

as himself. He refers to it in the most direct terms; he also refers to it in the most incidental manner, as the foundation of the common faith both of himself, and of those to whom he wrote. He evidently calculates that they would receive his statements respecting it without the smallest hesitation. Now, nothing is more valuable than incidental references such as these to an event. They prove that the writer, and those to whom he writes, know all about it, and have a common belief respecting it. I ask the reader to observe how this is exemplified in the ordinary letters which we write. When we are of opinion that our correspondent is fully acquainted with an occurrence, we simply allude to it, without entering into a formal description of it; and we feel sure that our view of the fact is accepted by him. Such is the manner in which St. Paul refers to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ throughout these letters, with the exception of 1 Cor. xv. and Gal. i. and ii., where his reference is for purposes directly historical and controversial.

3. But observe further: there are circumstances connected with these allusions which render this testimony stronger than any other in history. Party spirit raged fiercely in two of these churches. In the Corinthian church there were several parties, who were more or less adverse to St. Paul. He names three of them, viz., an Apollos party; another, which professed to be the followers of St. Peter; and a third, which claimed in a special sense to be the followers of Christ. Besides these, he specifies a fourth party, which was especially attached to himself. One of these parties went to the extreme length of *denying his right to the apostolical office, on the ground that he had not been one of the original companions of Jesus*. No small portion of the second epistle is occupied with dealing with this party, and defending his own position against them.

Such being the state of affairs in this church, it is obvious that if the party in opposition to the apostle had held different views respecting the reality of the resurrection from himself, the demolition of his entire defence would have been certain. He puts the question, "*Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?*" I do not quote these words as evidence that he had really seen Him; but as a proof, that if his opponents had not been firmly persuaded that the resurrection was a fact, it would have been an unanswerable reason for affirming that his claim to apostolical authority, based on his having seen the risen Jesus, was worthless, because He had not risen. This reference also proves that the Petrine and the Christian party in this church, which latter doubtless claimed to represent the most primitive form of Christianity, must have been firmly persuaded that the original apostles had seen their risen Master. It is evident, therefore, that as far as the fact of the resurrection is concerned, St. Paul and his bitterest opponents in the church must have been agreed as to its truth.

4. The evidence which is furnished by the Epistle to the Galatians is still more conclusive. Here there was a powerful party, who not only denied St. Paul's apostleship, but who had so far departed from his teaching that he designates their doctrines by the name of *a different gospel*. This party had been so successful, that they had drawn away a large number of his own converts. No one can read this letter without seeing that the state of things in this church touched him to the quick. It is full of the deepest bursts of feeling. Yet the whole epistle is written with the most absolute confidence: that however great were the differences between his opponents and himself, there was no diversity of opinion between them that the belief in the resurrection of Jesus was the foundation stone of their common Christianity. Hear his words at the beginning of the letter: "Paul, an apostle (not from men, neither through men, but through Jesus Christ, and God the Father, *who raised Him from the dead*), and all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia. I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from Him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel, which

is not another gospel; only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you let him be anathema."

If St. Paul's belief and that of his opponents, on the subject of the resurrection, had not been at complete accord, no man in his senses would have thrown down such a challenge as that which is contained in these words, and also in terms equally strong throughout the entire epistle.

5. But the evidence which is furnished in this letter goes far beyond the mere belief of the Galatian churches at the time it was written. It involves the testimony of two other churches, viz., that of the church of Antioch, and of the church at Jerusalem; the one, the metropolis of Gentile, and the other of Jewish Christianity; and carries us up to the briefest interval after the crucifixion. St. Paul's opponents were Judaizing Christians, who professed to be the followers of St. Peter and St. James. St. Paul, in the second chapter of this epistle, asserts that his teaching was in substantial harmony with that of these two great chiefs of the Jewish church. It follows, therefore, as their professed adherents concurred with him in believing that the resurrection was a fact, that these two apostles must have been persuaded that they themselves had seen their risen Lord; and that the whole Jewish Church must have concurred with them in this belief. This same chapter also makes it certain that the entire church at Antioch did the same at the period when St. Peter and St. Paul jointly visited it, and involves the fact of St. Peter's direct testimony to the truth of the resurrection. This proves for certain that this belief was no late after-growth, but that it was coincident with the renewed life of the Christian Church immediately after the crucifixion.

6. Let us now consider the evidence furnished by the Epistle to the Romans.

If it be urged that St. Paul had founded the churches of Corinth and Galatia and that even his opponents may have adopted his views on this point, this at any rate was a church which he had neither founded nor visited. It had evidently been in existence several years before he wrote his letter to them; and it was a church so large and important, that he felt that he was in no danger of being misapprehended when he said, that "*their faith was a subject of conversation throughout the whole world*." It contained a large Jewish element; and from the number of strangers who visited the imperial city there can be no doubt that among its members must have been representatives of every variety of Christian thought. Yet he addressed the church with the fullest confidence, that its members held the same views respecting the resurrection as himself. This is set forth in the opening words of the epistle: "Declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, *by the resurrection from the dead*," and the same truth permeates the entire contents of the epistle.

We have thus fully proved, that within a period of less than twenty-eight years after the crucifixion, three large churches, separated from each other by several hundred miles, were all of the same mind in believing that Jesus Christ had risen from the dead; and that this belief formed the sole ground of the existence of the Christian community. I ask the reader to consider how long it must have taken for such a belief to have grown up among churches *thus widely separated*. It is useless, therefore, to assert that the miraculous stories of the Gospels grew up gradually during the first century, and that they thus became mistaken for history, for our evidence is simply overwhelming, that the greatest of all miracles was implicitly believed in by the entire Church within less than twenty-eight years after the crucifixion.

7. But further: this belief was not then one of recent growth. The mode in which allusion is made to it proves that it must have been contemporaneous with their first belief in Christianity on the part of those to whom St. Paul wrote. Many of these, as we have seen, were Jewish Christians, who must have been very early converts, or have

derived their faith from those who were. The allusions in the Epistle to the Galatians plainly include the testimony of St. James and St. Peter. We also find, by a most incidental allusion in the Epistle 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: "Salute Andronicus, and Junias, my kinsmen and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the Apostles, who also have been in Christ before me." Yet they were all agreed on the subject of the resurrection. St. Paul believed it from the time of his conversion, i.e., within less than ten years after the date of the crucifixion. Andronicus and Junias believed it still earlier. Peter, James and John also believed it from the first; for St. Paul tells us that he communicated to them the gospel which he preached among the gentiles, and that they generally approved of it; and he informs us, in the fifteenth of the Corinthians, that both Peter and James had seen Jesus Christ alive after His crucifixion. The reader's attention should be particularly directed to the fact that in the Epistle to the Galatians he informs us, that three years after his conversion, he paid Peter a visit of fifteen days, during which he was entertained by him, and that during this visit he had an interview with James. As it is incredible that they did not explain their views to one another respecting this fundamental fact of Christianity, we cannot therefore err in assuming that we have here the direct testimony of these two men, that they believed they had seen their Master risen again from the dead. It follows, therefore, that their belief in the resurrection was the foundation on which the Church was reconstructed immediately after the crucifixion.

(To be Continued.)

In reading and conversation, Churchmen are constantly struck with the looseness and vagueness with which the word "creed" is used. This vagueness results from the fact that many of the denominational bodies either have no creed at all, or else make, and claim the right to unmake, their own creeds at pleasure. A creed, consequently, has come to mean, if any meaning is attached to the word, an opinion, or a series of opinions, more or less definite, about religious matters, which may be adopted, or modified, or dropped altogether, by individual caprice or popular vote; it may be one thing to-day, and altogether a different thing to-morrow. One of the chief restorations that are needed at the present day is the idea that there is, and always has been, a clear, distinct, objective and unchanging "Faith once delivered to the saints," and that a Creed is the definite, formal and authoritative expression of that Faith in words. Opinion is not Faith, and no expression of opinions can be a Creed.

In current language one often hears the expression, "Science says" so-and-so, or something like it, and the *dictum* is expected to be received as final. Of course, it is in speech a personification; for Science has not had, and cannot have, anything to say on the subject. Such *dicta* are the sayings and conclusions, more or less to be credited, of scientific men, or those who call themselves such. When such conclusions become established, that is, fairly proved, and receive the assent of scientific men everywhere, then the personification may be allowed, and not till then. Guess-work has its place, and plays an important part in scientific research, but so long as it remains guess-work or hypothesis, it is not science—only scientific guessing. One guess in a hundred, or a thousand may be, is verified, and becomes recognized as scientific truth.