

anew the earth with their bright light. The Friday of the crucifixion and the day that followed were days of storm for the disciples. Their sky was black with shame and sorrow. But when the bright Easter morn breaks and with it brought their Master, Lord and King triumphant from the sepulchre, gloom was turned to gladness, darkness to light, grief to joy, shame to triumph and depression to enthusiasm. Christ was risen, his mission was genuine, his cause divine, his victory final. Your attention is invited to this glorious truth of the resurrection of our Redeemer, the great theme of the apostles' preaching, and by means of which they overthrew the powers of heathenism to establish the blessed truths of Christianity.

I.—SOME OF THE GROUNDS ON WHICH OUR BELIEF IN IT RESTS.—The doctrine of Christ's resurrection is fundamental. When the enemies of Christianity attack this part of the citadel, they fully realize that if they can succeed in demolishing it, they will very soon cause the whole structure to give way. Hence the strenuous efforts of such men as Strauss and Renan to disprove the indisputable fact that Christ rose from the dead according to the scriptures.

Let us select four modes of proof out of the many that can be offered to establish this fact.

1. *The testimony of the Evangelists.*—Here are four upright men who agree in affirming the fact that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. These men did not anticipate this event. They had not understood their master, and the proof of it is that all their hopes were buried with him in the sepulchre. They have lost all power, their courage is gone, they have become weak, cowardly men. They do not look for him on the third day, they do not even know him at first when he speaks to them. They will not believe that he is risen until he himself tells them and upbraids their unbelief. Nothing then, but visible, palpable evidence could convince them of the fact they were so slow in believing. We can trust their testimony, for it must be reliable. To reject it would be to treat the evangelists as impostors or fools.

2. *The appearances of Christ* furnish us with a second and strong proof of the same truth: "He is risen: he is not here." Had he been seen on earth but once or twice and by one or two persons only, it might have been supposed that these were deceived. But no less than ten different times did he show himself during the forty days preceding his ascension. Let us briefly recall them.