

Laurie and staff, the Ambulance corps and others attended the service. Rev. J. P. Sargent officiated.

### The Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.

(Present Day Tracts, by Rev. Prebendary Row, M.A.)

(Continued.)

The fact that the Church was reconstructed shortly after the crucifixion, renders it absolutely certain that the followers of Jesus must have believed that they had conversations with their risen Master, and that in these conversations He gave them His directions both to reconstruct the Church and as to the mode in which they were to do so; for, as I have said, unless they had believed that they had received such instructions, it is simply incredible that they should have ventured on the attempt, and have dared to re-found the Church on the basis of His resurrection and spiritual Messiahship, and that too in the face of all the opposition they were certain to encounter. But if their belief in His resurrection was the result of an hallucination, then the instructions which they believed that they had received, and on which they successfully acted, must have been mere visions, the creation of their disordered imaginations. What is more, they must have all fancied that they heard similar utterances, or else there would have been a diversity of plans.

To enable us to accept theories like these as accounts of actual facts, requires on our part more than all the credulity which unbelievers ascribe to our Lord's primitive followers.

But observe further: the belief in the resurrection was no idle belief, like that of a common ghost story or an ordinary marvel. Such beliefs begin and end in nothing; but this had an energy and power sufficient to reconstruct the Church in the face of the greatest difficulties and perils. It was therefore no sentimental belief entertained by individuals, who did nothing in consequence of it; but one which sustained the weight of an institution which has endured for eighteen centuries of time, and has acted more powerfully on mankind than any other known to history. This belief went on spreading, until within less than seventy years, it had firmly established itself in all the great cities of the Roman empire, and had shown itself capable of enduring the test of martyrdom. Where in history can be found an instance of a community which has been founded on the belief that a man who had been publicly executed, rose again from the dead, and who was thus proved to be the King of the kingdom of God? Is it easy to persuade numbers of men and women to accept so astounding a fact? Where can be found an example of a great institution, which has lasted for centuries, which has wielded a greater influence for good, and a mightier power over the human mind than all other institutions put together, which has been erected on the foundation of a number of vulgar marvels?

What, I ask, has the whole mass of ghost stories, marvels, and current spiritualism done to reform the world? We have heard much in these modern days of spiritualism, and its wonders; has there any great institution been erected on its basis, or is there any probability that there ever will? Are mankind, or any portion of them, the better or the wiser for its disclosures? To these questions there can be only one answer. Spiritualism, with all its alleged powers of penetrating into the secrets of the unseen world, and all similar marvels, have achieved nothing; they have made man neither holier nor wiser; nay, they have not effected a discovery which has enlarged the knowledge, or even made the fortune of any of its votaries. But respecting the Gospel of the resurrection, the great Christian missionary could write to those who had actual knowledge of the facts, in the first of his extant letters, dating only twenty-three years from the crucifixion: "Remembering without ceasing your work of faith and labour of love and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, before our God and Father, . . . for our Gospel came not unto you

in word only, but also in power; . . . and ye became imitators of us, and of the Lord; . . . and how ye turned unto God from idols, to serve the living and true God; and to wait for His Son from heaven, whom He raised from the dead, even Jesus;" and as he wrote to another body of his converts, only four years later, after he had affirmed that before becoming Christians they had been guilty of some of the foulest voices which can disgrace mankind: "And such were some of you; but ye were washed, but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God."

The first of our three alternatives is therefore the only possible one. Jesus rose from the dead. If this was an actual event, it satisfies all the facts of history, and affords a rational account of the origin of the Church. No other theory does anything else but make boundless demands on our credulity in the name of an unsound philosophy.

I am now in a position to assign to the Gospels their proper place as historical documents. The above facts having been proved on evidence which is quite independent of their testimony, it is useless for unbelievers to affirm, as far as the Resurrection is concerned, that they were written by nameless authors, long after the events which they profess to record, for the truth of the Resurrection can be proved independently of their testimony. If, therefore, it is a fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead, the *a priori* presumption against their miraculous narratives, the existence of which is the reason why unbelievers pronounce them unhistorical, is destroyed; nay, it becomes far more probable that Jesus Christ wrought miracles, than that He wrought none. The Gospels, therefore, may be accepted for what they profess to be,—memoirs of the ministry of Jesus Christ, composed by their authors with the design of teaching the fundamental principles of Christianity.\* Their accounts are fragmentary, but are substantial narratives of facts. They were not written for polemical purposes, but for the edification of believers.† It has been objected that their accounts contain narratives which it is difficult to reconcile with one another in minute details. I admit that such is the fact, and that this results from the peculiar class of writings to which the Gospels belong, viz., not regular histories, but religious memoirs; which class of writings do not profess to furnish us with a complete and continuous narrative. The last thing which occurred to their authors was to guard against the objections of opponents. In their accounts of the Resurrection, they satisfy all the conditions of the case. The events of Easter Sunday must have thrown the followers of Jesus into the greatest excitement. The accounts of them given in the three first Gospels are exactly such as we should expect from men and women under similar circumstances. They are broken, disjointed, without any attempt being made to weave them into a complete whole, yet, in all the main facts their testimony agrees, and they are fully corroborated by the more definite account of an eye-witness—the author of the fourth Gospel. This is exactly what they should be, if they contain the reports of genuine witnesses; and what they certainly would not have been if they had been written by men acting in mutual concert, and with the design of smoothing over difficulties, or answering objections. Let us hear on this point one of the highest authorities of modern scepticism. "It is useless," says the *Westminster Review*, "to carp at small minor details. All histories contain variations, or if you like to call them, contradictions on minor points. This has been the case with every history that has been written from Herodotus to Mr. Froude."

Let unbelievers therefore join issue on the main facts of the Gospel history, just as they would with any secular history, and we will meet them. Above all, let them not carp at minor details about miracles; but let them join issue on the truth or falsehood of that great miracle, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ, on the truth of which the writers of the New Testament have staked the existence of Christianity; for if its historical foundation can be proved to be baseless, the Christian Church

must become a crumbling ruin. But if Jesus Christ has risen from the dead, Christianity must be a Divine revelation, notwithstanding all the objections which have been urged against it by unbelievers, or any amount of alleged discrepancies with which they charge the narratives of the Gospels.

### Book Notices, Reviews, &c.

THE LIBRARY MAGAZINE for May contains thirty-nine well selected articles from the best foreign and home periodicals. These fill 180 pages of ten by seven inches. The selections are well made and cannot help but interest the general reader. The Magazine is deserving of success, for, by its low price—\$1.50 per annum—it places within the reach of all the best productions of modern thought, which before have only been attainable through the high priced reviews.

THE NOVELIST appears in a new and improved form, similar to that of the Elzevir Library. Several serial stories by eminent authors are in course of publication in this periodical, which is sold at the nominal price of 3 cents per number, or \$1.50 a year. The publisher of the *Library Magazine*, and *The Novelist*, is John B. Alden, 303 Pearl St., N. Y.

TOWERS, BULWARKS, STRONG PLACES: An address to the congregation of the Church of the Holy Trinity, Toronto, delivered, Oct. 27, 1884, on the occasion of the uncovering of a memorial brass in honor of its anonymous founder, by Henry Scadding, D.D., Canon of Toronto: From 1847 to 1875, Incumbent of the above named Church. Toronto: Copp, Clark & Co.,

In this able and scholarly discourse the learned author gives an interesting sketch of the early history of Holy Trinity Church, and of the great revival of religious life in the Church of England, in which it originated.

THE CONVERTED CATHOLIC is the title of a monthly Magazine, published by James A. O'Connor, an ex-priest of the Roman Church. It is "specially designed for the enlightenment and conversion of Roman Catholics." No. 60, Bible House, New York. Subscription, \$1 per annum.

THE HOMILETIC REVIEW for May, is as usual full of good things. Bishop Cox opens a "Symposium on The Pulpit," with an eloquent and thoughtful paper which will well repay a careful perusal. The "Sermonic Section" has eighty discourses varying greatly in length and ability, but all good. The other departments are quite up to the average of this excellent periodical.

LITTELL'S LIVING AGE. The numbers of *The Living Age* for April 25th and May 2nd contain, Echoes of the Eighteenth Century, SCOTTISH REVIEW; The Black Death in East Anglia, *Nineteenth Century*; On Style in Literature; its Technical Elements, *Contemporary*; On Pattison's Memoirs, March in Magna Græcia, and the Astrology of Shakespeare, *Macmillan*; Sir Henry Taylor's Autobiography, *Longman's*; A Soldier of Fortune, *Blackwood*; Mr. Gladstone's Thoughts, and Arab Courage, *Spectator*; Inside a Catholic College, *Chambers' Journal*; Some Secrets of the Silk Trade, *St. James's*; with instalments of "A House Divided Against Itself," "Mrs. Dymond," and "The Blue Pests of Chester," and poetry.