

the resurrection takes the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth out of the common category of earthly lives and sets the seal on the Incarnation and the Divinity.

And the proof of the resurrection is by way of testimony. It is not an inference from things before. The twelve men who were His immediate friends and followers never inferred the resurrection from anything gone before. They did not believe in the resurrection during all their intercourse with Him. They did not understand it. They were stupid to all His allusions concerning it. His death was the catastrophe they dreaded. It would end all their expectations. A Messiah who could die was a Messiah incomprehensible.

And when he was taken and put to death, they were completely lost. Their hopes had come to an end. They had followed another false leader who had proclaimed a kingdom He was powerless to establish.

Then came the Resurrection. In spite of themselves they were obliged to recognize a fact—the fact that the man crucified on Friday was alive on Sunday morning! Outside all their expectations and contrary to all their imaginations, the Kingdom came which was supreme over Death as it was over Life. They had never understood the Master they followed until He died and arose. Then slowly began to dawn upon them the meaning of His words, and His own meaning and nature—the Sovereign of all worlds; Hell and heaven, this little world, and all measureless worlds, proclaiming the laws of the kingdom of God, which comprehends the seen and the unseen, archangels and men and devils equally under its willing obedience or its devouring compulsion!

So they just stood as witnesses to a fact—a fact they themselves found it hard to believe. But a fact on which all the Lord's words, works and credentials stood.

He had risen! They fought against the fact. They were convinced against their wills. It was an 'idle tale' to them at first. One would not believe till he put his fingers into the nail wounds, and his hand into the spear stab.

But the fact overpowered them all at last. They saw and believed. There was no escape.

They saw Him, talked with Him, ate, drank, with Him, for forty days. There could be no mistake. They knew what they saw, and their hands handled of the Bread of Life. They had a fact to go on, to proclaim, to stand by.

The world must make room for a fact. It always does. It can't help it. The fact is autocratic. It rides rough-shod over theories. 'Miracles impossible?' Yes, till five, four, three honest men testify to what you call a 'miracle,' and then your priori reasoning sounds like the whistling of the idle wind which no man regardeth. Miracles are always impossible till miracles occur. So Mr. David Hume was impossible till Mr. David Hume occurred.

There is nothing so apt to occur as a miracle, and a priori reasoning is scarce fit for the amusement of children. Everything in this wonderful universe is possible, or as Scripture put it: 'With God all things are possible,' a far profounder philosophic statement, revealing an insight into nature infinitely beyond the smart Scotchman's bit of Scotch metaphysics—the shallowest, it is conceded, I believe, of all the queer stuff that goes under that name.

The preaching of the Apostles was a preaching of the Resurrection, the climax of the whole story, the capstone of the whole edifice.

And it was the preaching of a fact. They were witnesses to the fact. It was a matter of testimony. And testimony takes small account of probabilities. It may be utterly incomprehensible that a highly esteemed citizen and pious church member should rob the company of which he is cashier, and make away with a quarter of a million. But on testimony the court will find him guilty and send him to the penitentiary when he is caught, whether the fact is comprehensible or not.

It may be utterly inexplicable that Eugene Aram, a mild, amiable, even pious man, should kill his friend Clarke, but witnesses saw him do it, and the court condemns him, and leaves you to explain the inexplicable as best you can.

So the Apostles were witnesses to a fact, a wonderful and incomprehensible fact, and that was their office.

They chose Matthias in the place of Judas 'to be a witness with us of His resurrection.' They declared that He rose again, 'whereof we are the witnesses.' The appointment and selection of the men seems not to have been, as one hears so often, to instruct; teach and convert, so much as to be living witnesses to a fact, without which all the preaching, instructing and teaching are idle words.

Nay, the loose talk one hears so often, growing commoner from day to day, I think, is even shallower than it is loose. The Apostles were not sent to preach moralities; even the most beautiful commentaries upon the sermon on the Mount. They were sent to be witnesses of His resurrection, preachers of a divine present power on earth among men, preachers of the Kingdom of God come into things natural, of God who is also Man. Lord and Master of all things seen and unseen!

No poor, staggering, gasping apologizing, naturalism pleading for a little bit of Christian decent morality as possible yet, but a strong militant, heroic assertion of the present divine and supernatural in the world and among men; of miracles and wonder and mystery at every turn and every step in a world that lies drifting in the great deeps of the spiritual as gulf weeds drifts in the North Atlantic—a world steeped, saturated charged with the spiritual, cradled and wrapped in the infinite terrors and splendors of the world unseen!

And the fact they knew and could testify to in any court and under any cross-examinations was the key to a transfigured world and a a transfigured life.

It is all true. We belong to the great ages and the great infinities, we men. It is not 'let us eat and drink for to-morrow we die.' It is 'let us work and endure and pray and keep soul and body pure, for to-morrow we live.' A man has risen from the dead, burst the dark doors wide open, and revealed our life and purpose, and sealed every great word He gave us, and every great deed He did for men even to the last mighty deed of dying.

'We are witnesses!' It is their cry everywhere. Before governors, kings, councils, mobs, before civilized and savage—we have a strange story to tell, but we know it is true. We saw Him. It is a fact. We testify to it. Jesus of Nazareth crucified under Pontius Pilate, rose from the dead!

(To be continued.)

UNREST.

Many people are getting alarmed at the "unrest" in the religious world. They imagine that chaos has come, and the foundations crumbling beneath our feet. So a cricket singing merrily in the field, when the ploughman comes along and tears up the greensward, thinks the whole world has gone to pieces. While the Christian should be alert and vigilant amid the disturbances caused by heavy-minded men with a crook in their mental vision, he has no reason to be frightened, or to suppose that the truth of God is at risk. For two reasons, first, because it is precisely the state of things foretold by our Lord, and clearly intimated by the Apostle Paul. He writes to Timothy: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being

deceived." These things must come, but this does not mean that truth and loyalty to Jesus are to be banished from the earth. "The wrath of man shall praise Thee, and the remainder of wrath shalt Thou restrain." Christ is the victor, and has conquered the world once for all. The second reason is, that the Church and Christianity has gone through much worse tribulation, time and again, and not only came off triumphant, but gained a distinct advance in strength and breadth after each disturbance. No present attacks upon the faith, either from within or from without, can be at all compared with the wide-spread and contemptuous disregard of divine things at the time of the restoration of Charles II, or the furious assault of infidels in France in the eighteenth century. The kingdom of Christ does not depend upon human efforts, and it can not be overthrown either by the errors or by the spite of men.—*The Church News, St. Louis.*

PROGRESS.

The fact is, this perturbed state of the religious world is a healthy sign, and betokens progress. It is better than stagnation to have men thinking about truths that at least belong to higher things than money making. It is true that the press and the popular mind make much ado about nothing, especially when there is a prospect of dissension in the Christian ranks, or when some bright man switches off and picks up an old exploded error, which he burnishes up, and imagines he has made a new discovery which is going to revolutionize theology. In the midst of all the ephemeral froth and sensation, the real work that is going steadily on is unnoticed. Millions of humble, earnest, faithful souls, the world over, are giving their lives in loving and consecrated service of the dear Master, making His truth the guide of their lives, and in bringing others to find their peace in Him, and these are undisturbed by the noisy waves on the surface, and go on their way without a thought of having their work heralded abroad. There is no question that honest, self-denying Christian work in all directions, by all possible instrumentalities, especially among the poor and neglected and in heathen lands, was never more active and wide spread than it is to day. The whole tone and sentiment of Christian life and morals are steadily advancing. As an instance of the elevation in morals, if not in religion, a profound public opinion is shaking the throne of England at a lapse of the Prince of Wales which would not have been deemed a peccadillo by Henry VIII. Also, the late development of the sentiment of Christian unity, if as yet producing no visible results, has done much to soften sectarian acerbities, and brought in a spirit of sympathy and forbearance with a consciousness of the ludicrousness as well as the desperate sinfulness of Christians warring with each other, and this is a more striking indication of true progress than it is usually estimated. It is true that the devil has many loyal servants; that the Church falls far short of her duty; and that many Christians are no better in their lives, outwardly, than the 'world's people'; yet, if we could get an accurate comparison between the present and 100 years ago, of the visible growth of the Church and Christian institutions, and the elevation of Christian life and Christian thought, the advance would be simply amazing, if not wholly satisfactory to the ardent mind. And the end is not yet.—*The Church News.*

Your heart seems cold, and your apprehension mechanical, and your faith paralyzed;—does this describe you? Thank God that feelings do not alter facts! He suffered for this sinful coldness as well as for all other sins.—*The Christian.*