

divinity of the whole history, an illustration of the goodness and wisdom of Him who prompted the historians, and a potent means of confirming the faith of the Church in the certainty of the things which it has believed?

Let us dispose first of some answers which have been given. One answer is to the effect that the life of Lazarus would have been put in jeopardy, even more than it was actually\* put by the local circulation of the facts. This may have some force, but hardly seems sufficient; because the documents of the Christian history were, probably, not widely read except in Christian communities; and it was not by these written records, but by the *viva voce* publication of a crucified but exalted Messiah,—accompanied by miraculous demonstration,—that the heavy hand of persecution was brought down upon the prominent members of the early Church.

Another answer is given by Dr. Whedon in these words:—“It does not in fact seem that the other evangelists viewed the raising of the dead as so pre-eminent a miracle as esteemed by modern thinkers or by the Jewish populace. The raising of the widow’s son is narrated by Luke alone, and in as brief and ordinary a way as any other miracle. And pictorially as John spreads out this narrative” (the one in question), “it fills no wider space than that of the restoration of the blind-born, in chap. ix. The evangelists, doubtless, presuppose that either of these miracles requires a whole Omnipotence, and neither requires more. To the popular view, and to the eye of modern science, the raising of the dead appears the greatest of miracles; but to a true spiritual view the casting out and controlling of demons may be far greater. The former is a mastery of passive or willing human nature; the latter is a mastery of hostile powers.” This answer suggests some useful thoughts, but hardly meets the objection; especially as, according to Dr. Whedon’s own statement, “the raising of Lazarus was the summit of the climax of our Lord’s divine works.” The fact is, that death is such a finality that it makes an impression exceeding all comparison; and He who masters death assumes, to the conviction of every intelligent and truthful mind, the majesty of the Creator Himself. Exorcists

\* John xii. 10.