

Church of England in Canada, so that every individual might feel that as a member of the Church he was a member of the Society, and bound to promote by his prayers, his personal efforts, and his offerings, the Missionary work of the Church, both in the Domestic and Foreign Fields; (3) The method adopted by the board of management, in issuing annually, at Epiphany, a circular bearing upon Foreign Missions, and at Ascensiontide a circular bearing upon Domestic Missions, and in asking for an annual offering from each member of the Church for each of these important objects; (4) The duty of every clergyman to read the circular letters at the times appointed, and to support them by sermons, addresses or personal efforts, and to afford the congregations, however feeble in point of numbers or wealth, the opportunity of making their offering and having it forwarded promptly through the diocesan treasurers to the treasurer of the board of management; (5) The importance of prompt action on the part of the clergy with reference to the circulating the appeals, both at the Epiphany and Ascensiontide, in order that they may not conflict with appeals for diocesan or parochial purposes, and that the accounts of the treasurer, which are closed annually on June 30th, may contain a full return from all the dioceses and every congregation for each year; (6) The responsibility assumed by any clergyman who undertakes to exercise his own discretion as to the best time for presenting these appeals, instead of acting at the seasons adopted, after a careful consideration of all the circumstances, by the board of management, on which all the dioceses are represented; (7) The advantage which will be found to attend the appropriation and division of the offerings, whether for Foreign or Domestic Missions, by the board of management, who have the whole field in each case, with all the latest information, distinctly and fully before them, and who are accordingly in a better position to judge of the needs of each than the individual, who may appropriate his offerings simply from feeling or preference, and not from a careful comparison of all the various circumstances, which cannot be known to him; (8) The determination of the board of management in every case to apply the offerings of each congregation and every individual as they may direct, although they would urge on all the advantage of intrusting the division and appropriation of their offerings to the board, who are in a position to know thoroughly and weigh accurately the comparative needs and claims of all the Domestic and Foreign Missions.—Carried.

It was moved by Mr. Walkem, seconded by Hon. J. B. Plumb, that a committee, consisting of Rev. E. P. Crawford, Mr. Thos. White, M.P., and Mr. E. B. Reed, be appointed to draw up a statistical report of work done by the Church of England in Canada, and presented at the September meeting.—Carried.

In the absence of the treasurer, the secretary read his report, which, on motion duly carried, was received.

Moved by Mr. Walkem, seconded by Rev. E. P. Crawford, that the sum of \$1,082.38, unappropriated balance for Foreign Missions, now in the Treasurer's hands, be divided equally between the S. P. G. and C. M. S.—Carried.

Moved by Mr. Walkem, seconded by Archdeacon Jones, that of the sum of \$661.79, unappropriated balance for Domestic Missions, now in the hands of the treasurer, two-thirds be given to Algoma, and \$100 to Moosonee, to be applied to the erection of a church at Fort Churchill.—Carried.

It being six o'clock, the meeting adjourned.

### The Historical Evidence of the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the Dead.

(Present Day Tracts, by Rev. Prebendary Row, M. A.)

(Continued.)

8. In the fifteenth of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, St. Paul makes a very definite statement as to a number of persons who believed that they had seen Jesus Christ after He had risen from

the dead. He tells us that on one occasion He was so seen by more than five hundred persons at once, of whom more than half were still alive, when he wrote the epistle. Now, consider how, in making this assertion, he must have put himself in the hands of his opponents, if this fact was not generally admitted to be true. They might have put an end to his reasonings then and there by simply exposing the falsehood of such a statement. The attempt of unbelievers to escape the force of this fact by the allegation that the apostle was careless of inquiry into the truth of such stories is here quite beyond the mark, for they forget that it was made in the presence of those who would have been only too eager to expose his mis-statements if they had been able. But if these five hundred persons really believed that they had seen Jesus Christ after His crucifixion, how is it possible to account for so singular a fact, otherwise than on the assumption of its truth?

9. But further: there were members of the Corinthian Church, who affirmed that a resurrection of the body was, if not impossible, yet a most undesirable event; and that all that was intended by the promise of a Resurrection was a great spiritual change. Yet, with singularly defective logic, they admitted that the Resurrection of Christ had been a bodily one. (1 Cor. xv. 14-17). The apostle presses them with the following reasoning, to which I invite the reader's attention: How can you deny a bodily resurrection hereafter, when you admit that Christ actually rose from the dead? If the resurrection of Christ had not been the foundation of the faith of the Church, they might have made short work of the apostle and his logic, by simply denying the truth of the bodily Resurrection of our Lord.

But further: this illusion proves that there were persons in this church who were far from being disposed to accept with eager credulity the story of a resurrection from the dead.

I have therefore proved, on the most unimpeachable historical evidence; that there is at least one miracle recorded in the Gospels, which is neither a myth, a legend, nor even a mental hallucination which slowly grew during the latter half of the first century, but that it was fully believed in as a fact by those who gave the new impulse to the Christian Church immediately after the crucifixion of its Founder; and that it formed the one sole ground of its renewed life. Let it be observed that I have foreborne to quote the testimony of the Gospels, because unbelievers affirm that their date is comparatively late. I have, therefore, simply made use of historical documents, the genuineness of which they do not dispute. It remains, therefore, to inquire whether it is possible that this belief could have been the result of some species of mental hallucination on the part of the primitive followers of Jesus, for this is the only possible alternative to its historical reality. But before doing so, let me briefly set before the reader the points which have been proved on historical evidence of the highest order.

1. That within less than twenty-eight years after the crucifixion, the entire Christian Church, without distinction of party, believed that the one sole ground of its existence was the fact that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead.

2. That at that period there were more than two hundred and fifty persons then living, who believed that they had seen Him alive after His crucifixion.

3. That the belief in the Resurrection was held in common by St. Paul and his most violent opponents.

4. That it is an unquestionable fact that the entire Christian Church believed in the Resurrection of its Founder, as the sole ground of its existence, within six or seven years after the date of His crucifixion.

5. That at least three of the original apostles asserted that they had seen Jesus Christ alive after His death.

6. That within a few months after the crucifixion the Church must have been re-constructed on the foundation of the belief that its crucified Messiah had been raised again from the dead. I say a few months, because if the interval had been longer,

while the belief was growing, the Church must have perished in its Founder's grave.

Such being the facts of which the historical evidence is unquestionable, it remains for me to examine whether they are consistent with any other assumption than the belief in the Resurrection was founded on a reality.

Let the reader therefore observe that there are only three possible alternatives before us.

1. Either Jesus Christ actually rose from the dead.

2. Or the belief in His Resurrection was the result of a deliberately concocted fraud.

3. Or the original followers of Jesus were the victims of some species of mental hallucination. Other alternative there is none.

It will be unnecessary to examine the second of these alternatives, because it has been abandoned as untenable by all eminent modern unbelievers.

Two theories have been propounded as affording a rational account of the origin of the belief in the Resurrection of Jesus, on the assumption that it was due to the mental hallucination of His disciples. Of these the first is—

That they were so intensely enthusiastic and credulous, that some one or more of them fancied that they saw Jesus alive after His crucifixion, and that they succeeded in persuading the others that it was a fact. This theory is technically called the theory of Visions. It has been propounded in many forms, but that of Renan may be cited as a fair illustration of it, that Mary Magdalene, in the midst of her grief and emotion, mistook the gardener for Jesus, fancied that He was risen from the dead, and communicated her enthusiasm to the rest.

The second is, that Jesus did not really die of the effects of crucifixion, but that He was taken down from the cross in a swoon, from which He awoke in the sepulchre; that He succeeded in creeping out of it an exhausted state, in getting to a place of retirement, and died shortly afterwards; and that His credulous followers mistook this partial recovery for a resurrection from the dead.

I must ask the reader to observe, that to impart to either of these theories the appearance of plausibility, it is necessary to assume a boundless, I may say an amount of credulity that surpasses belief, on the part of the followers of Jesus. But when we ask that some proof should be adduced of the existence of this extreme credulity, the only one which is forthcoming is, that the Jews of that period were habitual believers in supernatural and demoniacal agency.

I will deal with the second of these theories first:—

I allow that it was possible for a man who had been suspended for some time on the cross, if taken down, and carefully treated, to recover. This, we informed by Josephus, happened to one of his friends, though it was the exception, for two out of three died under care. But in the case of Jesus, unbelievers must meet the fact that He was in the hands of His enemies, who, as a matter of course, would have seen to His burial as a criminal who had been publicly executed, and have thus put the possibility of His recovery in his Grave out of the question. It is true that our Gospels inform us that Pilate surrendered His body to His friends; our sole knowledge of this fact is derived from their testimony, but unbelievers affirm that they are unhistorical, and they cannot therefore in this particular case claim the benefit of it. If, however, they accept the statements of the Gospels on this point they are bound also to accept their further assertion, that Pilate took care to ascertain that Jesus had actually died before he resigned possession of the body; and that it was afterwards consigned to a sepulchre, the entrance of which was closed with a large stone. But those who propound the above theory cannot help admitting that a sepulchre hewn in a rock was a most unlikely place for a man who had been crucified to recover from a swoon, which could be mistaken for death; but even if this is conceded to be a possibility, they are met with the insuperable difficulty, of a man in this wounded and exhausted condition being able to get out of a place—the doorway of