



SMYRNA.

His life meant power. That new life which rescued Him from the grave was not given to Him for nothing. He who had suffered for humanity was put into a position to care for humanity, and to watch over its interests in a place of magnificence and power.

The Lord by this message would have His people know that He had not deserted them. There were people living who had seen Him in the flesh. John himself had the holiest recollections of Him; but there was no doubt a constant yearning among all to see Him again. They all knew that He had appeared to His disciples after His death, why should He not do so again?

It was a natural yearning for these early Christians, in whose ears the story of the crucifixion was so fresh, to expect at any moment to see their Lord again. And, as a matter of fact, we know that He did appear, to some favoured ones, but in a very guarded manner. He appeared, for a moment only, to Saul of Tarsus; He appeared to St. John when he was all alone in Patmos, but He would not appear elsewhere. The world must learn to do without Him—at least as far as His bodily presence went; but then the world must know that He is,

nevertheless, with it, and that He knows every sorrow that can pierce the human heart. It must be well known to all, that if He *was* dead, He was undoubtedly alive again, and if alive again, able to help those who trusted Him.

And there was a reason why He specially sent this reminder. It was not what He had said to the Church of Ephesus. To them the message was sent from Him who "walks among the golden candlesticks," i.e., from Him who continually moves in and out among His Churches; but to Smyrna the message came from Him who "was dead and is alive again." This difference has a meaning. Ephesus as a Church was strong—Smyrna was poor, weak and suffering, threatened indeed with entire destruction. "I know thy works," says the heavenly messenger to them, "and thy tribulation and poverty."

There are those who know well what it is to struggle with poverty. It is a load known only to those who are called upon to bear it. Those who have wealth, or even a moderate supply of means constantly at their disposal, cannot enter into the griefs and sorrows of the poor. The poor are human. They love their children as dearly as the richest in the land, and as dearly, too, do their children love their parents. But