

dreds of miles of space, were all of the same mind in believing that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead, and that this belief was the sole ground of the existence of the Christian community. Consider how long it would have taken for such a belief to have grown up in Churches thus widely separated. We have found that similar was the belief of the Jewish Church, and of that at Antioch, and proved that it was believed in by those churches from their first origin. We may therefore safely infer that it was the belief of the entire Christian body wherever situated. It is useless therefore to assert that the belief in the miraculous stories of the Gospels grew up very gradually during the first century, and for the purpose of enabling them to have done so, to put off the publication of the first three Gospels to its close or the first ten years of the second. On the contrary, we have indisputable evidence that the greatest of these miracles was implicitly believed in within much less than twenty-eight years after the crucifixion.

6. This belief was evidently not one of recent growth. The mode in which allusion is made to it proves that it was contemporaneous with the first belief in Christianity on the part of those to whom St. Paul wrote. As we have seen, many of them were Jewish Christians, who must have been very early converts themselves, or who must have derived their faith from those who were. The allusions in the letter to the Galatians plainly include the testimony of St. Peter and St. James. We also find, by a most incidental allusion in the letter to the Romans, that there were two members of that Church who had embraced Christianity before St. Paul. The allusion is so incidental, that it is worth quoting. It occurs in the midst of a large number of salutations, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me." Yet they were all

agreed on this point. St. Paul had believed in it from his conversion, *i.e.*, within less than ten years after the crucifixion. Andronicus and Junia believed it still earlier. Peter, James, and John believed it from the first; for St. Paul states that he communicated to them the gospel which he preached among the Gentiles; and that they generally approved of it; and in the fifteenth to the Corinthians he expressly affirms that Peter and James had seen Jesus Christ after He was risen from the dead. Let it be observed that in the Epistle to the Galatians he informs us that he paid Peter a visit of fifteen days, three years after his own conversion; and that during this visit, he had an interview with James. We cannot, therefore, in asserting that we have here the direct testimony of these two men, that they had seen the risen Jesus. It follows, therefore, that the belief in the Resurrection was that on which the Church was reconstructed immediately after the crucifixion.

7. St. Paul makes, in the fifteenth to the Corinthians, a very definite statement as to a number of persons who had actually seen Jesus Christ after He had risen from the dead. He tells us that on one occasion He was seen by more than five hundred persons at once, of whom the greater part, *i.e.*, more than two hundred and fifty, were still living when he wrote. Now consider how St. Paul, in making this assertion, put himself in the hands of those opponents who denied his apostleship. If the resurrection was not generally believed to be true, the discussion between them might have been put an end to then and there, by a simple exposure of the falsehood of such a statement. But if these five hundred persons really thought that they had seen Jesus Christ alive after He was crucified, how is it possible to account for so singular a fact, otherwise than on the supposition of its truth?

8. But further: in the Corinthian