

not warranted in doing otherwise. But if this is the case with St. Matthew and St. John, it is hardly possible to exaggerate the claim which each Gospel must have upon our faith and reverence. For if there is adequate reason to believe these Gospels genuine, it is certain in that case that we have the testimony of two eye-witnesses and companions of our blessed Lord, who, from that very fact, may be regarded as commissioned to record what they have related. Consequently, if their works are genuine, it is not less certain that they must be authentic—that is, contain the narratives of those who themselves witnessed the events and faithfully recorded what they witnessed. Now it is exactly this which in the present day is so frequently denied or called in question and insinuated. It is suggested that our accounts are not those of eye-witnesses. It is, on the contrary, all but certain that they are—at least, two of them; and whether they are or not, it is certain that the incidents recorded are not one whit more incredible than those which we must postulate to account for the language of St. Paul to the Romans and Corinthians. For is the feeding of the five thousand or the raising of Lazarus more marvellous or incredible than our Lord's own resurrection? But it is impossible to account for the language of St. Paul to Rome and Corinth unless the faith in the Lord's resurrection was complete, and impossible to account for the faith being so complete and so general unless it had rested upon adequate ground. Nay, is not the faith itself the best evidence of the reality of the cause producing it? For what was that faith, so to say, but the extension and continuation of the resurrection? They who held that faith were partakers of a risen life, because they had received it from a risen Lord. I claim, then, that we should read the Gospels in the light they receive from the evidence of the early Christianity of St. Paul's Epistles, and not wait till it is absolutely impossible to doubt the genuineness and authenticity of the Gospels before we deal with the evidences of renewed and supernatural life with which those Epistles abound.

But having got thus far, that is, as the clear indications of the existence of a new and supernatural life ostensibly spring-