliny to Trajan, he speaks of the temples as having been *almost forsaken* ; and Justin Martyr, who wrote about thirty years after Pliny, in his Apology addressed to the Roman emperor and Senate boldly says, "There is not a nation, either of Greek or Barbarian, or of any other name, even of those who wander in tribes, and live in tents, amongst whom prayers and thanksgivings are not offered to the Father and Creator of the Universe by the name of the crucified Jesus." Tertullian, who also belongs to the second century exclaimed in his well known Apology, "We are of yesterday, and yet have filled every place belonging to you—cities, islands, castles, towns, assemblies, your very camp, your tribes, companies, senate and forum ;" and he "calls the attention of the heathen to the fact, that the Christians were in a condition

to make resistance, and to acquire by violence liberty of faith, since their numbers were so great, constituting almost a majority in every city. Yet they obeyed the injunctions of patience taught in their divine religion, and lived in quietness and soberness, recognizable in no other way than by the amendment of their former lives," (Uhlhorn).

The wild assertion, that the Gospels were not written until the second century, destroys itself, therefore, and is shown to be utterly absurd. Leaving entirely out of view the account given in the Acts of the Apostles of the marvellous progress of Christianity during the thirty-five years immediately following the alledged resurrection of Jesus, we have the testimony of Tacitus that in this brief period a vast multitude of Christians suffered persecution under Nero, and that "their executions were so contrived, as to expose them to derision and contempt. Some were covered over with the skins of wild beasts, and torn to pieces by dogs. Some were crucified. Others, having been daubed over with combustible materials, were set up as lights in the night-time, and thus burned to death." Upon the statement of the Roman historian Gibbon remarks; "The most skeptical criticism is obliged to respect the truth of this extraordinary fact, and the integrity of this celebrated passage of Tacitus." But Tacitus is followed by Pliny at the very beginning of the second century, who certifies to the prevalence of the Christian faith at a time when, if the assertion of infidelity is to be believed, there was no foundation for it in any written or published narratives. It may be said that the diffusion of

Christianity was owing to the missionary zeal of the apostles and first preachers of the gospel. Yes, but if they had no story of the resurrection to tell, it is inconceivable that a vast multitude believed what they never heard, and according to the assertion just noticed, they could not have heard it for the story was not invented until the middle of the second century. You might as well suppose that the people of the United States celebrated their Declaration of American Independence a hundred years before it was made, and based their laws, customs, and usages upon the Constitution of their country long previous to its adoption. Surely men must hate Christianity intensely to believe such nonsense.

But we are not yet done with the witnesses to the authenticity and genuineness of the four Gospels. Entering now the first century we find Barnabas, a fellow laborer of Paul, mentioned in Acts xi., xii., xiii., xiv., xv.; 1 Cor. ix. 4-7; Gal. ii. 1, 9, 13; Col. iv. 10; Clement, another fellow laborer of Paul, mentioned in Phil. iv. 3; Hermas, another fellow laborer of Paul, mentioned in Rom. xvi. 14; Ignatius, Bishop of Antioch, A. D. 70; and Polycarp, a disciple of the apostle John, all quoting these four gospels, and all referring them to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John as their authors. Thus we have an unbroken succession of writers, numbering in the aggregate many thousands, and running back through successive centuries to the very time when it said the gospels were written, and extending no further. Of all these writers not one has ever questioned the authenticity and genu-

iness of the four gospels. Some of the other books of the New Testament, now and for many hundreds of years, recognized as constituting part of the Canon of Sacred Scripture, were at first doubted or disputed, but no Christian for more than eighteen hundred years has ever doubted or disputed the fact that the four gospels were written by Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. — Dean Alford says of the first of the four, “The author of this Gospel has been *universally* believed to be the apostle Matthew,” and cites the names of Papias at the beginning of the second century, Irenæus, Eusebius, Origen, Epiphanius, Jerome, Gregory Nazianzen and others, who state that it was first written in Hebrew. As to the author of the second Gospel he says, “it has been *universally* believed to be Mark; . . . and an unanimous tradition of the ancient Christian writers represents him as the ‘interpres’ of Peter: that is, the secretary or amanuensis, whose office it was to commit to writing the orally-delivered instructions and narratives of the apostle.” Concerning the third Gospel he says, “It has been *universally* ascribed to Lucas or Luke, spoken of Col. iv. 14, and again Philemon 24, and 2 Tim. iv. 11.” Of the fourth he says, “The *universal* belief of the Christian Church has ascribed this Gospel to the apostle John.”

It may be well to add the testimony of infidels to the authorship of the four Epistles, thus rendering complete and conclusive the evidence which assigns to the first century the original documents narrating the resurrection. Baur says, “The four Epistles, which must on all accounts be considered

the chief Epistles of the Apostle, are the Epistle to the Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Romans. There has never been the slightest suspicion of unauthenticity cast on these four Epistles." Renan says in "The Apostles," "Not the slightest doubt has been raised by serious criticism against the authenticity of the Epistle to the Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, or the Epistle to the Romans;" while in his later work, "St. Paul," he speaks of "Epistles unquestionable and unquestioned; namely, the Epistle to the Galatians, the two Epistles to the Corinthians, and the Epistle to the Romans." Keim, the latest of the rationalistic writers, says in his "Jesus of Nazara," "The first Epistle of the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians was written at the beginning of Easter, A. D. 58." "Suspicion is forbidden by his whole character; by his acute understanding, which was entirely free from fanaticism; by the form of his careful, cautious, measured, plain representation; . . . and above all, by the favorable general impression his report produces, and by the powerful corroboration which accompanied it in the clear, consistent, universal belief of early Christendom, and particularly in the testimony of a host of living eye-witnesses." Hence even if it could be proved that the four Gospels were not written until the second century, infidels themselves admit that through the four Epistles the story of the resurrection gained currency in the middle of the first century, and therefore before myths had time to form.

## VI.

### *THE WITNESSES EXAMINED.*

IT has been proved by a remarkable succession of writers, reaching back to the very days of the Apostles, and by the admission of ancient infidels, that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John wrote the books which bear their names. It has also been proved by the voice of the entire Church, and by the admission of the most critical and skeptical of modern infidels, that Paul wrote the four epistles which constantly allude to the resurrection of Jesus. It only remains to inquire into the credibility of the witnesses, and then to examine their evidence.

In the first place, they make no mistakes and fall into no errors concerning any other thing of which they testify. Clement, the companion of Paul, and several of the early fathers, do not hesitate to illustrate the resurrection by relating as a fact the fable of the phoenix, living for six hundred years, and then dying in the flames of its own kindling, so that out of its ashes another phoenix springs, thus perpetuating its race. Similar absurdities or glaring proofs of ignorance are often found in the writings of the first Christians who immediately followed the apostles, and in the apocryphal gospels. But why are they not found in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John or in Paul's epistles? What strange power protected them from the prevailing beliefs and blunders of the age in which they lived?



Their simple memoirs and paternal letters, touch upon almost every conceivable subject that affects the interests of man here or hereafter, and they have been exposed for centuries to the fierce light of the most hostile criticism; but science can not lay its finger upon a single false statement, nor even point to one anachronism. Occasionally infidelity has raised a loud hurrah upon the fancied discovery of some misdate, as when it asserted that Luke had fixed a wrong time for the governorship of Cyrenius; but by and by Zumpt showed that Luke was correct, and infidelity had to slink back into its hole. Thus it has been in every instance when the testimony of the evangelists has been questioned concerning any person or event. They have been invariably proved to be perfectly intelligent and perfectly truthful.

It must not be forgotten that they lived in a country and day, when they were surrounded by anarchy, strife, misrule, perpetual alteration which, as Rawlinson says, "render the civil history of Judæa during the period one very difficult to master and remember; the frequent changes, supervening upon the original complication, are a futile source of confusion, and seem to have bewildered even the sagacious and painstaking Tacitus. The New Testament narrative, however, falls into no error in treating of the period; it marks, incidentally and without effort or pretension, the various changes in the civil government—the sole kingdom of Herod the Great—the partition of his dominions among his sons—the reduction of Judæa to the condition of a Roman province, while Galilee,

Ituræa, and Trachonitis continued under native princes—the restoration of the old kingdom of Palestine in the person of Agrippa the First, and the final reduction of the whole under Roman rule, and re-establishment of Procurators as the civil heads, while a species of ecclesiastical superintendence was exercised by Agrippa the Second.” He cites proofs of all this from the New Testament, and then confirmatory evidence from contemporaneous history.

“Again, the New Testament narrative exhibits in the most remarkable way the mixture in the government—the occasional power of the president of Syria, as shown in Cyrenius’s taxing; the ordinary division of authority between the High Priest and the Procurator; the existence of two separate taxations—the civil and the ecclesiastical, the ‘census’ and the ‘didrachm;’ of two tribunals, two modes of capital punishment, two military forces, two methods of marking time; at every turn it shows, even in such little matters as verbal expressions, the co-existence of Jewish and Roman ideas and practices in the country—a co-existence, which (it must be remembered) came to an end within forty years of our Lord’s crucifixion. The conjunction in the same writings of such Latinisms as [and here follows a list of words in Greek derived from the Latin] and the like, with such Hebraisms as [and here follows a list of words in Greek derived from the Hebrew] was only natural in Palestine during the period between Herod the Great and the destruction of Jerusalem, and marks the writers for Jews of that time and country.”

While, therefore, there is overwhelming external evidence that the gospels were written during the first century, the internal evidence is equally conclusive. *They could not have been written at any other time.* Nor could they have been seriously corrupted without immediate detection. One might as well speak of corrupting Washington's Farewell Address, or the American Declaration of Independence, or the Magna Charta of English rights. Copies of them were instantly made, and transmitted everywhere, and multiplied with amazing rapidity. It is certain that in the year 30 of the present era, there was no such thing as Christianity; it is also certain, and proved by enemies, that twenty-five or thirty years later, Christians constituted "a vast multitude" according to the accurate Tacitus, and were found in immense numbers scattered throughout distant provinces according to Pliny. There was not sufficient time for the growth of myths, nor was it possible to involve so many in the propagation of a forgery.

Hence, in the second place, if the story of the resurrection is false, it is inconceivable that not one of all these many thousands could be induced by the hope of reward, or by the threat of punishment, to turn State's evidence, and to expose the fraud. If false, "you must suppose," as another has well said, "that twelve men of mean birth, of no education, living in that humble station which placed ambitious views out of their reach and far from their thoughts, without any aid from the State, formed the noblest scheme that ever entered into the mind of man, adopted the most daring means

of executing that scheme, and conducted it with such address as to conceal the imposture under the semblance of simplicity and virtue. You must suppose that men guilty of blasphemy and falsehood united in an attempt the best contrived, and which has in fact proved the most successful for making the world virtuous; that they formed this singular enterprise without seeking any advantage to themselves, with an avowed contempt of honor and profit, and with the certain expectation of scorn and persecution; that although conscious of one another's villainy, none of them ever thought of providing for his own security by disclosing the fraud; but that amidst sufferings the most grievous to flesh and blood, they persevered in their conspiracy to cheat the world into piety, honesty, and benevolence."

De Rossi, perhaps the highest authority on the Catacombs, "Calculates from carefully-gathered data that the total length of all the galleries known to exist near Rome is 957,800 yards, equal to about 590 miles," and it is estimated that they contain 7,000,000 of graves. As the Romans burned their dead, it is probable that the most of those buried beneath the imperial city were Christians; and every tomb is a witness to the faith of the early church in the resurrection. There has been a recent discovery of a work entitled "The Doctrine of the Twelve Apostles," concerning which we have the testimony of so competent an authority as Right Rev. J. B. Lightfoot, D. D., D. C. I., Lord Bishop of Durham. He with most English critics places the date of this work "between A. D.

80-110." He gives satisfactory reasons for his conclusion, and then says, "Of the genuineness of this document there can be no shadow of doubt." Moreover, brief as it is, "the writer quotes large portions of St. Matthew," thus again proving that the gospels belong to the first century, and that the resurrection was then firmly believed by Christians. So the Peshito Version, or translation of the New Testament into Syriac, made before A. D. 150, tells the same story of the early origin of the gospels, and the universal belief of Christians that Jesus rose from the dead. Indeed it is obviously impossible that the church could have taken a single step forward, or existed for a single day, without a fixed and unflinching conviction that He in whom she trusted had come forth from the grave.

Turning then to the testimony of the original witnesses, we find them affirming in the most solemn manner that Jesus was seen after His resurrection, not once nor twice only, but again and again, appearing to Mary Magdalene; to Joanna and other women; to Simon Peter; to the two disciples on the way to Emmaus; to the ten disciples, Thomas being absent, who were together on the evening of the day He rose; to the eleven disciples, Thomas being present; to seven disciples on the sea of Galilee; to the whole multitude of disciples on a mountain where He had appointed to meet them; to James; to the eleven as they sat at meat; to all of them again when He ascended to heaven from the mount of Olives. They say that He was not only seen on many occasions, but He ate with them, they handled Him, and they detail His conversations and record His

words at considerable length. They declare that "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, [margin, or eating together with them], commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, ye have heard of me: for John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence. When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath appointed by his own authority. But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem, and in all Judæa, and in Samaria, and unto 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 stedfastly 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."

Discarding the theory of fraud, what are we to do with the testimony of these four unimpeached witnesses? Strauss replies that we are to trace their be-

lief in the resurrection of Jesus to the power of imagination and nervous excitement. But this is a more foolish explanation, than the fraud theory or the swoon theory, though not so mean. If it had been recorded that He appeared to one or two at night, and then vanished out of sight without a word, there might have been reason to discover the foundation of the Christian faith and the Christian Church in the power of imagination and nervous excitement. But it is wholly impossible that so many of them, not one or two, but ten and eleven, and even five hundred at one time, labored under the singular hallucination that they not only saw Him repeatedly, but saw Him in the broad light of day, and heard Him speak, and placed their hands on Him, and ate with Him, and received His commands and instructions in distinct and articulate and extended language, and witnessed His ascension after forty days from the mount of Olives. Not only so, but the very next record after His ascension informs us that about one hundred and twenty of the disciples were assembled in Jerusalem, that they determined to elect a successor of the traitor Judas who had basely betrayed Him, a part of the narrative, by the way, which a fictitious writer would have been careful not to invent, and that Peter 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."

The theory of hallucination, therefore, breaks down at every point, and if the story of the resurrection as recorded in the four gospels cannot be accepted as true, the only conclusion which any intelligent and candid reader is able to reach is that the writers told a deliberate lie. They were in no state of mind to become the victims of hallucination. So far from being predisposed to believe in the resurrection, not one of them expected it, and hence at the crucifixion of Jesus they were utterly disheartened. But it is a fact which all admit that at the end of the forty days, their timidity suddenly and forever ended, and the discouraged, frightened, and illiterate fishermen started forth upon the conquest of a world, that would have been achieved long ago but for the failure and unfaithfulness of the church in the day of its prosperity and power. The marvellous success that attended their preaching had no other source, and could have had no other than this—"Jesus and the resurrection," the whole of Christianity, with all that it imports, being constructed, as Keim truly says, "upon an empty grave."

It is not strange that Reuss says, "Recourse to a visionary illusion is impossible, in view of the universality and firmness of the convictions within the church," or that Keim has utterly exploded the conjectures of Strauss and Renan, although he has substituted for them a no less absurd conjecture of his own, when he claims that the spirit of Jesus actually appeared to the disciples while His body remained in the grave. But it is the testimony of witnesses, whose honesty is admitted, and whose



credibility is confirmed by the most abundant external and internal evidence, that it was the body that rose, the body they saw and touched and heard in divers continuous and connected remarks on various occasions; and then Paul comes forward in an epistle admitted to be his, to certify to the same fact during the life time of the other apostles, and during the life time of at least two hundred and fifty other witnesses.

A far more important witness, however, is found in Jesus Himself. According to Strauss He "speaks in the Gospels not only of his resurrection on the third day, but also of the coming of the Son of man, *i. e.*, of his own second coming at a later period, when he will appear in the clouds of heaven, in divine glory, and accompanied by angels to awake the dead, to judge the quick and dead, and to open his kingdom, the kingdom of God or heaven. Here we stand face to face with a decisive point." Yes, it is decisive, for it involves the veracity of Jesus Himself. From the time it became evident He would not be acknowledged by the Jews as the Messiah, "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," (Matt. xvi. 21). "And 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," (Matt. xvii.<sup>22</sup> 23). "And 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 : and the third day he shall rise again," (Matt. xx. 17-19).

These and many other allusions to His death and resurrection, as they fell from His own lips, are recorded in the trustworthy gospel of Matthew ; and if He did not rise, the infidel is compelled to go much further, and to do far worse, than fasten upon the apostles the charge of wilful imposture or wild hallucination, for he is forced to assail the character of Jesus also. But if he is prepared to do this, the argument is at an end. Nothing remains to be said to a man who denies the sincerity, or assails the veracity of the meek and lowly Nazarene. Cultured infidelity has vied with Christianity in admiration of His peerless excellences, in praise of His manifold virtues, in acknowledgment of His beneficent influence upon the world, the family, and the individual ; and yet it can not be questioned that He again and again foretold His resurrection. Even coarse, vulgar, blasphemous infidelity, of the Ingersoll order, adopted by Socialists, Nihilists, and pot-house politicians, usually speaks respectfully of Jesus Christ, and claims that He is on their side against the rich and tyrants. But what will it do with His repeated declarations, that He would rise from the grave ?

Moreover, it is plainly predicted in the Old Testament that He was to rise from the dead, for the Holy One was not to see corruption, (Ps.

xvi. 10); and although He was to make His grave with the wicked, yet He was to prolong His days, to see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied, to divide the spoil with the strong, because He poured out His soul unto death, (Isa. liii.). Indeed the entire tenor of the ancient prophecies concerning Him, from the time of the first promise that He should bruise the serpent's head, although that serpent should bruise His heel, (Gen. iii.), proceeds upon the truth of His death, His resurrection, and His second coming in glory. Hence the entire Old Testament becomes another witness that He arose from the dead; for if this is denied, it is only a dry and useless record of Jewish perversity, but if studied in the light thrown upon its pages by a risen Jesus, it becomes luminous with beauty and glory.

So in the New Testament every leading doctrine of Christianity is essentially linked with the reality of His resurrection. Hence the apostle writes to Timothy, to whom He is giving his farewell instructions, "Remember that Jesus Christ, of the seed of David, was raised from the dead according to my gospel," (2 Tim. ii. 8). It is essential to salvation, for "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). It is required for justification, for he "was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification," (Rom. iv. 25). It is necessary for our sanctification, for "as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in new-

ness of life. . . . Knowing that Christ, being raised from the dead, dieth no more ; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once : but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord," (Rom. vi. 4-11). It is the high motive of personal consecration, "for 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). It guarantees our preservation amid many dangers and difficulties, for "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. 34). It gives us all our hope for the future, for "blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mércy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," (1 Pet. i. 3). Hence the New Testament becomes another witness that He rose.

Many other uses of this great event are made by the writers of the Scriptures, but probably enough has been said to prove that if you tear it away from revelation, you tear out every leaf of the Bible ; if you remove it from the field of history, you remove the very foundation of Christianity. The book of God and "the god of books," as it has been well called, stands or falls with the truth or the un-

truth that Jesus rose from the dead. If He rose, the seal of divine sanction is set upon the venerable records that have come to us across the ages, as given by inspiration of God. If He did not rise, we are left to grope our way by the feeble and flickering light of human reason, amid the distractions of time, down to dust that cannot be distinguished from the dust of a dead dog, to moulder in a tomb upon which no word of cheer can be written. But it is blessed to notice at the very close of the old book, in a writing which Strauss and Renan acknowledge to be the genuine production of the apostle John, we can still hear the voice of the risen Jesus saying, "Fear not; I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of death and of Hades." "These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive," (Rev. i. 17, 18; ii. 8), dead for our sins, but alive for our salvation.

## VII.

### *HISTORICAL MONUMENTS.*

**L**ESLIE in his celebrated little treatise, "A Short and Easy Method with the Deists," lays down four rules to determine the credibility of a narrative relating an ancient event of importance. "The rules are these: 1. That the matters of fact be such, as that men's outward senses—their eyes and ears—may be judges of it. 2. That it be done publicly in the face of the world. 3. That not only public monuments be kept up in memory of it, but some outward actions be performed. 4. That such monuments, and such actions or observances, be instituted, and do commence from the time that the matter of fact was done." The first two rules, he proceeds to argue, render it impossible to impose a false story of marvellous occurrences, at the time of the alledged date, upon the acceptance of a people among whom the transactions are said to have taken place, because it would be at once contradicted by every man's senses. The last two rules render it impossible to impose such a story upon the credulity of succeeding generations, because if monuments of the extraordinary events are said to exist, and public institutions and observances, intended to perpetuate them, are declared to be contemporaneous with the events themselves, it is the easiest task possible to prove that there were no institutions and observances of the kind mentioned, at the period to which

they are assigned. Hence he adds, "You may challenge all the Deists in the world to show any action that is fabulous, which has all the four rules or marks before mentioned. No, it is impossible." Again, "I do not say, that everything which wants these four marks is false; but, that nothing can be false which has them all."

Perhaps it is well to illustrate these rules, so that a child may understand their meaning. Suppose it were now asserted by one or more persons that during the year 1885, while President Cleveland was the head of the American government, and Queen Victoria the head of the British government, a man appeared who went about everywhere doing good, uttering words of matchless truth and grace, and in attestation of his teaching performing the most wonderful deeds of power and mercy, healing all manner of disease with a touch or command, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, feeding multitudes with a few loaves, and raising the dead, that thousands and myriads in various places and over a considerable extent of country attended his ministry, heard him preach, witnessed his benevolent and omnipotent works, and received the benefit of his kindness and might, that all this was done publicly in the face of the world, in cities, towns, villages, and the open country—would it be possible to get such a tale credited during the life time of those among whom these marvels were said to be performed? The evidence of their senses would contradict it, and its origin would soon be properly traced to a wretched attempt at imposture, or more probably to lunacy.

But suppose the same tale, instead of being published at present, is withheld for one hundred and fifty or two hundred years, in order to give time for the gradual growth of myths, and that then it appears with the added statements that this remarkable personage at last met a violent death as a criminal, which at first greatly discouraged and distressed his followers, but very soon their courage revived as they began to proclaim that he rose from the dead, and that there were certain institutions and public observances established at the very time of his death and resurrection, intended to commemorate them, which had been celebrated every week and almost every day in many parts of the world ever since the period of his death—would it be possible to convince the people one hundred and fifty or two hundred years hence that such institutions and observances had been handed down to them, when they had never even existed? No wonder Leslie says he does not pronounce every thing which wants his four rules false, but certainly nothing can be false which has them all.

Probably there is not a man, woman, or child of ordinary intelligence on the face of the earth who doubts the reality of certain ancient historical events, for example, as the invasion and conquest of Persia by Alexander the Great, or the assassination of Julius Cæsar in the Senate chamber of Rome, leading on to the accession of Augustus to the throne and all that followed, and yet this universal and unhesitating belief rests upon the evidence of a few writers, evidence far less conclusive than that which lies at the foundation of Chris-



tianity and the Christian Church. There was no monument of Alexander's victories, nor yet of Cæsar's death, erected at the time of their occurrence in the form of public institutions and ordinances, which have been carefully and continuously observed ever since in the most enlightened nations of the world, and by the best people of these nations. With singular unanimity writers of at least equal opportunities for knowing the truth, and far surpassing in number all the writers combined who narrate all the leading historical occurrences of antiquity, proclaim the authenticity and genuineness of the four gospels which contain an account of the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. Gausson says, "Such is the voice of all preceding ages, the voice of the whole Christian people, from the days of the apostles—a voice invariably precise, clear, and unhesitating. We have listened to all the traditions of ancient times to ascertain whether even one discordant sound might reach us from within the compass of the ancient Church, and we have been able to perceive none. We have looked across the expanse of ages to descry aught that might warrant even the slightest doubt, and the eye has not discovered, from the one extremity of the vast horizon to the other, even the most minute speck of contradiction, much less any cloud, even of the size of a man's hand."

Let us remember, then, that the narratives in these four authentic writings bring the life and death and resurrection of Jesus under the observation of the outward senses. Moreover everything was done publicly in the face of the world.

There is no attempt at concealment. His alledged miracles were wrought upon vast crowds of people, in every condition of need, in the presence of thousands, before the watchful eyes of foes as well as friends, in the court of the temple, in the streets, under all circumstances. His death was so public it would be an insult to the understanding of any one but an idiot to undertake to prove its reality. But His resurrection also was made public, so public indeed that if those who testify to it are not to be believed, neither would a thousand more witnesses be believed. It is true that He did not appear promiscuously to the multitude, for apart from the utter incongruity of such a procedure, and its entire unsuitableness to the purpose of God in the redemptive work of His Son, whom He offered to the whole world, and raised for the justification only of believers, facts show that such an unseemly manifestation of Himself to scoffers could have accomplished no real good. But to His friends, as already stated, "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," or as Peter expressed it to Cornelius and other Romans gathered in Cæsarea, "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."

It has been conclusively proved that these witnesses, whose honesty even the infidels admit, lived at the time He was on the earth, and that

their belief in His resurrection can not possibly be attributed to hallucination. Let it be remembered, as already said, that not one of them was expecting His resurrection, and therefore not one of them was in a state of mind to yield to the power of imagination and nervous excitement. Let it be remembered, as already said, that even if one had been credulous and weak enough to be deluded by an apparition, or to be carried away from a sound judgment and from common sense by an optical illusion, it is inconceivable that one after another, on several occasions, when two were together, when seven were together, when ten were together, when eleven were together, when one hundred and twenty were together, when more than five hundred were together, were under the spell of so strange an hallucination as to imagine that they saw Him in the broad day light, that they walked with Him, that they talked with Him, that they ate with Him, that they touched Him, that they heard His words at considerable length, which were just like His words of matchless wisdom and divine love spoken before His death, and far beyond their comprehension at the time they were uttered, and that they beheld Him ascend bodily into heaven.

But the fraud theory, the hallucination theory, the myth theory, and every other theory but the theory of fact entirely vanish before the permanent institutions which were founded as enduring monuments, seen daily and seen all over the world, of the victory which Jesus achieved over death and the grave. First, we have the Lord's Day, which

can be traced by an unbroken line of witnesses and writers back to the period of the crucifixion, and it is altogether impossible from the nature of the case to trace it a step beyond that. The heathen did not recognize the day, nor do they recognize it now. The Jews did not recognize it, nor do they recognize it now. But it is admitted that all of the apostles and early Christians were Jews. How did it come to pass, then, that without precedent, without command, without example even, in the face of all their childhood's associations and religious instructions and established habits, they began to observe the first day of the week instead of the seventh, as the time specially appropriate for public and united worship? That they did so observe it does not admit of a shadow of doubt. It is fully proved by the testimony of heathen and Christian writers. Pliny in his letter to the emperor Trajan, already quoted, says, "The Christians affirm the whole of their guilt or error to be that they were accustomed to meet together on a stated day, and to sing hymns to Christ as a God, and to bind themselves by a *sacramentum*, not for any wicked purpose, but never to commit fraud, theft, or adultery; never to break their word, or to refuse, when called upon, to deliver up any trust; after which it was their custom to separate, and to assemble again to partake of a harmless meal."

What is meant by the "stated day" is clearly shown by Justin Martyr who wrote not long afterwards as follows: "On the day called Sunday is an assembly of all who live either in the cities or in the rural districts, and the memoirs of the apos-

bles and the writings of the prophets are read." Among other reasons he assigns for its observance he says, it was "because Jesus Christ our Saviour rose from the dead upon it." Barsedanes, a heretical writer of the same period, in his letter to the emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus says, "Lo! wherever we be, all of us are called by the one name of the Messiah, Christians; and upon one day, which is the first of the week, we assemble ourselves together." Dionysius, Bishop of Corinth, A. D. 170, Melito, Bishop of Sardis who was his contemporary, Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, A. D. 178, and other writers speak to the same effect, confirming the truth of the remark "that while, even towards the end of the second century, tradition varied as to the *yearly* celebration of Christ's resurrection, the *weekly* celebration of it was one upon which no diversity existed, or was even hinted at."

But it is useless to refer further to early writers when the infidels themselves admit the observance of the Lord's day, or the first day, or Sunday during the life time of the apostles. Renan who claims that Luke's authorship of the book known as the "Acts of the Apostles" is too plain to be disputed, or to need argument, fixed the date of the book at A. D. 80, or less than 40 years after the crucifixion. He selects this date arbitrarily, because he says it is evident that the book was written after the gospel of Luke, and that the Gospel must have been written after the year 70, because it contains a prophecy of the destruction of Jerusalem, which he assumes is sufficient evidence that

the work must have been composed and published after that event. Of course he is entirely mistaken; but let it stand as he wishes, and still we have the most distinct testimony to the fact that the first day of the week was observed at that early period as the time when Christians assembled for public worship. We read that "Upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them," (Acts xx. 7). So in the epistle which Renan, Strauss, and the most captious of the skeptics acknowledge to be the genuine production of Paul, written within twenty-five years after the death of Jesus, we find him saying, "Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye. 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. 1, 2). Again, in the book of Revelation which the skeptics recognize as the work of the apostle John, the writer says, "I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day," (Rev. i. 10).

The question arises, and must be met by every inquirer after truth, how did this peculiar institution of the Lord's day originate, and originate in close connection with the crucifixion of Christ? Before that time it could not have occurred to the minds of His disciples, for He did not direct them to observe it, and as Jews they had always been accustomed to keep the seventh day with scrupulous care. But each of the four gospels informs us that He rose from the dead on the first day, and not long after we find that those who believed in

Him formed the habit of meeting together to break bread on the first day of the week, and to hear the gospels read and expounded. There was no law for it, either in the Old or the New Testament, but without law, and under grace, they assembled of their own accord, drawn to the day by common consent, as if they felt that it was the most appropriate, the only appropriate, thing to do. Thus by the desire of loving hearts, by the instinct of the new nature they had received through faith in the crucified One, they established an institution which has been observed ever since wherever the gospel is preached and accepted. For eighteen centuries and a half there has not only been a yearly celebration of the resurrection of Jesus, but each year fifty-two commemorations of it in all lands upon which light from His empty grave has shone.

How could this be? How could the Americans be led to celebrate the twenty-second of February, if George Washington was not born on that day, or the English be led to celebrate the escape of the house of Parliament from the gunpowder plot, if there was no Guy Fawkes, or the French to celebrate the destruction of the Bastille, if its walls were not thrown down to make way for the bloody revolution that followed? If any one were to assert gravely that there is no historical foundation whatever for various national festivities or observances, that are kept up year after year to perpetuate the memory of grand exploits or heroic achievements or striking events that were fruitful in important results, he would only be laughed at for his absurd skepticism. The reply would be,

if it were thought worth while to make a reply, that these festivities or observances started sometime or other, and somehow or other; and if they did not start in connection with the facts which it is supposed they were intended to commemorate, then the generation that was first persuaded to receive them as mementoes of facts that never occurred, was made up entirely of fools, and each generation of the fathers that succeeded is also composed wholly of fools, until happily the able skeptic was discovered who exploded the faith of many centuries by the force of a simple denial.

Let us suppose that Jesus did not rise from the dead. Nevertheless the skeptics themselves say that soon after his death an institution was established which was designed to commemorate His resurrection, not to be observed only by a yearly celebration like nearly all national holidays, but to be observed every week, as if to keep it fresh and vivid in the memory and heart. If it was not the commemoration of a fact, how did the observance of the day originate? Was it in an agreement among the disciples to impose a gigantic fraud upon the world? But apart from all that has been previously said to expose the nonsense of such a supposition, they would not have dared to throw the gauntlet down in defiance at the feet of Jew and Gentile every week, challenging investigation every week, defying contradiction every week, instituting a memorial of an alleged fact in the very face of their enemies, when it could be so easily disproved, if it was not a fact. Nor will it account for the Lord's day to suggest that the disciples



cherished a sincere but mistaken belief that He rose, for the supposed hallucination will not explain why, without the slightest command from the Old Testament, and without the least direction from Jesus Himself, they changed the observance of the Sabbath, proclaimed amid the thunders of Sinai, from the seventh to the first day of the week. It must have been a most extraordinary power of imagination which not only fancied that they saw him, and talked with Him, and walked with Him, and handled Him, and heard Him speak at length, and this on many occasions, and this in groups of two, and three, and seven, and ten, and eleven, and one hundred and twenty, and above five hundred persons, but which travelled back fifteen hundred years to lift a law of God out of its immutable surroundings, and to bring it forward as a new ordinance to be observed by all nations in fifty-two memorials every year of a mere apparition, and this without any fact on which to rest!

But let us suppose that the four gospels were not written for a hundred and fifty or two hundred years after the death of Jesus, so as to afford time for the myths of Strauss to be gradually formed—still the question remains, how did the observance of the Lord's day originate? According to the supposition it had no existence until, by the admission of all infidels Christianity was diffused all through the Roman empire, all over the known world; and to imagine that the thousands and tens of thousands of Christian assemblies, with their countless teachers and writers, could be induced to accept without hesitation or even question an ordinance

of which they had never heard before, and which commemorated nothing, is preposterous to the last degree. It would be far easier to imagine that the people of various countries have been led to observe their national festivals in celebration of events of which they had never heard, and that too after generations had passed, during which no allusion was made to the occurrence thus intended to be perpetuated. Could the people of the United States be led to observe the Fourth of July if they had not previously known something of the Declaration of Independence? He who answers this question in the affirmative, or who thinks that the Lord's day was instituted a hundred years after the death of Jesus, and with no other foundation than a badly distempered mind, exhibits a credulity which should make him slow to speak of the credulousness of Christians in believing the most astonishing miracles of the Bible.

But it must not be forgotten that the Lord's day is not the only institution established to attest the resurrection of Jesus. We have also baptism, never mentioned by Him previous to His resurrection. According to the trustworthy gospel of Matthew it was after His resurrection He said to His disciples, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," (Matt. xxviii. 19). According to the epistle to the Romans, allowed by the skeptics to be the writing of Paul, the meaning of this command is expressed in the words, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized

into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," (Rom. vi. 3-5). Thus standing side by side with the Lord's day, another notable monument is reared to the resurrection of Jesus in an ordinance that is administered not only fifty-two times, but doubtless three hundred and sixty-five times every year. It would be utterly meaningless, but for the fact of the resurrection, and this great fact it was designed to proclaim to every baptized person until the end of the age.

There is still another monument reared near the empty grave of Jesus, which must not be entirely overlooked. The record in the trustworthy gospel of Matthew informs us that just before His death, He gathered His disciples about Him to observe the Jewish feast of the Passover, and that in connection with it He gave them bread to eat, and wine to drink, in remembrance of Himself. The apostle Paul in the trustworthy epistle to the Corinthians writes, "I have received of the Lord that which I also delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat; this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as

ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come." We find, therefore, that the ordinance was instituted, not only in commemoration of His death, but as a pledge of His coming again; and hence it necessarily appears as a witness of His resurrection, for if He did not rise, He can never come again; our faith is vain; we are yet in our sins. How often the Lord's Supper has been celebrated during the last eighteen hundred years it is impossible to say, but every time it has been observed, it has been as one of the three monuments reared at the time He rose from the dead, and reared to testify silently but continuously and powerfully that He who was crucified and buried is risen again. Thus we have all the proofs of a credible narrative. The resurrection was such that men's outward senses—their eyes and ears—were judges of it. He was seen by a large number of competent witnesses for forty days. Public monuments have been kept up, and visible actions performed, in memory of it; and these monuments and actions were instituted, and commence, from the time of His resurrection.

## VIII.

### IT BEHOVED HIM TO RISE.

**T**HIS is the way Jesus Himself speaks of His resurrection. Appearing unto the eleven, showing them His hands and feet, inviting them to handle Him and see that He was not an intangible spirit, but that He had flesh and bones, and eating before them, He said, "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 behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day," (Luke xxiv. 36-46).

The word rendered *behoved* is nearly always elsewhere translated *must* or *ought*, and it implies necessity. It is the same word used by the apostle when he went into the Jewish synagogue, as his manner was, "and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, opening and alledging that Christ *must needs* have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is the Christ," (Acts xvii. 2, 3). It is the same word used by the Saviour when He said to Nicodemus, "Ye *must* be born again;" "and as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so *must* the Son of man be lifted up," (John iii. 5, 14). If, therefore, man must be born

again before he can enter the kingdom of God, Jesus must be lifted up to bear our sins in His own body on the tree.

But if it was necessary for Him to die for our sins, it was equally necessary for Him to rise from the dead, because otherwise His work would have been incomplete. Nay, if the existence of a personal God is admitted, the resurrection becomes a necessity, for how else can He vindicate His character, and judge the world in righteousness, and reward His saints who have suffered in the flesh, and mete out to villains who escaped punishment here the just consequences of the deeds done in the body? It may be thought that this has nothing to do with the resurrection of Jesus, but it is vitally connected with it, since, as the apostle argues, if He did not rise, there is no resurrection for any one, and hence no possibility of dealing in the future with man as man made up of spirit, soul and body.

The history of the human race is for the most part a record of avarice, selfishness, bloody deeds, atrocious cruelty, brutal despotism, and untold suffering; and does death end all? Is the grave the last stage in the experience both of heartless tyrants and their helpless victims? Shall a Nero or Caligula never be summoned before a higher tribunal than that of Rome to answer in the body for their merciless barbarities, and shall thousands and hundreds of thousands of slaughtered Christians never come forth from the tomb to receive compensation for the anguish they endured on earth? Even as these lines are written, the body

of a young Englishman lies in the Morgue of St. Louis, hideous in its ghastliness. He was gentle, modest, and refined, an earnest follower of Jesus, and spending much time and money in doing good. He was foully murdered in his room at the Hotel by a fellow-countryman, and his body, while yet living, crushed down into a trunk, was discovered after seven days only by the intolerable stench it emitted. Meanwhile the scoundrel who deliberately put him to death fled from the country, and will probably never be brought to justice. Is there to be no reckoning for this hereafter? If not, what kind of Being is the God who sits upon the throne of the universe?

It may be replied that the soul is immortal, and God can deal with that. Yes, but there is no more evidence of the immortality of the soul than there is of the resurrection of the body, and this, as already shown, depends wholly upon the resurrection of Jesus. Nor can science bring any stronger objection to the latter than to the former. Indeed, it speaks far more clearly for resurrection than for immortality. It tells us in the first place that there is no such thing in nature as annihilation, and in the second place that "the materials of our bodies are being constantly renewed, and the great mass of their structure changes in less than a year. At every motion of your arm, and at every breath you draw, a portion of the muscles concerned is actually burnt up in the effort. . . . I know that there are some who entertain a vague fear that these well-established facts of Chemistry conflict with one of the most cherished doctrines of

Christian faith ; but so far from this, I find that they elucidate and confirm it. Modern scientific discoveries have shown that our only abiding substance is merely the passing shadow of our outward form, that these bones and muscles are dying within us every day, that our whole life is an unceasing metempsychosis, and that the final death is but one phase of the perpetual change. Thus the idea of a spiritual body becomes not only a possible conception, but, more than this, it harmonizes with the whole order of nature," (*Religion and Chemistry* by Professor J. P. Cooke of Harvard University).

But it may be urged that the resurrection of Jesus was a miracle, and therefore impossible. Well may the question be asked of the skeptic, which was presented by the apostle to King Agrippa, "Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?" (Acts xxvi. 8). Bring God upon the scene, and every difficulty instantly disappears. If there is a personal God, it will of course be acknowledged by all (1) that it is possible for Him to raise the dead ; (2) that it is possible for eye-witnesses to have satisfactory evidence of the fact ; (3) that it is possible for eye-witnesses to bear credible testimony of it to others.

Even John Stuart Mill has said, "A miracle (as was justly remarked by Brown) is no contradiction to the law of cause and effect ; it is a new effect, supposed to be produced by the introduction of a new cause. Of the adequacy of that cause, if it exist, there can be no doubt ; and the only antecedent improbability which can be ascribed to the



miracle, is the improbability that any such cause had existence in the case. . . . All, therefore, which Hume has made out, and this he must be considered to have made out, is, that no evidence can be sufficient to prove a miracle to any one who did not previously believe the existence of a being or beings with supernatural power; or who believed himself to have full proof that the character of the Being whom he recognizes, is inconsistent with His having seen fit to interfere on the occasion in question," (*Logic*, Vol. ii. pp 185, 186). That is to say, Hume has only succeeded in showing that a miracle cannot be proved to an atheist, or to one who is determined not to believe that God will at times supernaturally manifest Himself to men.

A vast amount of nonsense has been spoken and written about Hume's celebrated argument, which assumes that a miracle is a violation of the laws of nature. But it is no such thing. It is only the temporary removal of a person or thing for a great purpose from the control of the laws of nature, while the laws move on unchecked in relation to every other person or thing. A boy tossing a ball into the air, thus overcoming by superior force for a time the law of gravitation, or arresting with his hand a miniature boat on a stream, fairly illustrates the violation of the laws of nature involved in a miracle; and in this sense miracles are of daily occurrence. The testimony of one honest and intelligent man, therefore, is worth more than the observation of nature's uniformity of operations for a thousand years; and if twelve good men, with no motive to deceive, with everything to lose, carrying

with them innumerable blessings for the whole world, and laying down their lives in attestation of their sincerity, were to declare that they had repeatedly seen a person who had risen from the dead, and that they could not be mistaken in his identity, he might justly be considered as lacking in common intelligence, or as a blinded partisan, who would still refuse to believe them.

If it is still insisted that the resurrection is denied by Science, the question is, what science? Not Chemistry; for it proves it. Not Evolution; for it favors it. Not Geology; for it has nothing to do with the future, but only with the past, and its guesses even here are too wild to deserve serious attention. For example, Sir Charles Lyell informs us that it required 1000,000 years to deposit the delta at the mouth of the Mississippi. St. John, a text book used in some of the Colleges thirty years ago, says that it took 54,000 years; but M. Elie de Beaumont thinks 1300 years are sufficient to account for the mud. He who tries to count the wrecks of scientific speculations and theories, scattered along the pathway of the present century, will be slow to surrender his faith in God's word at the dictate of "profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science falsely so called." So far, then, as nature speaks at all, or can speak, her voice is eloquent with whisperings of resurrection, and her hands are outstretched in eager longing every cold, dead winter for its speedy attainment. The poor blind grub, struggling under the earth to put on its beautiful wings and to flutter in the sunshine; the hydroid which will supply itself with a

foot or even a head, if lost ; the dull crab and stupid lobster that will reproduce a leg or claw, if cut off ; the sprouting of the seed ; the breaking of the bird from the egg ; the ugly and unpromising bulb developing into the gorgeous flower ; the materials of our own bodies, that are being constantly renewed, the form alone undergoing change, the substance and personality remaining permanent ; and ten thousand transmutations not less wonderful, which we daily witness around us, and which science is quick enough to recognize—all rebuke the madness of the skepticism that says resurrection violates any law of nature, or thinks it a thing incredible that God should raise the dead.

But let us take it for granted for a moment that sin is followed by death, as a law of cause and effect, not less certain in its operation than the law of gravity, or any other order of sequence observable in the broad field of nature. If so, then holiness is followed by life, as a law of cause and effect. Once more, let us take it for granted that the testimony borne by the apostles concerning Jesus is true, He “knew no sin,” He was “without sin,” He “did no sin,” “in Him is no sin ;” and that the testimony He bore concerning Himself is true, “the Father hath not left me alone ; for I do always those things that please him ;” “the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me,” and it will be seen that by law, a law of nature if you choose, at all events a law not less exacting and imperial in its demands than any law which presides in the domain of nature, Jesus must have risen from the dead. If death is the necessary

penalty of sin, life is the certain reward of holiness, and if the richly merited and fairly won life has been interrupted in some way, resurrection must ensue as a matter of justice and propriety and law. Hence Peter's remarkable address on the day of Pentecost: "Ye men of Israel, hear these words: J<sup>e</sup>sus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and signs, which God did, by him, in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: 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." Death had no right to Him, and in the nature of the case He could not remain its prey.

But this opens up a wonderful vista, through which we behold the outworking of God's eternal purpose of grace in the redemption of lost man. That purpose, whether we can understand its reasonableness or not, proceeds upon the principle that forfeited life can be restored only through inflicted death. From the time that He clothed our fallen parents in Eden with garments torn from the slain bodies of substituted victims, down to the time when the piercing cry of the Son of His love was heard on Calvary, this is the great truth He sought to proclaim and to press upon the attention of His people. It is set forth in the bloody sacrifice of Abel, that was more acceptable than Cain's; it is set forth in the bloody offerings of Noah, that stayed another curse from smiting the earth; it is

set forth in the sprinkled blood of the pascal lamb, that procured Israel's redemption from Egyptian bondage; it is set forth in the burnt offering, and peace offering, and sin offering, and trespass offering under the Levitical economy; it is set forth in the impressive ceremonies observed on the great day of atonement; it is set forth in the distinct statement, "It is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul;" it is set forth in the words of Jesus, found in the trustworthy gospel of Matthew, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many," and at the institution of the Lord's Supper, "This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins;" it is set forth in what may be called the central truth of the epistles, "Without shedding of blood is no remission."

Now, admitting that these statements are true, and that they make known an immutable law ruling in the higher sphere of morals, it is obvious that there is no possible escape for the sinner, except through the suffering in his stead of a sinless One, who must meet the demands of God's holiness and justice, honor and magnify and uphold God's righteous government, and exhibit at the same time His hatred of sin and His love for the ruined sinner. The gospel tells us with marvellous consistency and harmony, that exhibits its undesignated but entire unity with every part of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, how this has been accomplished. It introduces One whose body was formed by the Spirit of God in the womb of a

virgin; who was in His nature and through His whole life essentially and perfectly holy; who so glorified God that twice the silence of the heavens above His head was broken by the voice of His Father, saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased;" who proved His divine mission by signs and wonders that were all benevolent and kind; who was infinite love embodied in human form; who as already shown by the testimony of Paul in the genuine epistle to the Corinthians, died for our sins, according to the scriptures; and was buried; and rose again the third day according to the scriptures.

Let men say what they please against His resurrection, it is a necessary part of this magnificent scheme of human redemption; and, conceding that we are sinners, and that God interposed in our behalf, the laws of both physical and moral nature, so far from being violated by that resurrection, positively demand it as inherently right and indeed unavoidable. If it is required by the perfection of the Being who made us, and by the exigencies of our condition, it is not only possible but absolutely certain; and it sets upon the wondrous revelation of divine mercy the bright and indispensable crown of divine glory. Oh, if the skeptic would look upon the resurrection of Jesus, not as an inexplicable miracle, nor the meaningless exhibition of irresponsible power, but as the expression and proof of God's love to a lost world, and the fitting termination of His Son's obedience unto death, surely cavilling would sink into silence, and doubt would hide its diminished head in the presence of the

most splendid spectacle this universe has ever seen. Then would there be deep significance in the fine language of the apostle, when he calls attention to the exceeding greatness of God's power to us-ward who believe, "according to that working of the strength of his might which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all," (Eph. i. 19-23, R. V.).

Yes, the head in such sense that He would not be complete without the entire number of believing sinners, who constitute His body; and hence His resurrection is not only the pledge of our own, it is the beginning of it, it is part of it already taken place, it is the sure and infallible forerunner of a mighty host that shall come forth out of the grave, as the apostle writes in the genuine epistle to the Corinthians, "Every man in his own order; Christ the first fruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming." It is for this coming all believers wait, whether their bodies slumber in the ground, or they are still moving amid the activities of life, for as the same apostle says in the same chapter, "Behold, I show you a mystery: we shall not all sleep, but we all shall be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead

shall be raised incorruptible, and we [that is, we who are then upon the earth] shall be changed. For this corruptible [if we are in the grave] must put on incorruption, and this mortal [if we are on the earth] must put on immortality. So 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 victory? O grave, where is thy victory?" Well might old Trapp the Commentator, say, "This is the sharpest and shrillest note, the boldest and the bravest challenge, that man ever rang in the ears of death. Death is here out-braved, called craven to his face, and bidden do his worst." The apostle, however, is not yet done: "The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." The battle has been fought, and the victory gained by the crucified One of whom Renan wrote, "Complete Conqueror of death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither shall follow thee, by the royal road which thou hast traced, ages of worshippers."



## IX.

### *UNWILLING WITNESSES.*

**T**HE story of the resurrection is inseparably linked, as previously shown, with the moral character of Jesus, and with the entire structure of the sacred Scriptures. If He again and again predicted that He would rise, and after all He did not rise, of course His claim upon our respectful attention or confidence at once ceases, and He is to be regarded as a base impostor or crazed enthusiast. If on the other hand, He did not predict His resurrection, although his four biographers say that He did, of course they are not worthy of the slightest credit in any statement they make. If He predicted His resurrection, but did not rise, we are at a loss to account for His benign influence upon the world, according to the confession of His very enemies, and for the powerful hold He has taken upon the faith and the affection of the most enlightened peoples for eighteen hundred years. If He did not predict His resurrection, but His biographers put words into His mouth which He never uttered, we are at a loss to account for their ability to conceive such a faultless and marvellous character, for the lofty morality and virtue they everywhere enjoin, for their admitted power to elevate and reform the vicious and the vile, and for their sufferings unto death in the propagation of what they knew to be a lie.

“Peruse the works of our philosophers, with all

their pomp of diction," says one: "how mean, how contemptible are they, compared with the Scriptures! Is it possible that a book, at once so simple and so sublime, should be merely the work of a man? Is it possible that the sacred Personage, whose history it contains, should be himself a mere man? Do we find that he assumed the tone of an enthusiast or ambitious sectary? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What an affecting gracefulness in his delivery! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what truth in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness and without ostentation? . . . Shall we suppose the evangelical history a mere fiction? Indeed, my friend, it bears no mark of fiction. On the contrary, the history of Socrates, which no one presumes to doubt, is not so well attested as that of Jesus Christ. Such a supposition, in fact, only shifts the difficulty without obviating it: it is more inconceivable that a number of persons should agree to write such a history, than that one should furnish the subject of it. The Jewish authors were incapable of the diction, and strangers to the morality contained in the gospels; the marks of whose truth are so striking and inimitable, that the inventor would be a more astonishing character than the hero." Those who are not familiar with this quotation might suppose that the fine eulogy of Jesus, which it contains, must have been written by some distinguished divine. Not

at all: It was written by Rousseau, an avowed infidel who gloried in his shame.

“It is of no use,” writes another, “to say that Christ, as exhibited in the gospels, is not historical;” . . . for “who among his disciples or among their proselytes was capable of inventing the sayings ascribed to Jesus, or of imagining the life and character revealed in the gospels? Certainly not the fishermen of Galilee; certainly not St. Paul, whose character and idiosyncrasies were of a totally different sort; still less the early Christian writers, in whom nothing is more evident than that the good which was in them was all derived, as they always professed it was derived, from a higher source. . . . About the life and sayings of Jesus there is a stamp of personal originality combined with profundity of insight, which, if we abandon the idle expectation of finding scientific precision, where something very different was aimed at, must place the prophet of Nazareth, even in the estimation of those who have no belief in his inspiration, in the very first rank of the men of sublime genius of whom our species can boast. When this pre-eminent genius is combined with the qualities of probably the greatest moral reformer and martyr to that mission who ever existed upon earth, religion can not be said to have made a bad choice in pitching on this man as the ideal representative and guide of humanity; nor even now would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life.” Please

observe this last statement: "nor even now [that is, after eighteen hundred years of culture and progress] would it be easy, even for an unbeliever, to find a better translation of the rule of virtue from the abstract into the concrete, than to endeavor so to live that Christ would approve our life." It might be supposed that this strong language was used by some able theologian. Not at all: it was written by John Stuart Mill, an atheist, if he was anything. (Three Essays in Religion, pp. 253-255).

"It was reserved for Christianity," says another, "to present to the world an ideal character, which, through all the changes of eighteen centuries has filled the hearts of men with an impassioned love, and has shown itself capable of acting on all ages, nations, temperaments, and conditions; has not only been the highest pattern of virtue, but the highest incentive to its practice, and has exerted so deep an influence that it may be truly said that the simple record of three short years of active life has done more to regenerate and to soften mankind than all the disquisitions of philosophers, and than all the exhortations of moralists. This has indeed been the well-spring of whatever has been best and purest in Christian life. Amid all the sins and failings, amid all the priestcraft, the persecution, and fanaticism which have defaced the church, it has preserved in the character and example of its Founder an enduring principle of regeneration." It might be supposed that this was penned by an eloquent preacher of the gospel. Not at all: it is the production of Lecky, the rationalistic historian of Rationalism, who has exhibited extreme bitter-

ness in his hostility to the Bible, and in his opposition to the faith held by Christians.

“I will not say,” writes another, “that the belief that Jesus was the Messiah is the only article of belief necessary to make men Christians. There are other things doubtless contained in the revelation he made of himself, dependent on and relative to this article, without the belief of which, I suppose Christianity would be very defective. But this I say, that the system of religion which Christ published, and his Evangelists recorded, is a complete system to all the purposes of religion natural and revealed. It contains all the duties of the former, it enforces them by asserting the divine mission of the Publisher, who proved his assertions at the same time by his miracles; and it enforces the whole law of faith by promising rewards, and threatening punishments, which he declares he will distribute when he comes to judge the world.

. . . Christianity as it stands in the Gospel contains not only a complete but a very plain system of religion. It is in truth the system of natural religion, and such it might have continued to be to the unspeakable advantage of mankind, if it had been propagated with the same simplicity with which it was originally taught by Christ himself.

. . . The political views of Constantine in the establishment of Christianity, were to attach the subjects of the empire more firmly to himself and his successors, and the several nations which composed it to one another, by the bonds of a religion common to all of them; to soften the ferocity of the armies; to reform the licentiousness of the prov-

inces; and by infusing a spirit of moderation, and submission to government, to extinguish those principles of avarice and ambition, of injustice and violence, by which so many factions were formed, and the peace of the empire so often and so fatally broken;" and "no religion was ever so well proportioned, nor so well directed, as that of Christianity seemed to be, to all these purposes." It might be supposed that this was composed by some thoughtful Christian Professor to be delivered to the students of a Divinity School. Not at all: it is the language of Lord Bolingbroke, the boldest blasphemer, and one of the vilest men, of his day.

"I know men," exclaims another, "and I tell you that Jesus Christ is not a man. Superficial minds see a resemblance between Christ and the founders of empires, and the gods of other religions. That resemblance does not exist. . . . Everything in him astonishes me. His spirit overawes me, and his will confounds me. Between him and whoever else in the world, there is no possible term of comparison. He is truly a being by himself. His ideas and his sentiments, the truths which he announces, his manner of convincing, are not explained either by human organization or by the nature of things. His birth, and the history of his life; the profundity of his doctrine, which grapples the mightiest difficulties, and which is of those difficulties, the most admirable solution; his Gospel, his apparition, his empire, his march across the ages and the realms, everything is for me a prodigy, a mystery insoluble, which plunges me into a reverie from which I can not escape, a

mystery which is there before my eyes, a mystery which I can neither deny nor explain. Here I see nothing human. . . . The soul is sufficient for him, as he is sufficient for the soul. Before him the soul was nothing. Matter and time were the masters of the world. At his voice everything returns to order. Science and philosophy become secondary. The soul has reconquered its sovereignty. All the scholastic scaffolding falls, as an edifice ruined, before one single word—*faith*. What a master and what a word, which can effect such a revolution! . . . Who is the insensate who will say *no* to the intrepid voyager, who recounts the marvels of the icy peaks which he alone has had the boldness to visit? Christ is that bold voyager. One can doubtless remain incredulous, but no one can venture to say *it is not so*. . . . I search in vain in history to find the similar to Jesus Christ, or anything which can approach the gospel.” It might be supposed that this was the impassioned declaration of some Evangelist. Not at all: it was the speech of Napoleon Bonaparte, who was far enough from being a Christian practically, but whose gigantic intellect was altogether too acute and vigorous to be content with the nonsense of infidelity.

“Repose now in thy glory, noble Founder,” says another. “Thy work is finished; thy divinity is established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thy labors fall by any fault. Henceforth, beyond the reach of frailty, thou shalt witness from the heights of divine peace, the infinite results of thy acts. At the price of a few hours of suffering,

which did not even reach thy grand soul, thou hast brought the most complete immortality. For thousands of years the world will depend on thee! Banner of our contests, thou shalt be the standard about which the hottest battle will be given. A thousand times more alive, a thousand times more beloved, since thy death than during thy passage here below, thou shalt become the corner-stone of humanity so entirely, that to tear thy name from this world would be to rend it to its foundations. Between thee and God, there will no longer be any distinction." It might be supposed that this is the ardent expression of some enthusiastic Christian, ready to die for the object of his love. Not at all: it is the utterance of the French infidel, Renan.

Another, who had received tidings of his father's death, wrote to his mother, "We, your children, whom you have faithfully cared for, soul and body, and brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, we gather round you in this solemn hour, and say, Be of good comfort! Well done, hitherto; persevere and it shall be well! We promise here, before God, and the awful yet merciful work of God's hand, that we will continue to love and honor you, as sinful children can. And now, do you pray for us all, and let us all pray in such language as we have for one another, so shall this sore division and parting be the means of a closer union. Let us and every one know that though this world is full of briars, and we are wounded at every step as we go, and one by one must take farewell and weep bitterly, yet 'there remaineth a rest for the people of God.' Yes, for the people of God there



remaineth a *rest*, that rest which in this world they could nowhere find. . . . I can not be with you, but read in the Scriptures as I would have done. Read, I especially ask, in Matthew's gospel, that passion, and death, and farewell blessing and command of Jesus of Nazareth; and see if you can understand and feel what is the 'divine depth of sorrow,' and how even by suffering and sin man is lifted up to God, and in great darkness there shines a light. If you cannot read it aloud in common, then do each of you take his Bible in private and read it for himself." It might be supposed that this was a message of some absent Pastor to an afflicted family. Not at all. It is the advice of Thomas Carlyle, an English infidel if his biographer Froude can be believed, who declares that he said to him late in life concerning the miraculous occurrences of sacred history, "It is as certain as mathematics, that no such thing ever has been or can be," the poor old man utterly failing to see that mathematics can have nothing to do with miracles.

Another says of Jesus, "Consider what a work His words and deeds have wrought in the world. Remember that the greatest minds have seen no farther, and added nothing to His doctrine of religion; that the richest hearts have felt no deeper, and added nothing to the sentiment of religion; have set no loftier aim, no truer method than His of perfect love to God and man. Measure Him by the shadow He has cast into the world—no, by the light He has shed upon it. Shall we be told such a man never lived—the whole story is a lie? Sup-

pose that Plato and Newton never lived. But who did their wonders and thought their thoughts? It takes a Newton to forge a Newton. What man could have fabricated Jesus? None but Jesus. . . . That mightiest heart that ever beat, stirred by the Spirit of God, how it wrought in his bosom! What words of rebuke, of comfort, counsel, admonition, promise, hope, did he pour out! Words that stir the soul as summer dews call up the faint and sickly grass." It might be supposed that some devout believer wrote this in praise of his Lord. Not at all: it was written by Theodore Parker, an American infidel.

"It has been said," exclaims another, "and with some commendations on what was called my liberality, that I did not in this discourse, on its first delivery, term Jesus of Nazareth an impostor—I have never considered him such. The impostor generally aims at temporal power, attempts to subsidize the rich and weak believer, and draws around him followers of influence whom he can control. Jesus was free from fanaticism; His was a quiet, subdued, retiring faith; He mingled with the poor, communed with the wretched, avoided the rich, and rebuked the vain-glorious. . . . He courted no one, flattered no one; in His political denunciations He was pointed and severe; in His religion calm and subdued. These are not characteristics of an impostor; but, admitting that we give a different interpretation to His mission, when 150,000,000 believe in His divinity, and we see around us abundant evidences of the happiness, good faith, mild government, and liberal feelings which spring

from His religion, what right has any one to call Him an impostor? That religion which is calculated to make mankind great and happy can not be a false one." It might be supposed that this was spoken by some one who had previously confessed his faith in Christ. Not at all: it was uttered by M. M. Noah, a distinguished Jew in New York City.

Another says of Jesus: "We are far from reviling His character, or deriding His precepts, which are indeed, for the most part, the precepts of Moses and the prophets. You have heard me style Him the '*Great Teacher of Nazareth*,' for that designation I and the Jews take to be His due. No enlightened Jew can or will deny that the doctrines taught in His name have been the means of reclaiming the most important portions of the civilized world from gross idolatry, and of making the revealed word of God known to nations, of whose very existence the men who sentenced Him were ignorant." It might be supposed that this was stated by a converted Jew, as a reason for his acceptance of Christianity. Not at all: it was spoken by Dr. Raphael, an eminent Jewish Rabbi.

Another says, "As little as humanity will ever be without religion, as little will it be without Christ. . . . He remains the brightest model of religion within the reach of our thought; and no perfect piety is possible without his presence in the heart." It might be supposed that this came from the pen of some Christian defender of the gospels. Not at all: it came from the pen of Strauss, the great German infidel, who did all in his power to destroy the faith of men in the credibility of the gospels.

It is needless, however, to go further in this direction. Testimony of a similar kind could be multiplied indefinitely; and the marvel is that such language was used. If Jesus did not rise, He was an impostor or fanatic, and in either event, what business had these men, who did not believe that He rose, to utter lofty panegyrics upon one not worthy of the slightest respect or notice, according to their view of His character? Infidelity asserts that preachers of the Gospel are fools or hypocrites, but it dare not bring such a charge against its own admired authors; and let it explain the fact that its chief exponents have not hesitated to speak of Jesus in terms not less enthusiastic, and it must be taken for granted, not less sincere than any theologian who has ever lived. Surely if they believed that He lent Himself to the perpetration of a fraud in pretending that He would rise, or that He was carried away by a silly delusion in saying that He would rise, consistency and logic required them to dismiss Him with contempt from their attention; and it remains a profound mystery how they could despise His claims upon their faith, and yet employ expressions about Him little short of the deepest reverence and highest worship.

## X.

### *FIFTY ADDITIONAL PROOFS.*

**B**UT the story of the resurrection is as much interwoven with the texture of the entire scriptures as it is with the moral character of Jesus, so that, to adopt the language of Renan, to tear it from the Book would be to rend the Bible to its foundations. Hence it is not only a legitimate mode of argument to consider the claims of the Old and New Testament to our belief, in connection with our study of the resurrection, but we are bound to consider them, because the resurrection and revelation stand or fall together. † If the former can be established as a historical fact, the supernatural origin of the latter is clearly vindicated; and if the latter can be proved, the former can not be doubted. If, on the other hand, the resurrection of Jesus never occurred, the Bible is unworthy of our acceptance, the resurrection can no longer be believed. It remains, therefore, to present in most imperfect outline some of the evidences for the credibility of the Scriptures, which are offered for the candid and thoughtful consideration of the sincere inquirer after the truth.

1. Let us think of the antiquity of the book, its earlier portions dating back to a period six hundred years before the existence of Homer, the father of poetry, and more than a thousand years before Herodotus, the father of history; and yet it contains the acknowledged basis of the jurisprudence

of the civilized world. Honest infidels have often been converted by reflecting upon the nature of the law given by Moses, and trying to see whether they could add anything to it, or take anything from it, so as to make it better. They have asked themselves, where did he get such a code of morals as that contained in the ten commandments, amid the idolatry and darkness and brutality of that early day, a code in which the wisdom of modern philosophy can detect no flaw, a code which, if obeyed, would confessedly make a paradise on earth; and they have been constrained to acknowledge that it could come only from God.

2. This marvellous volume consists of sixty-six different books, occupying about sixteen hundred years in their production, and composed by about forty different persons embracing every variety of intellect, culture, and social condition; and yet so perfect and sublime is the unity of design and testimony, you can not discover the slightest difference of principle or even of opinion of any one of them from any other. Open at any part of the volume you please, and you will find its statements in entire harmony with all other parts, whether they relate to God or man.

3. The whole book is in thorough accord with what has been discovered concerning the material condition of the universe and with the voice of nature. In every newly fledged science the reckless assertion has been made that some mistake or misstatement is at last discovered in the Bible, and frequently foolish Christians are in a hurry to pervert and twist the text that it may be forced into

unison with the false teachings of infidel and pretentious theories; or to dodge the issue by the paltry plea that the Bible was not designed to teach science and history. But in the end, when thorough research has elicited the full truth, it is found without a single exception that real knowledge confirms the superhuman intelligence of the scriptures. How exultant would be the shout of infidelity if it could show even one clear contradiction in these Scriptures to any fact universally accepted as proven by unbelieving scientists themselves, but this it has never done.

4. The moral government of the world, which Christians call providence, but which infidels regard as chance or law or nature, keeps step with the teachings of the Bible through the entire course of human history. The principles which underlie the one are brought to light in the other, and the results of a given course of conduct by nations, communities, families or individuals are found in the long run to be in accordance with the statements everywhere contained in the book.

5. There are many important truths which the Bible alone reveals, important as bearing upon the question of our present and everlasting happiness, which confessedly lie beyond the discovery of man's unaided intellect, as shown by the fact that they were not dreamed of by the wisest and best of men of ancient or modern times who reject its testimony.

6. It alone reveals the existence of one God, who is infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in His being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and

truth ; and this in the light of all human history is shown to be directly contrary to the known principles of human nature.

7. It makes known the only way of salvation, by which God manifests at the same time His love for the sinner and His hatred of sin, by which the perfections of His character are not only fully maintained but illustriously exhibited and glorified, by which not a spot sullies His righteousness ; while His grace is untrammelled in its merciful errand to a guilty and ruined world.

8. This revelation of divine love is made in such manner as to uphold the strict purity of the doctrines, duties, and precepts of the entire Bible, for you can not discover from first to last the least allowance for sin, nor any excuse for the evils incident to fallen human nature.

9. The grandeur of its style and its manner of teaching stamp it as superhuman, for you will find nowhere outside of the Bible those artless, simple, but inimitable unfoldings of truth, before unknown or disregarded, which make the productions of the most cultivated minds seem trivial in comparison, and which have elicited the admiration of men of letters in all ages and all lands.

10. Its exaltation of God and stern condemnation of man, always vindicating the former, always telling of some evil in the latter, with the solitary exception of the man Christ Jesus, shows that it did not have a human origin.

11. Its complete subordination of morality to the will of God as supreme, making that which man esteems to be the highest rule of life, and which



constitutes his crowning glory, inferior to the pleasure of Another, and receiving its only authority and highest sanction from that pleasure, proves that the book did not spring from earthly sources.

12. But it also teaches a morality contrary to all natural impulses, claiming as virtues what the world instinctively scorns, like meekness, forbearance, non-resistance, self-abasement. Even professing Christians are often heard to say that it is right to resent an insult, making it manifest that the Bible lies athwart their deep-seated inclinations, and could not have taken its start in the mind or heart of man.

13. The Old Testament contains an almost unbroken record of the unbelief, ingratitude, idolatry, and meanness of the Jews, both leaders and people, and it is unnatural to suppose that this shameful record was made by Jewish writers, unless they were moved by a power higher than their own.

14. The New Testament brings its stern accusations against the entire human race, representing all alike as depraved, as at enmity with God, as by nature the children of wrath, the whole world lying in the wicked one; and it is unnatural to suppose that men of any nationality composed such a book of their own will.

15. Its necessity is demonstrated by man's ignorance of himself and of God, and by the failure of all the philosophers of the earth to construct a system of religion, which can meet our present need, and tell us anything of the future state of being.

16. It is precisely adapted to the wants of all, high and low, rich and poor, educated and illiterate; and as a matter of fact persons of every condition and in every land and of every race have found in it a message suited to their necessities, and a rule of life they can safely follow in all conceivable circumstances unto death.

17. Its commission to its disciples requires them to go into all the world, preaching the gospel to every creature, carrying its entreaties and warnings unto the ends of the earth, and thus it aspires to universal dominion but without a whisper of violence.

18. Wherever it has been proclaimed, multitudes of the most thoughtful have become convinced that it is from God, nor have they been inferior in intellect, in intelligence, in good behavior, nor in any other respect to those who have refused to heed its claims.

19. It has shown a marvellous power, which no other religion has exhibited, and which irreligion does not even pretend to wield, to arouse the conscience, to enlighten the understanding, to renew the will, to give another heart, to refine the life, to make the moral desert blossom as the rose, and to set free the prisoners of vice.

20. It authenticates its truth by numerous distinct prophecies, which have been fulfilled before the eyes of the world, as those concerning Ishmael and the Arabs, Egypt, Edom, Ammon, Moab, Philistia, Nineveh, Babylon, Chaldea, Tyre, the seven churches of Asia, or they are now in process of fulfillment as those concerning the Jews, Jeru-

salem, and the state of things among the nations, and all over the face of the earth.

21. It authenticates its truth by miracles, which are the appropriate and necessary evidence of a messenger from God, nor can we conceive of a divine Saviour without such deeds of love, compassion, forgiveness and restoration as His credentials to confirm His demand upon the faith and obedience of mankind.

22. It recognizes the rights of conscience, which proves it to be supernatural, or opposed to that which is natural to our race, by the history of Christianity itself, as in the name of Christianity fierce persecution has been carried on in the very face of the Bible.

23. It demands a separation between Church and state, or politics and religion, contenting itself with directing Christians to be subject to civil government; and this too is unnatural, or supernatural, as shown by the history of the church itself.

24. The corruption of Christianity has always been along the line of man's natural inclinations, proving how difficult it is to walk in obedience to a book which constantly crosses the desires of the human heart, and which thus manifests its super-human origin.

25. The picture it gives of the life and character of Jesus Christ shows that it was not drawn by man's unaided hand, because nothing like it was ever seen before, and because we are incapable of portraying that of which the mind had no previous conception.

26. The words of Jesus and His apostles, which

it records, prove it to be divine, for these words touch upon all the relations we sustain, upon every duty which springs out of these relations, and upon every topic of interest to the soul; and yet there is not one word nor even one illustration which is shown to be false by modern knowledge.

27. The book deals constantly and freely with the names of persons and places, with dates and innumerable details in its narratives; and yet after the strong light of unfriendly criticism has beaten upon it for eighteen hundred years, there has not been discovered the smallest discrepancy of fact, nor even the slightest anachronism.

28. It has gone forth into various lands, and wherever its precepts have been heeded; and in so far as they have been heeded, it has laid an arrest upon murder, adultery, falsehood, drunkenness, avarice, and other shapes of crime and vice that form such dark and continuous blots upon the pages of human history.

29. It is admitted by infidels themselves that if those who profess to follow its teachings were only sincere, it would bring with it incalculable blessings, and that no community could come thoroughly under the control of its influence without receiving a higher and nobler impulse toward all that is beneficent and valuable.

30. With all the imperfections and short-comings of those who profess to be governed by its authority, it has built orphan asylums and charitable institutions, and sought out the poor and suffering, and carried a better civilization to heathen countries, and lifted all upon whom it has laid its hand

to a higher plane, none of which things can be said of infidelity as an organized effort or system.

31. It offers a definite, positive, and tangible object of faith and hope to the acceptance of men, while infidelity only tears down, but can not build; only denies, but can not affirm; only takes away, but can not fill the dreary void it leaves in the soul and in the life.

32. It has encountered from the beginning the most bitter opposition and unrelenting hostility from Judaism, from the Roman empire, from the heathen world, from the foul apostacy of the dark ages, from human nature, from the unfaithfulness of its own friends; and it has won its way without arms, without influence, without learning, without wealth to its recognized supremacy.

33. The lives of its writers were above reproach, their enemies themselves being judges, nor is it possible that a succession of impostors or fanatics could so speak and so record their thoughts, that even those who do not believe in their inspiration have been led to say with Huxley, "By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between two eternities; and earns the blessings or the curses of all time, according to its effort to do good and hate evil?"

34. It exhibits the most marked and obvious superiority to the Jewish Talmud, the Koran, the apocryphal books of the Old Testament, the apocryphal gospels of the New, the writings of the so-called

“Fathers,” and the sacred books of all other religions, a superiority so great that it is instantly perceived by every candid reader, whether he be a Christian or intelligent infidel.

35. As to the relative value of the Bible, perhaps the present distinguished Prime Minister of Great Britain, Hon. W. E. Gladstone, whose familiarity with classic literature is unsurpassed, will be accepted as a competent witness. He says, “No poetry, no philosophy, no art of Greece ever embraced, in its most soaring and widest conceptions, that simple law of ‘love towards God and towards our neighbor,’ on which ‘two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets,’ and which supplied the moral basis of the New Dispensation. There is one history, and that the most touching and profound of all, for which we should search in vain through all the pages of the classics—I mean the history of the human soul in its relations with its Maker; the history of its sin, and grief, and death, and of the way of its recovery to hope and life, and to enduring joy. . . . All the wonders of the Greek civilization heaped together are less wonderful than is the single Books of Psalms.”

36. As to the relative value of Christianity, perhaps the testimony of the brilliant Essayist and historian, Macaulay, will be accepted. Writing of India and Christianity, he says, “I altogether abstain from alluding to topics which belong to divines; I speak merely as a politician, anxious for the morality and temporal well-being of society; and so speaking I say that to countenance the Brahminical idolatry, and to discountenance that

religion which has done so much to promote justice, and mercy, and freedom, and arts, and sciences, and good government, and domestic happiness—which has struck off the chains of the slave, which has mitigated the horrors of war, which has raised women from servants and playthings into companions and friends,—is to commit high treason against humanity and civilization.”

37. The Bible reveals man to himself precisely as he is, and knows himself to be; and it is not surprising that a native Chinaman, engaged by Dr. Morrison to assist in the translation of the Scriptures, came rushing one day into the presence of the Missionary with the exclamation, “Whoever made this book made me.”

38. It places all the race of mankind on a common level, obliterating the artificial distinctions of birth, wealth, culture, and social position, recognizing only two classes, the saved and the unsaved, the children of God and the children of the devil, giving an equal offer of eternal life to the rude men who sweat and swelter in mines, and furnaces, and factories, and to whom the gospel of science and enlightenment and progress is only a hideous mockery. All this is supernatural.

39. It has beyond question raised woman from the degradation to which she is consigned where its power is unknown; and precisely in proportion as its influence is felt in the home and social circle, does she ascend to her rightful position as an help meet for man; nor can there be found in the whole range of heathen literature anything half so beautiful and touching concerning her proper treatment

as we read in the book, now alas ! too often derided by those whom it has blessed.

40. The frank admissions of its writers as to their own ignorance and stupidity, and their ingenuous record of events that would seem to militate against the claims of their God, as the fall of David and Peter, the betrayal of Judas, the doubt of some whether Jesus had risen, prove that neither forgers nor fanatics could have composed the book.

41. Their remarkable reticence concerning many things into which man's curiosity instinctively seeks to pry, but which could not add in the least to the knowledge of his present duty, shows that they were under the mastery of a higher than human wisdom.

42. It is absolutely certain that good men did not write the Bible, because they everywhere affirm that they spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, proclaiming the words which God told them to utter, and if this is not true, they uttered what they knew to be false.

43. It is absolutely certain that bad men did not write it, because they would be strangers to the lofty conceptions of holiness, to the majestic ideas of God, to the terrible denunciations of hypocrisy and evil of every kind, which pervade the entire book.

44. Of what other book or books can it be said that at least 250,000,000 have been published during the last 70 years, and translated into 250 of the languages and dialects of earth ; and how could this have been possible, unless it carried with it in great and innumerable blessings the proof of its divine origin ?



45. If there is a personal God, as Deists acknowledge, and if He is a merciful God, as infidels admit, the probability that He would give us a written revelation amounts to a demonstration, when without it our sinfulness, ignorance, and utter helplessness and hopelessness are proved by the entire history of the race.

46. There is now preserved in the Bodleian Library at Oxford a manifesto, drawn up and signed by 617 of the most scientific men of Great Britain, who say, "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 Holy Scripture, 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 only 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."

47. That the Bible has outlived, not only the fires of persecution, and the assaults of infidel science, but the corruption of the church itself, torn with dissension and strife, filled with false doctrine and worldliness, wounding the Lord that purchased her redemption with His precious blood in the house of His friends, and furnishing a shelter

in the greatest of trees for the foulest fowls of the air, is a mighty proof that it originated with God, and is kept by the power of God.

48. Notwithstanding the defection of so many, there are millions of the best people now living, and there have been millions in preceding centuries, who attest its supernatural origin by their personal knowledge of its power to break the shackles of sin, to deliver from the assaults of temptation, to guide in perplexity, to comfort in sorrow, to elevate, enlarge, and ennoble the aims of life, and to light up a dying bed, if need be a martyr's stake, with the substantial hope of a glorious immortality.

49. A trial, after all, is the best test of its truth. As the poet and philosopher, Coleridge, says in his *Aids to Reflection*, "Try it. It has been in existence eighteen hundred years, and has one individual left a record like the following? . . . 'Both outwardly and in the discipline of my inward acts and affections, I have performed the duties which it enjoins, and I have used the means which it prescribes. Yet my assurance of its truth has received no increase. Its promises have not been fulfilled; and I repent me of my delusion.' If neither your own experience nor the history of almost two thousand years has presented a single testimony to this purport; and if you have read and heard of many who have lived and died bearing witness to the contrary; and if you yourself have met with some *one*, in whom on any other point you would place unqualified trust, who has on his own experience made report to that 'He is faithful who promised,

and what He promised He has proved Himself able to perform:’ is it bigotry if I fear that the unbelief, which prejudges and prevents the experiment, has its source elsewhere than in the uncorrupted judgment; that not the strong, free mind, but the enslaved will, is the true original infidel in this instance?”

50. It has uniformly commanded the confidence and reverence of really great men, which would have been impossible, if it were unworthy of respect, as shallow and ignorant infidelity claims it to be, chiefly, it is to be feared, because infidelity prefers sin, or dreads the future punishment which the Bible threatens, or is too conceited to surrender pride of opinion in presence even of perfect demonstration, or too indifferent to investigate the subject, or too unwilling to be convinced to listen to arguments on the other side. But when we hear Sir Matthew Hale saying, “If I omit praying, and reading a portion of God’s blessed word in the morning, nothing goes well the whole day;” when we hear Sir Isaac Newton saying, “We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy;” when we hear the biographer of Chief Justice Marshall saying of a brilliant lecture which the distinguished lawyer delivered in defence of the Bible, “An attempt to describe it would be an attempt to paint the sunbeams;” when we hear John Quincy Adams saying, “In what light soever we regard the Bible, whether with reference to revelation, to history, or to morality, it is our invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue;” when he hear Daniel Webster saying,

in the inscription cut upon his tombstone at Marshfield by his own order, "My heart has always assured me, and re-assured me that the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be a Divine Reality;" when we hear Robert C. Winthrop saying at the unveiling of Mr. Webster's statue in New York, "I can not help wishing that this declaration were engraved on one of the sides of yonder monumental base, in letters which all the world might read;" when we hear Jean Paul Richter saying that Christ, "being the holiest among the mighty, and the mightiest among the holy, lifted with His pierced hand empires off their hinges, turned the stream of civilization out of its channel, and still governs the ages;" when we hear Carlyle calling the book of Job "the sublimest poem of all ages," and Humboldt praising the 104th Psalm as "a concise and complete description of the whole cosmos—a psalm of the world;" and when we know that similar testimony has been given by hundreds and thousands of men in various pursuits and professions, the young Christian need not fear that he is standing alone against the false and impudent assertion of infidelity that men of sense do not see anything in the Bible to admire. Contrast those who have appeared as voluntary witnesses in its behalf with the crowds that gather about the blasphemer Ingersoll, and let every one determine for himself with which company he prefers to be identified. With one or the other each must have his place.

But all this, observe, has a direct bearing upon the resurrection of Jesus, and goes to confirm it mightily. If one tithe of the evidence is valid,

presented in the outline of the fifty arguments just offered in defence of the divine origin and authority of the Bible, then the book that contains an account of His resurrection must be accepted as true. Such a book can not be a tissue of lies, and as it implies and involves the resurrection of the promised Saviour from the third chapter of Genesis to the last chapter of Revelation, we are bound to believe that He actually rose, and is now on the right hand of God, and thence will come to judge the world. How much is wrapped up in this, as it affects the duty, the example, the influence, the happiness of man here, and his destiny hereafter, eternity alone can unfold. "Indisputably," wrote Lord Byron to Mr. Shepherd, "the firm believers in the Gospel have a great advantage over all others,—for this simple reason, that, if true, they will have their reward hereafter; and if there be no hereafter, they can but be with the infidel in his eternal sleep, having had the assistance of an exalted hope through life, without subsequent disappointment, since (at the worst for them) 'out of nothing, nothing can arise,' not even sorrow." Perhaps any reasoning skeptic would say the same thing; and it is marvellous in the light of such a confession, that so many choose to walk all their life-time in the darkness of unbelief, and even to go down into the grave without a ray of light or hope to disperse its gloom. Surely man is his own worst enemy here, as he is in the indulgence of his baser appetites.

It is often declared, however, by those who claim to be honest and anxious to find the truth,

that their skepticism is unavoidable, because they find it impossible to believe the Bible. To such it is earnestly recommended that they confine their studies and investigations to the one question, Did Jesus rise? They have probably been travelling over too much ground, and they have become confused by the multiplicity of arguments and suggestions and thoughts that meet them in a wide and apparently boundless field of inquiry. But they can readily see that if by patient and even laborious research and reflection they are convinced of the resurrection of Jesus, the great problem is solved, and the gigantic difficulty is settled. From that moment not a doubt can remain of the validity of His title as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. From that moment they can not hesitate to bow at the foot of the cross in adoring gratitude for the generous sacrifice of Himself to put away sin, and to stand with exultant hope beside His open grave in anticipation of the eternal glory for soul and body that is to be the portion of the believer at His second coming. As Napoleon said, "Christ speaks, and at once generations become His by stricter, closer ties than those of blood—by the most sacred, the most indissoluble of all unions. He lights up the flame of a love which consumes self-love, which prevails over every other love." It is not merely a system of doctrines you are asked to believe, but a risen personal Christ you are urged to trust.

Remember, too, that He is not a distant and indifferent Being, far removed from the possibility of sympathy with your infirmities, for the two men in

white who stood beside the disciples, as they watched with astonished gaze His ascension from the mount of Olives, said to them, "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." He is the same Jesus yesterday, to-day, and forever, having the same forbearance, and patience, and tenderness that marked His treatment of the vilest sinners when He was on the earth, and therefore inviting you to come, though laden with doubts, and fears, and questionings. He knows the sincerity of your desire to find the truth, and if you begin to call upon Him even in your blindness and darkness, He will lead you step by step, it may be, until you rejoice in the clearest light and largest liberty. Many a skeptic, who knew not whither to turn in his distress, has commenced his inquiries with the one thought, Did Jesus rise? This has been pursued with the firm purpose to arrive at the facts, and it has been followed up to the fixed conviction that the gospels contain a narrative of an event that actually occurred, and this by the fullest persuasion that the book of which these gospels form a part is from God, the only safe and reasonable rule of faith and practice for this life, as it is the only foundation of hope when we are called to face the tremendous realities of eternity.

One of the strongest men of the present century was the philosophical historian, and profound thinker, Arnold of Rugby. No one questions his ability or his honesty. Like multitudes of earnest souls he was sorely perplexed by the mysteries

surrounding him, and was sometimes cast into the tempestuous sea of doubt. But hear him in one of his lectures to the students under his care. These are his weighty words: "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 the 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 a most important cause. 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.*"



