

THE QUIET HOUR

THE HISTORICAL TRUTH OF THE EASTER STORY

When the accusers stood up, they brought none accusation of such things as I supposed; but had certain questions against him of their own superstition, and of one JESUS, which was dead, whom Paul affirmed to be alive.—Acts xxv., 18, 19.

I seldom speak of the historical evidence of the Gospel story, because I don't expect this column to be read by people who echo the airy statement of Festus—given in our text—that JESUS, who claims to be the Life of the world, is "dead." And, even if men like Festus could be convinced by the overwhelming weight of evidence, this conviction would be absolutely worthless, unless their lives were the better for it. Satan knows that Jesus is the Son of God, but that knowledge only adds to his guilt while he is fighting against Him. S. James points his assertion that "faith without works is dead," by saying: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe and tremble." Of what value is their abject fear of a God who is not revered or obeyed by them? It is a very terrible thing for a man to be convinced of the truth of the Bible, and yet deliberately to refuse obedience to God's commands, as our Lord warns us: "That servant which knew his Lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." When the chief priests and the Pharisees could not disprove the miracle of the raising of Lazarus, they decided that this man, who "doeth many miracles," must be put to death; and said that, for the safety of their own plans, it might be necessary to put Lazarus also to death. Such terrible fighting against God would hardly be possible to one who could truthfully say that he doubted the truth of the Gospel story. But wilful ignorance is almost as bad. When a man turns his back on the light and complains that he can't see, the darkness of unbelief is a sin. It is a mystery to see how many people apparently care very little whether the Bible is telling the truth about life here and hereafter, or whether it is legendary. Because, if the Bible be false, no religion can possibly be worthy of an educated person's belief. It is the only book which really throws light on the life beyond death—and we are all marching straight towards death. It is a marvellous thing that anyone who has to die can be utterly careless about the future which an immortal soul must enter into. We have to die, and yet we can't die. No one, by wishing, can put out his own soul "like the flame of a candle"—as people used to say, before we were informed that it was an unscientific statement, because even the flame of a statement, because even the transformed into some other force.

But I am wandering from my subject. Though I care little to convince unbelievers, by argument, that the Founder of the Christian religion really rose from the dead, I feel the importance of establishing the faith of those who want to feel sure that it is really true. From the accounts of the visible appearances of the Risen Christ which are preserved to us, it would seem as though He took care to establish, by many infallible proofs, the fact of His Resurrection—but only to His friends. And I believe it is much the same to-day. The proofs are there, if we want to seek and find them; but they may be overlooked by those who don't feel especially interested, and they seem inadequate to those who don't want them to be true.

Poets and painters and musicians have been inspired by the beauty of Christ's marvellous Life, and have poured out the treasures of their imagination in the attempt to describe

But perhaps the halo around the

head of the King makes Him seem unreal sometimes, and it is well to look through the flowers and music of our modern Easter Day to the solid fact of the first Easter. Unless our faith rests on a basis of historical fact, it may be very beautiful, but it will be impossible to rest all our hopes on it. It is either a Fact of history, or it is the greatest falsehood the world has ever known. There can be no half measures.

Let us judge of the truth of the Resurrection story by what it has accomplished. I have no new proofs to offer, but will just put before you a few which have been gathered together by careful students. Let us see just what would have been the natural result of the death of the Nazarene Leader if there had been no Resurrection. The little company of his friends and followers, having no money or influence, would have scattered sadly to their homes. They

of the world, and, as a matter of fact, wherever He reigns the darkness dies out. There is plenty of wickedness in Christian countries, but that only proves my statement; for the people who harden themselves in lives of deliberate sin, are never Christians in more than name. To really serve Christ, from the heart, is to fight against all kinds of evil.

There is no effect without a cause. The Great, Victorious Christian Church could not have grown and accomplished such marvellous results if it had been dead, if the Living Christ had not been working in it all these centuries. Millions of the best people in every age have been inspired to live in joy and peace and fearless courage, no matter what difficulties or dangers faced them. The greatest witness to the truth of Christ's Living Presence in the world has always been its power to inspire fresh and eager love and devotion to God and man in the hearts of men and women.

Then there is the weekly witness of Sunday. Some wonderful Event must have caused a body of Jews to change their rest-day from Saturday to Sun-

days of linen, passing out without disturbing the sealed stone.

What the spiritual body is like we cannot tell, for we can only understand things which fit into our own experience. Probably S. Peter and S. John, who had seen their Lord transfigured on the mountain, realized at once from the appearance of the grave-cloths that His body was now able to appear and disappear, according to His will, and was unfettered by the attraction of the earth or the laws of space.

I have not time to speak more on this subject, except to remark that those who doubt the possibility of a resurrection, on the ground that it is a "miracle"—and that "miracles never happen"—are speaking very unscientifically. Huxley said that the miracles of the Bible were mere child's play to the miracles of science, and that the question was purely a matter of evidence. We, who can see through solid bodies by the help of the X-ray, can listen to the voice of men who have long been dead, by means of a phonograph, and send a message thousands of miles in a few minutes—not to speak of many other seemingly impossible commonplaces of every day—should hardly dare to say that anything is impossible.

DORA FARNCOMB (HOPE).

LITERARY SOCIETY

THE LAST WINNERS OF THE SEASON

Do you remember an old school rhyme we used to sing with more vigor than music, that ended with "The last and best of all the game"? That line describes our last contest of this season in respect of numbers and interest, and should be a pleasing prophecy for the re-opening of our Literary Society next fall. By the way, if an idea strikes you at any time that you think would be useful for our Literary Society next season, make a note of it or drop a card to this department while it is fresh in your mind.

The prize-winners in this last contest are four competitors who had no errors at all in their list. They are Mrs. D. G. Markle, Alberta; Miss Clara Sharman, Saskatchewan; Miss Annie Garnett, Manitoba; Miss Cordie Gill, Manitoba. Will they state their preferences in prizes promptly?

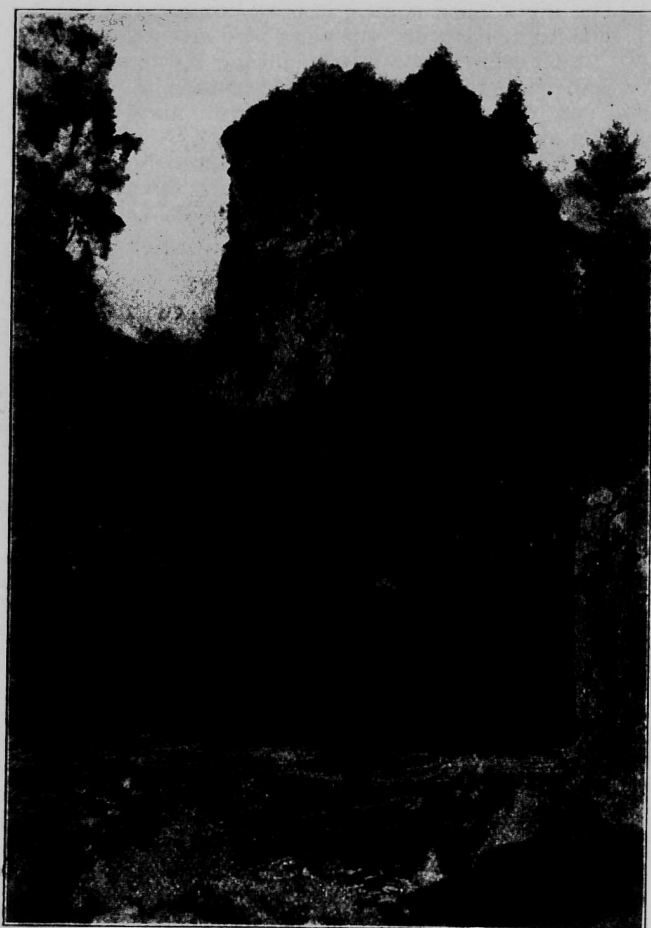
Deserving of mention, I think, are all those who had three errors or less in their stories and these are Miss A. Rutherford, Manitoba; Miss Pansy Munday, Manitoba; Stanley Fuller, Manitoba; Mrs. A. J. Hunter, Ontario; Mrs. T. D. McCallum, Saskatchewan; Miss M. E. Iretton, Manitoba; Miss L. Elder, Saskatchewan; Miss M. Lackey, Alberta; Mrs. M. H. Tallant, Saskatchewan; Miss L. Thorn, Manitoba; Mrs. L. Killough, Saskatchewan.

With best wishes for a prosperous summer, and hopes for a grand reunion next fall we leave our pleasant comradeship for a time.

The complete story used in the contest is given below:

THE COURSE OF TRUE LOVE

A girl whose name was Maud Muller is the heroine of this story. She was born in the Deserted Village and was as good and beautiful as a Fairy Queen. For the purpose of educating their daughter her parents left their native town for a larger city where they rented the House of Seven Gables. Here they hoped their daughter would become The Betrothed of some worthy man, and would be able to furnish them with plenty of Hard Cash; however, She refused to carry out their wishes, and the family for a while had Hard Times instead of having their Great Expectations realized. Her most intimate friend was a beautiful blonde with A Pair of Blue Eyes and was called Gold Elsie. As they had some artistic ability they decided to keep a Sketch Book; this afforded them much amusement, as it did also a young man to whom they had often showed it, and whom they styled Our Mutual Friend.



UNTOUCHED BY TIME.

would have had no object in trying to make people believe in one who had failed even to save himself. In a generation or two the name of Jesus of Nazareth would have been almost forgotten. But what do we find? This little body of disciples glorying in the Cross, which was the symbol of their Leader's shameful death, eagerly and joyfully attempting the apparently impossible task of making the world believe that He was alive. How they succeeded, the pages of history can tell us. It is an historical fact—a fact which no educated person can doubt—that the Founder of the Christian religion was put to death by Pontius Pilate, and yet that, in the face of terrible persecution, in about 300 years it had spread until the great Roman Empire called itself Christian. And it has gone on conquering the world ever since. The most enlightened nations are those who call Jesus their King. It has stamped out such terrible evils as infanticide, slavery, the murder of helpless prisoners, the torture of criminals, etc., wherever it has taken deep root. Christ said He was the Light

day. If it was not the fact of the Resurrection, what was it? Those who deny that great miracle should offer us some other good reason for the changed day. The burden of proof lies with them.

Then there is the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Why should disciples of a loved Master take the solemn Memorial of His death and call it their great "Eucharist," or Thanksgiving? Only the Resurrection could transform the remembrance of His death into a feast of joy. Only the Resurrection could have made the Cross a token of triumph instead of sorrow and shame.

Then there was the witness of the grave-cloths in the tomb, which convinced the apostles that their Master's body had not been taken away by friend or foe, but had been changed into a spiritual body. The undisturbed folds were "lying flat," pressed down by a hundred pounds of spices, the turban-like napkin was still twirled where it had been about the sacred Head. Nothing had been stirred as the natural body changed mysteriously and rose through the

Soon our heroine be that the young man wa to her friend than to began to play The Spy Yourself in his Place and stand how he felt, were soon realized, young man give her and heard the young l call in The Little Mi lived in a seaport town one of the Ships That and at once started Meanwhile the parent

IN

THE HOUSEWIFE SOME HINTS ON THE WHICH WILL BE FOU HOUSE W

What is it? Surely for every woman is 1 even if she be not yet into the middle of eve

Housecleaning! D tv soon now the ho cleaner will ascend to and the thump, thum of the carpet beater the land. We can on to don dust caps, ol worried expression, a broom, a pail and a m dusty corners and c agreeable subject is it, to enlarge and expc going to do much of though, you may find among the various lit gestions in the follo

When the first war we feel the houseclea ing through our vein to just let our extra i in setting to rights th trunks and boxes. the next day will be and the "housecleani abated somewhat. I mulated a lot of us you, like old clothe really have no use fo them to someone v Many poor children clothed on some of have been stored aw other rubbish.

"Needless waste m is an old saying wh told our mothers, a b we gladly hand do young Canadians. advisable to save it is not right to w there are women w inches of lace, whic this wide world for fill a rag bag. The even the sleeve clipp a dress and nine ti a clipping of a particu it is like hunting for stack to find it.

Old papers, magaz pieces of worn, old articles too nume find their way into which would be be the spring when hou done the wardrobes heaval of a departm due to the desire to s mical part of the hou to be in filling ragba in other respects. painting to do? Di Every time you ente greeted with an o and oil, so strong th you out again. To almost surely resul It is said that chlo newly painted room the odor. That's a tolerate the smell c vessels filled with v efficient, especially changed frequently. a wisp of hav put in the treatment mor ask me why, for I d

What is your sp what are you goin spring? It is one cold, clean, comf with a never-used, d