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Editorial.

THE NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION BODY.

From the time God announced the startling doctrine, that there is to be a resurrection of the dead, men have been busy speculating on the nature of the resurrection body. We can easily gather from Paul's great argument, in the fifteenth chapter of his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians, that the first tendency of Christians was to be too literal in their interpretation of the doctrine. They imagined that the material body with its essence and accidents unchanged would rise to heaven and be partakers of its glory. Such an extreme view gave rise, as is usually the case, to a party in the Christian Church, probably of Sadducean origin, who denied altogether a doctrine so grossly misrepresented. This brought Paul (1 Cor. xv.) upon the field of discussion, to explain, establish and defend the true doctrine as revealed to him by God.

If the tendency in the early days of Christianity was to the extreme of *literalness* in reading the promises, we in our day are not without danger of falling into the other extreme of undue *freedom*. In a recent number of an evangelical and very popular Magazine there is a very interesting article on "The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body," which glides into error from the desire, we suppose, to make the doctrine look more reasonable to cultivated minds. Here is what the writer,

the Hon. and Revd. Canon Lyttelton, says, given in his own words:—*

"In this whole personality of man, with its multiplicity of mysterious vital power, forces, attributes, there is, you should notice, one that is specially connected with the body, and which forms, I think we may say, in a special sense, the mediating power between soul and body, that is, the wonder-working, formative, or building power, by means of which it is given to the soul to lay hold of and appropriate surrounding matter, and which is continuously engaged during life in fashioning its atoms into a living body, or rather into a succession of living bodies. This power, or vital force, stands to our bodies in just the same relation in which the seed, or the seminal force in the seed, does to the plant; it is its originating and controlling force, its law, the pervading, and subordinatedly creative power of its life.

Now, if such a "building-force," attached to the soul during its life in this world, was always, by the law of its nature, appropriating matter and therewith building for itself out of the materials of this world a fitting body, then, when the soul is transferred to another world or sphere of existence, carrying with it thither this "formative force," that force will, from its very nature, continue, in that world too, doing its proper work. *There*, too, it will appropriate and mould into charac-

* *Sunday Magazine.*