

grave by the disciples and made provision accordingly, but the disciples themselves were completely thunderstruck when they heard of the removal. Despite definite testimony, it would seem as if they had resolved not to believe that Christ had risen. Looking back upon the whole scene we cannot help wondering at their incredulity—their dogged resistance of proof in addition to proof.

And yet what a change there was in these men in the course of a few days!

At first we find them bewildered, timid, despairing. A short time after we find them strongly altered for the better—full of energy, with great insight into truth and with dauntless courage proclaiming that truth—they were *new men*—the mantle of the old prophets had fallen upon them and the spirit of the old prophets was in them.

As soon as they were permitted to speak—they spoke with such fire and force—their theme was a crucified and risen Christ.

The suggestion that they were impostors and that they deliberately laid themselves out to deceive, is monstrous, and as such unworthy of serious notice.

Would impostors have begun their work in Jerusalem, where the events that are the foundation facts of Christianity had occurred? Could impostors have shown the brave and noble bearing which these men did in the Day of Pentecost, before the Council, amid scourging, torture, and death? If *honest* men there ever were, these men were honest and so they staked their *all* upon the truth of Christ's resurrection.

What was it that brought this great change in their character and conduct? It is the fact that Jesus rose again on the third day from the dead; that this Jesus who was slain by wicked hands, God had raised up to be a Prince and Saviour; any other explanation is futile.

It is scarcely possible to overestimate the importance of unshaken faith in the resurrection of our Lord. A "Risen Christ" is the centre around which all things else range themselves. The aspect in which we are to look upon Him—the aspect that is indispensable to our hope, trust, strength, worship is that of the "Risen Christ."

Will this, and all that is involved therein as the theme, Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost resulted in the conversion of three thousand souls. In the course of a short time, through the preaching of Jesus and the resurrection, by the apostles, many more thousands both of Jews and Gentiles were won to the faith and were prepared to suffer imprisonment and even death rather than deny the faith.

Well then may we hail the return of Easter day, commemorating as it does a *fact*, than which no other in the whole range of history is better authenticated.

Easter Day speaks to us the eloquent tones of bright morning, bright after a dark and dreary night—of gain through loss—of joy through sorrow—of victory through seeming defeat, of a prophecy and pledge of your own resurrection—life eternal, through death.

Despite the blood red setting of the sun of righteousness, He is to-day high in the heavens, and is destined to rise higher and higher still, and to bathe a weary, sin sick world in the glorious light.

At Easter time nature is on the eve of a great quickening and renewal—winter is passing away—the time of the singing of birds and of the flowers is at hand—there will soon be a great oozing out of life, oceans of life on hill and mead.

Would that in the moral and spiritual

realm there were a resurrection corresponding to that in nature!

Just in proportion as the church believes in, and experiences the *Power* of His resurrection will she be stirred up to shake herself from the dust and from the bands of her neck—put on her beautiful garments as the Lamb's Bride—the King's Daughter. Then with heart and voice rightly attuned she will break forth in glad and grateful song.

"Hail holy day most blest, most dear!
"When Death's dark region, sad and drear
"These strange mysterious sounds did hear
"The Lord is Risen."

All true Christians are crucified, buried, risen with Christ—but what of the grave clothes? Have they been laid aside? Our Lord laid aside His. In this respect there was a marked difference between Him and Lazarus who came forth from the sepulchre bound in grave clothes. Alas! that so many eyes should be like Lazarus rather than like our Lord—the grave clothes do not become the resurrection life—they are a dead weight—a sore hindrance to *ascension*.

Without ascension the Christian process in us is not complete. It is the will of our Saviour King that we should be set down in the orderly places with, and in Him. For this His Holy Spirit is waking upon, and in us.

It is only as we are what may be called "high level Christians"—that the gracious purpose of the Redeemer concerning us, is fulfilled.

May there come to us at this Easter season—fresh inspiration—holy aspiration—a weighty spiritual uplifting.

"Up, and away,
"Thy Saviour's gone before,
"Why dost thou stay
"Dull Soul! Behold the door
"Is open, and His Precept bids thee rise,
"Whose power hath vanquished all thine enemies"

The "Advanced" Theory of Resurrection.

II.

REV. JOSEPH HAMILTON.

In a former article we adverted to Dr. Gerhard's theory both of our Lord's resurrection and our own. If his theory is not essentially wrong it certainly appears to be hazy. He is fond of representing the resurrection both as "a process and an event." And the second advent he also treats in the same indeterminate way. "The second advent," he says, "is both a process and an event." Then he goes on to show that there are many comings of the Lord. He says He is "continually coming." Special cases or occasions are named, as, His conscious presence with His disciples—His coming in the unfolding history of the Church—in the destruction of Jerusalem—in the elevation of Constantine—in the struggle with Mohammedanism—in the missionary activity of the middle ages—in the Reformation—in the rise of Methodism—and so on. I confess that to me the stress laid upon such events seems calculated—if not intended—to minimise or explain away the Saviour's supreme final coming to judge the world. The resurrection, as I have said, is also treated in this progressive sense, as if it were not a clean cut definite event. "The resurrection," our author says, "is not an isolated event, which takes place at the end of the world, but it is a present reality; it begins in this life, is continued at death, and completed at the final consummation of all things." I have not space to show how our author develops these views. The effect on my mind is simply to consign

the resurrection as a definite event to the limbo of uncertainties. Christ's own resurrection, our author says, "was a moral process. He was ever rising, because he was ever doing the will of God." In such mist and haze the great event itself is lost.

My purpose now is to notice as briefly as I can our author's theory of the spiritual body. And I am glad to be more at one with him on this point, though not wholly at one. On such a mysterious subject there may well be differences of opinion. I have long had the idea that when the spirit leaves the body at death it does not go out "unclothed." This seems to be what Paul teaches. When speaking of liberation from the fleshly body, he says, "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon." I think there is no scripture that affirms or implies that the spirit at death is wholly disembodied. I doubt whether consciousness or activity could be maintained in a wholly disembodied state. "The assumption that the soul after death is absolutely bodiless," says our author, "cannot be maintained." "Is there not," he asks, "perhaps, after all, a third substance, which is neither matter nor mind? Just this an increasing number of scholars are beginning to believe." So far as I may venture an opinion, it accords with this. If we do not understand matter, as certainly we do not, and if far less we understand spirit, I think he would be a rash man who would say that there cannot be another substance which is neither matter nor spirit, but a connecting link between them. If so, we would find in this fact an explanation of many things that heretofore have been mysteries. On this point, therefore, we are agreed.

But beyond this point we diverge. Our author seems to think that after all there are not two bodies but one. At death the fleshly body is no longer a body—it is only a corpse. In life the spiritual body is only potentially present in the fleshly body. The spiritual body is then actually *the* body; and this is the body of the resurrection. Such are his views. "When a man dies," he says, "the matter of which his body is composed is abandoned." Again: "When he dies the corpse is dissolved, but the body does not perish any more than the soul." That is, if I understand him aright, the spiritual body is actually the true body, the fleshly organ being at death needed no longer, and no longer serviceable, is discarded forever. Thus the spiritual body is the resurrection body. Certainly this view fits in well with our author's theory of the resurrection. We will not say that this theory of the body has been adopted to sustain his theory of the resurrection. The main question is—Is the theory in accord with reason and revelation?

Whatever reason may say on this point, I think revelation does not sustain our author's theory. Paul's great discourse on the resurrection by no process of jugglery with words can be explained away. The Apostle says the body is "sown"; but by no fair process can the spiritual body within the fleshly body be understood as "sown"; it is not sown at all. Nor is this spiritual body "corruptible," as Paul says; it is not corruptible; it is only released. Nor is this spiritual body "mortal"; it is immortal; it is the fleshly body that dies, not the spiritual body. It is the fleshly body, "sown," "mortal," "corruptible," that is to be raised immortal and incorruptible; otherwise words have no meaning.

Now let me briefly sketch my own views of the spiritual body. Yet they are not quite

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